

BEYOND THE SUNSET

A Biblical Study of Life after Death

(Based on the book by Perry B. Cotham)

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Preface

(Job 14:14) "If a man dies, shall he live again?"

The Bible does not answer all of our questions on this subject, but the Lord has given to us all that we need to know about physical death and the existence that follows it.

Chapter 1 - Is there a God?

A reasoned study of any religious subject should begin with settling two critical questions: "Is there an eternal God and is the Bible the inspired, inerrant Word of God?"

A. "There is a God"

True science and faith in God have never been and will never be in conflict. **(Psa 90:1,2)** "Lord, you have been our dwelling place^[a] in all generations.² Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God." **(Psa 14:1)** "The fool has said in his heart, there is no God"

B. The Foolishness of Atheism

1. Scientists know that life does not come from non-life, but only from previous life. Atheists would have us believe the incredible theory of spontaneous generation.

2. If evolution were true, why did it stop with man?

C. The Universe - From where did it come?

1. Matter shows signs of age, therefore it is not eternal. Are we to believe it created itself??

2. **(Psa 33:6-9)** "By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, and by the breath of his mouth all their host.⁷ He gathers the waters of the sea as a heap; he puts the deeps in storehouses.⁸ Let all the earth fear the LORD; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him!⁹ For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm."

3. **(Gen 1:1)** The Hebrew word for "create" means to bring into existence something where nothing previously existed

4. The uncaused first cause is self-sufficient and underived, has life in Himself and is the source of all life
(John 5:26) "²⁶ For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself."

D. We can accept both science and the Bible

1. They will always be in harmony because God is the Author of the Bible and the Author of nature

(Col 1:16-17) "16 For by[a] him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. 17 And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together."

2. The Spirit was the organizer of the material universe and the giver of laws. All things began with a miracle. They continue through laws which the Holy Spirit has given.

E. All the Bible is inspired

Ignorance of God only leads to idolatry. Man will always worship something **(Acts 14:15)** "15 "Men, why are you doing these things? We also are men, of like nature with you, and we bring you good news, that you should turn from these vain things to a living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all that is in them."

F. Why some hate the Bible

1. There is a direct connection between human conduct and one's concept of his origin and purpose in life. The Bible is replete with the results of people who gave up God and put Him out of their minds

2. When some believe they are no more than animals, they will live a life without moral guidelines.

3. Those without knowledge of the Holy Scriptures lack information on two vital matters: he is ignorant of the one true God, and second, he is ignorant of himself. He does not know where he came from, why he is here, or where he is going when he passes from earthly existence.

Chapter 2 - What is man's origin? (**Psa 8:4**) "What is man, that you are mindful of him?" Man was created by Jehovah - There are only two possible answers as to man's origin: a mere animal product of past ages of evolution or a spirit-being created by an act of God.

A. The Bible affirms God created man as a compound being - a material body made from the dust and an inbreathed spirit from Jehovah (**Gen 1:27**) "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them." (**Zech 12:1**) "The oracle of the word of the LORD concerning Israel: Thus declares the LORD, who stretched out the heavens and founded the earth and formed the spirit of man within him:"

B. Body, Soul, and Spirit of man - the body is the fleshly, material part man. The soul of man has different meanings depending on the context in which the word is used: physical life (**Psa 78:50**); the whole of man (**Gen 46:26-27; 1 Pet 3:20**); the spirit of man (**Acts 2:27; Psa 16:10**). The spirit is the immortal nature of man (**John 4:24; 1 Tim 1:17; Gen 1:26-27**) The spirit dwells within the body and sometimes the word soul means the same as spirit.

C. Our physical bodies are simply a temporary house for our spirit (**Dan 7:15**) "As for me, Daniel, my spirit within me^[a] was anxious, and the visions of my head alarmed me." (**2 Cor 4:16**) "So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day." These two different aspects of man also have different destinations: (**Ecc1 12:7**) "and the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit returns to God who gave it."

D. The Image of God - **Gen 1:27** refers to man's spiritual nature. God has intelligence, will and emotions as does man. Man thinks, perceives, remembers, reasons and wills. Man has a mind in a sense in which animals have none. He alone possesses self-consciousness and is capable of fellowship with his Maker. The fact that man's spirit came, not from the dust, but from the eternal God, justifies belief in the immortality of our spirit and its survival after our body's destruction.

Chapter 3 - When does human life begin?

A. David characterized himself as a person when he was developing in his mother's womb. Notice the personal pronouns, "I," "me," "my," even when his substance was not yet formed. **(Psa 139:13-16)** "For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb.¹⁴ I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.^[a] Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well.¹⁵ My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth ¹⁶ Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them.

B. One can logically conclude a person possesses a spirit from conception and is therefore a human being, a person. **(Jere 1:5)** ""Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations."

C. Children are born innocent (**Ezek 18:20**) "The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not suffer for the iniquity of the father, nor the father suffer for the iniquity of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself." (**Mt 19:14**) "but Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven." We die physically because of Adam's sin, we die spiritually because of our own sins (**Isa 59:2**) "but your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear." If our spirit is evil from birth, how did it get that way? God is the Father of our spirits (**Heb 12:9**) "Besides this, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live?"

D. Man only, not animals, was created to glorify God on this earth (**Isa 43:7**) "everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made." Man has innate greatness at his creation and if he chooses to live the right way, great will be the consequences of his being.

Chapter Four - What is death?

A. There are four simple facts about death:

1. Death is real - 100,000 every day

2. Death is certain - Unless the Lord returns soon no one living today will avoid it; death will be a personal experience

3. Death's time is uncertain - it usually comes when unexpected

4. Man should make preparation for death before it comes **(2 Kings 20:1)**" In those days Hezekiah became sick and was at the point of death. And Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz came to him and said to him,

"Thus says the LORD, 'Set your house in order, for you shall die; you shall not recover.'"

B. Death comes every day to someone and someday to everyone, but it need not be feared (**Psa 116:15**) "Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints."

C. Inscription on the great arch in the Cathedral of Milan, "That only is important which is eternal." If only man could be conscious of this truth and live his life accordingly.

D. Separation of spirit and body occurs in death (**Jas 2:26**) "For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead." Our physical bodies die at the separation, but our spirits live on into eternity (**Eccl 12:7**) "and the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit returns to God who gave it."

E. The soul departs (**Gen 35:18**) "And as her soul was departing (for she was dying),.."; (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob "gave up the ghost" upon death (**Gen 25:8; 35:29; 49:33**); Stephen said to Lord Jesus upon his death, "receive my spirit" (**Acts 7:59-60**) and Jesus Himself cried with a loud voice, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit," and having said this, he "gave up the ghost" (**Lk 23:46**)

F. We fly away (**Psa 90:10**) "The years of our life are seventy, or even by reason of strength eighty yet their span^[a] is but toil and trouble; they are soon gone, and we fly away." What "flies away" if not our spirit?

G. Our body is a tabernacle (frail dwelling/tent) in which the real man lives (**2 Cor 5:1,6-8**) "For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. So we are always of good courage. We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, ⁷ for we walk by faith, not by sight. ⁸ Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord."

1. The dweller and his house are distinct, (**2 Cor 4:16**) "So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self^[a] is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day." (**Phil 1:23-24**) "I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. ²⁴ But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account." What can "remain in the flesh" mean except living in our bodies?

2. This separation is only temporary. The separation is only till the resurrection; at that time the body will be raised, changed and our spirit will be reunited with body. *(covered in depth later in this study)* **(1 Cor 15:35-57)** "But someone will ask, "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?" ³⁶ You foolish person! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. ³⁷ And what you sow is not the body that is to be, but a bare kernel, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain. ³⁸ But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body. ³⁹ For not all flesh is the same, but there is one kind for humans, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish. ⁴⁰ There are heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is of one kind, and the glory of the earthly is of another. ⁴¹ There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for star differs from star in glory. ⁴² So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable. ⁴³ It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. ⁴⁴ It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. ⁴⁵ Thus it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being";^[a] the last Adam became a life-giving spirit.

⁴⁶ But it is not the spiritual that is first but the natural, and then the spiritual ⁴⁷ The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. ⁴⁸ As was the man of dust, so also are those who are of the dust, and as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. ⁴⁹ Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall ^[b] also bear the image of the man of heaven ⁵⁰ I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. ⁵¹ Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, ⁵² in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. ⁵³ For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. ⁵⁴ When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory." ⁵⁵ "O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" ⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. ⁵⁷ But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

3. The resurrection of Christ and the whole Biblical teaching on life after death should take the fear out of death for every faithful believer **(Heb 2:14-15)** "Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, ¹⁵ and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery." **(John 5:28-29)** "Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice ²⁹ and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment"

4. If on this side of death there is a departure, then on the other side it is an arrival. If here a separation, there a reunion. It is a voyage, in the blink of an eye, to a better life.

Chapter Five - Does the spirit survive the grave?

Neither Science nor philosophy can shed any light on this question. Only the Holy Scriptures can answer this question and provide accurate information on life in the hereafter.

Job exclaimed: "But a man dies and is laid low; man breathes his last, and where is he? **(Job 14:10)** We shall see.

As we have seen, at physical death our bodies return to the dust from which they came, but our spirit returns to God who gave it.
(Eccl 12:7)

Death is simply the gateway to life in another state or form.

A. Spirit-Beings exist - God is Spirit **(John 4:24)** as are Jesus and the Holy Spirit. If the Godhead exists outside of physical bodies and man is made in the image of God, it is certainly possible man's spirit can exist outside his physical body. Some things on earth are invisible to man but exist: electricity, wind.

1. The Bible speaks of only two kinds of beings that are in existence: (1) God, who is the eternal, self-existent One, and (2) the beings that He created and which exist by His will; some of these exist in material bodies and some in spirit form.

2. There are three classes of purely spirit-beings: (1) God, (2) holy angels, and (3) fallen angels or evil spirits.

3. There is nothing any more mysterious about the existence of spirits out of the flesh than about their existence in the flesh **(Lk 1:46-47)** "And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, ⁴⁷and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior," (Dan 7:15) "As for me, Daniel, my spirit within me^[a] was anxious, and the visions of my head alarmed me." **(Heb 12:23)** "and to the assembly^[a] of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect,"

4. As we see, the Scriptures teach that the spirit is not dependent upon a body for its existence. Our spirit exists within our physical bodies while we live and outside this house after death **(2 Cor 5:1)** "For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

B. Man lives after death - The Bible confirms many times that physical death does NOT mean the extinction of the soul:

1. Abraham **(Gen 25:8-9)** "Abraham breathed his last and died in a good old age, an old man and full of years, and was gathered to his people.⁹ Isaac and Ishmael his sons buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite, east of Mamre," His father was buried four hundred miles away and his distant ancestors more than six hundred miles away in Ur. This "gathering" was obviously not referring to corpses, but of spirits.

2. David (**2 Sam 12:22-23**) “²² He said, “While the child was still alive, I fasted and wept, for I said, ‘Who knows whether the LORD will be gracious to me, that the child may live?’ ²³ But now he is dead. Why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he will not return to me.” David in no uncertain language expressed his belief that he would one day be reunited with his child.

3. **Job (19:25-26)** “But as for me I know that my [b]Redeemer And at last he will stand up upon the [c]earth: ²⁶ [d]And after my skin, even this *body*, is destroyed, Then without my flesh shall I see God;” (ASV)

C. Death cannot kill the soul -

1. (**Lk 12:4**) “I tell you, my friends, do not fear those who kill the body, and after that have nothing more that they can do.” (**Matt 10:28**) “And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy (“*cause one to lose eternal salvation*” *Thayer’s*) both soul and body in hell.” The body and soul (spirit) are clearly distinguishable; one is susceptible to destruction by man; the other only by God. At death, the soul does not die. It continues to live forever.

2. There is personal existence between death and the resurrection in the disembodied state.

a. **(Mt. 17:1-3)** "And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James, and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. ² And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light. ³ And behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him." Moses and Elijah had been physically dead for many years, but were still in existence retaining their personal identity and individuality.

b. **(Rev 6:9-10)** "When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the witness they had borne. ¹⁰ They cried out with a loud voice, "O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" John saw these disembodied souls alive and aware of how they died at the hands of their persecutors on earth. This passage shows that the soul of man does exist after it leaves the body.

3. Spirits have returned to their bodies **(1 Kings 17:21-22)**

"Then he stretched himself upon the child three times and cried to the LORD, "O LORD my God, let this child's life^[a] come into him again." ²² And the LORD listened to the voice of Elijah. And the life of the child came into him again, and he revived" Death occurred when the child's spirit departed her body and life returned with her spirit returned to her dead body.

D. Christians depart to be with Christ

1. **(Phil 1:21-23)** "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. ²² If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. ²³ I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better." How could it be "far better" if death meant ceasing to exist?

2. **(Rom 8:38-39)** "For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹ nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

God loves that which exists. How wonderful to know that the power of death does not put an end to the Christian's relationship with God. **(2 Cor 5:8)** "Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord." Death is not the end. Death is simply a transition or change-change to another state of existence. Since God breathed into man something of Himself, man is endowed with capacity to exist forever.

Chapter Six - Is the spirit immortal?

God, who is Spirit **(John 4:24)** created man in His image **(Gen 1:27)**, therefore man must possess a spirit **(Zech 12:1)**.

The created universe is made up of matter (substance) and spirit (essence)The Greek word for "spirit" refers to the essence of life that animates (brings to life) the body and is invisible as the wind.

Matter: Applies to all substances of which we have knowledge by natural senses; known by its qualities. Life of the body is tis power to digest and assimilate food and build tissue.

Spirit: Thayer's definition is "a simple essence (nature, idea, quality of something), devoid of all or at least grosser matter and possessed of the power of knowing, desiring, deciding, and acting"; known by its activities. The life of the spirit is its power to feel, to think, to will. One can see qualities in a person that are not matter in any of existing forms such as intelligence, reason, judgment, memory, and consciousness. Our spirit is susceptible to love, hate, joy and grief, and these properties are not inherent in matter. Since man has an inherent intellectual and moral nature, these spiritual qualities must have come from an intelligent and moral being, a spiritual source.

Thus, in a unique way man is like God (**Eccl 12:7**) Scientists cannot take the chemicals found in man's body and create him in his fullness because man is a compound being who possesses a spirit that is different in its origin and distinct in its character from the body. Man is both mortal and immortal, depending on which part one is referenced.

A. The spirit is the heart/mind (intellect, emotions, will, conscience) The heart/spirit does the thinking (**Heb 4:12**) "For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart."

1. The heart thinks: understands (**Mt 13:15**); believes (**Rom 10:10**); reasons (**Mk 2:8**); loves (**Mt 22:37**); desires (**Rom 10:1**); despises (**2 Sam 6:16**); may be stolen (**2 Sam 15:6**); trusts (**Prov 3:5**).

2. The heart displays emotional processes: purposes (**2 Cor 9:7**); determines (**1 Cor 7:37**); obeys (**Rom 6:17**). These words show volitional processes or acts of will. Every act of acceptable obedience to God comes from the heart or spirit. The heart may be pricked (**Acts 2:37**); may either condemn or approve (**1 John 3:20-21**);

3. The heart/mind displays processes of the conscience: issues of life (**Prov 4:23**; **Mt. 12:34-35**; **15:18-19**)

4. The Biblical terms-spirit, mind, inward man, soul, and heart help us to understand what the spirit of man is.

B. Is this thinking essence just a function of the brain? Are physical brain movements the cause or source of thought?

1. The brain is not the origin of thought; the brain is not the soul. If it were the destruction of part of the brain would be partial destruction of the soul. The real relation between "I" and the brain is something like that between an organist and his organ. The organ produces at the organist's bidding. Likewise the brain is not the "I", it is the instrument. My brain is mine to use, but it is not "I". The physical body is not "I", it is the house where "I" lives, temporarily. The fact that the heart/mind/soul/spirit functions outside the body, as we have seen from Scripture, is proof that our physical brain is not the origin of thought.

C. The spirit of man is immortal - "possessing a quality of deathlessness or interminability (undyingness; incapable of dying; free from the power of death". As it pertains to our study it means an endless continuation of man's personality-the thing he calls "I." We have not always been, but we will always be.

1. God is an immortal spirit (**1 Tim 1:17**) therefore he begets immortal spirits (**Gen 1:27**)

2. Our hearts will live forever (**Psa 22:26**); God has put eternity into man's mind/heart (**Eccl 3:11**). Man then, is not creature of time; he belongs to eternity

3. Great care must be taken to keeping our immortal hearts right with God (**Psa 96:9**) "O worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness: fear before him, all the earth." (KJV); (**1 Sam 16:7**) "But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the LORD sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart."

D. God differs from man in that His immortality is underived, uncreated; He alone in His own essence is deathless; God only has life without beginning or ending. Men and angels created by Him have their immortality bestowed upon them by God. Immortality flows out of God to generate other spirit-beings. Ours is an acquired immortality.

Chapter Seven - What is the Soul?

A. The word "soul" is derived from the Greek word *psyche* and the Hebrew word *nephesh* and is used in the Bible to refer to at least three different things depending on context.

1. The animating principle which man possesses in common with beasts, the physical life that ends in death. **(Psa 78:50)** "He made a way to his anger; he spared not their soul (lives) from death, but gave their life over to the pestilence ;" (KJV); **(1 Cor 15:45)** "And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit." (KJV)

2. An individual or person (a part of man representing the whole of man) **(1 Pet 3:20; Acts 2:41)** "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"; "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." (KJV)

3. The human spirit (**Lk 23:46**) "Then Jesus, calling out with a loud voice, said, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!" And having said this he breathed his last." (**Acts 2:27, 31**) "Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption."; " He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption." (KJV)

4. When the word "soul" is used to refer to the inward man, it means the same as "spirit", the immortal nature of man-the undying spirit-and not the dying soul (**Lk 23:46; Heb 12:9**)

5. When referring to man's invisible, intellectual element (essence), it is permissible to call it either soul or spirit. Keep in mind the Bible, at times, makes a distinction (**Heb 4:12**) "For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart."

B. What part of man is mortal?

1. Our physical bodies (**Rom 6:12; 2 Cor 4:11**) "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal (liable to die) body, to make you obey its passions."; "For we who live are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal (liable to die) flesh."

2. The Bible never teaches that the spirit of man is mortal or the earthly body of man is immortal!

3. The Bible does teach that man has an immortal spirit now and will have an immortal body after the resurrection (**1 Cor 15:53-54**) "For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality.

⁵⁴ When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."

4. To put on immortality is to put on a body free from suffering, decay, and corruption of this present life.

5. Our spirit cannot be resurrected because it is not subject to death. Nowhere does the Bible teach man should seek immortality for his spirit, because the spirit is already immortal.

6. It is important to notice what part of man is referred to in any Biblical statement. Man in his fleshly body is not equipped for the eternal afterlife. **(1 Cor 15:50-52)** ⁵⁰ I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.

⁵¹ Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, ⁵² in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed."

7. After the resurrection and judgment every human will exist forever with an immortal spirit and an immortal body either dwelling with God in heaven or with Satan in hell. **(John 5:28-29)** ²⁸ Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice ²⁹ and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment."

8. The Bible teaches that all spirits - God, angels, Satan, demons, and human-cannot cease to exist. We can be separated from God, but we cannot be annihilated. The Bible never teaches the spirit dies or that the rational mind of man will ever cease to exist. The immortality, in the sense of an endless existence, of man's spirit and his resurrected body is an unalienable endowment of mankind.

Chapter Eight - Does death mean annihilation?

Biblical Truism: death always means separation, not cessation of being or absolute non-existence.

Biblical Truism: life always means union with or united to.

A. Both death and life in the Scriptures are applied to man in three different senses:

1. Physical death-separation of the spirit of man from his body (**Gen 35:18**) "And as her soul was departing (for she was dying), she called his name Ben-oni;^[a] but his father called him Benjamin." (**Jas 2:26**) "For as the body apart from the spirit"

2. Spiritual death-separation of the spirit of man from the Spirit of God while he is living in sin in his physical body **(Eph 2:1)** "And you *He made alive*, who were dead in trespasses and sins," (NKJV) **(Isa 59:2)** "but your iniquities (sins) have made a separation between you and your God.."

3. Eternal death-separation of the soul of man from the Spirit of God for all eternity **(Rom 6:23)** "For the wages of sin is death"; **(Rev 20:14-15)** "Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. ¹⁵ And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire." (*2nd death*)

4. Physical life-the union of the spirit of man with his physical body **(Lk 8:53-55)** " And they laughed at him, knowing that she was dead. ⁵⁴ But taking her by the hand he called, saying, "Child, arise." ⁵⁵ And her spirit returned, and she got up at once. And he directed that something should be given her to eat.

5. Spiritual life-union of the spirit of man with the Spirit of Christ which includes membership in His Spiritual body, the church **(1 John 5:12)** "Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life."

6. Eternal life-union of the spirit of man with the Spirit of God in heaven forever. **(Mt 25:46)** "And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

B. Man can eat of the Bread of Life and live forever **(John 6:50-51)** "This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. ⁵¹ I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever (*spirit in union with Spirit*) And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh."

1. The living have no advantage over the dead insofar as spiritual life and communion with God are concerned-for believers.

2. So long as the believer is faithful, nothing can separate him from the Lord; but one must continue to hold fast the beginning of his confidence steadfast to the end (**Heb 3:14; 10:38**) "For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end."; "but my righteous one shall live by faith, and if he shrinks back, my soul has no pleasure in him."

C. The second death is eternal separation from God (**Rev 21:8**) "But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death."

D. Man can save and lose his life (**Mk 8:35**) "For whoever would save his life^[a] will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it." By not following Jesus a man might save his physical life, but in doing so he would lose his eternal life.

E. Spiritual life is in Christ **(1 John 5:11-12)** "And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. ¹² Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life."

F. Every physical living person accountable to God is both dead and alive. If he is a Christian, he is dead to sin and alive to Christ,; if he is not a Christian, he is alive to sin and dead to Christ. The word immortality in these Scriptures describes the imperishable existence of the soul, regardless of the quality of living which is associated with it here on earth. If one is born but once (physically), he will die twice (physically and the second death), but if he is born twice (physically and spiritually) and faithfully lives the Christian life, he will die but once (physically).

Chapter Nine - Are the dead conscious?

Is the spirit of man in its disembodied state conscious or unconscious? What is the condition of the departed soul after death and before the resurrection of the body?

A. The Rich Man and Lazarus were conscious (**Lk 16:18-31**)

¹⁹ "There was a rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. ²⁰ And at his gate was laid a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, ²¹ who desired to be fed with what fell from the rich man's table. Moreover, even the dogs came and licked his sores. ²² The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham's side.^[a] The rich man also died and was buried, ²³ and in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side. ²⁴ And he called out, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in anguish in this flame.'²⁵ But Abraham said, 'Child, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner bad things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish. ²⁶ And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, in order that those who would pass from here to you may not be able, and none may cross from there to us.'²⁷ And he said, 'Then I beg you, father, to send him to my father's house—²⁸ for I have five brothers^[b]—so that he may warn them, lest they also come into this place of torment.'²⁹ But Abraham said, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.'³⁰ And he said, 'No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.'³¹ He said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead.'"

1. The soul lives after the body dies, in bliss or misery, according to the life lived upon the earth.

2. The departed soul remembers things as they knew them on earth. Memory is one of man's unique endowments. Lazarus recognized himself as did the rich man and the rich man recognized Lazarus. These facts teach us the preservation and perpetuation of personal identity in life beyond the grave.

3. Lessons taught by the account of Lazarus and the Rich Man.

a. There is a future life after physical death, an existence beyond the grave.

b. The dead still have a conscious existence. Souls are represented as living, talking, remembering, and being comforted or tormented after death.

c. The identity of self is preserved in the disembodied state. Every man who has died is at the time in full possession of all his faculties

d. The righteous and unrighteous are forever separated

with no change after death

e. Those who will not believe the testimony of Scripture would not be convinced by one if he returned from the dead then or today.

f. The wicked in conscious torment remember friends and loved ones on earth, are concerned about them, and would send missionaries to them if they could.

g. The sin of the Rich Man was misuse of his riches; the righteousness of Lazarus was in pleasing God. We are taught the right and wrong use of our material blessings and the eternal consequences of those uses.

h. We learn that each person is the arbiter of his own destiny; no one is preordained to spend eternity in heaven or hell.

i. When we die, we do not go directly to heaven or hell, but to Hades. The Lord is now in heaven **(Acts 1:9-11)**

⁹ And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. ¹⁰ And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, ¹¹ and said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."

j. The wicked are now under punishment **(2 Pet 2:9)** "then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials,^[a] and to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment,"

k. To depart and be with Christ is far better **(Phil 1:23-24)** "I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. ²⁴ But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account." (better beyond all expression, by far much better) **(Phil 1:21)** "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain" For the faithful child of God, death holds no pangs of remorse. He goes to be comforted, which is far better than living in his earthly body here.

B. Paul's account of the Third Heaven (**2 Cor 12:2-4**) "I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows. ³ And I know that this man was caught up into paradise—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows—⁴ and he heard things that cannot be told, which man may not utter." Although only God knows if Paul experienced the third heaven in spirit outside his earthly body or within it, the account proves that man may see, hear and understand, although out of his physical body.

C. The thief on the cross was conscious in Paradise with Christ (**Lk 23:43**) "And he said to him, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise." If the thief was going to be in a state of blank unconsciousness or non-existence, why would Jesus tell him?

D. The righteous dead are happy (**Rev 14:13**) "And I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." "Blessed indeed," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them!" This verse indicates immediate blessedness (happiness) for those who die "in the Lord."

It is an obvious fact that a person cannot experience happiness in an unconscious state. "Die in the Lord" implies two things are necessary to secure this blessing: (1) one must come into the Lord (**Gal 3:26-27**) and (2) must remain faithfully in Christ until physical death (**Rev 2:10**).

E. The righteous have "hope" in death (**Prov. 14:32**) "The wicked is driven away in his wickedness: but the righteous hath hope in his death." A person who is unconscious in death cannot experience desire or expectation.

F. The righteous are carried away by angels to rest (**Lk 16:22**) God will see that the righteous here on earth will not be left alone in death (**Psa 23:4**). Who can deny that ministering angels, unseen by human eyes, are sent from heaven to watch around the bed of the dying Christian and convey his ransomed spirit home to rest?

G. Death is a sleep (**John 11:11**)-The word "sleep" when used concerning physical death, always refers only to the body of a person, not to the spirit:

1. **(Dan 12:2)** "And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." We have already seen that at death only the physical body goes to the dust **(Eccl 12:7)**

2. **(Acts 7:60; 8:2)** "60And falling to his knees he cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." And when he had said this, he fell asleep. Devout men buried Stephen and made great lamentation over him." Stephen's body "fell asleep" and was buried, not his spirit.

3. **(Jas 2:26)** "The body apart from the spirit is dead"

Chapter Ten - Where are the dead?

We have seen thus far in our study of the afterlife that (1) man is a compound being: physical body and spiritual; (2) death is a separation of body and spirit; (3) the soul neither ceases to exist nor becomes unconscious between death and the resurrection; (4) souls of the righteous are happy immediately following death; (5) souls of the wicked are miserable immediately following death. The question now arises: Where do the souls go a death to await the resurrection?

The place prepared by the Lord where all disembodied spirits dwell between death and the resurrection is an intermediate abode called Hades. **(Lk 6:23)** "and in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side." The spirits of both the rich man and Lazarus were in Hades after they died. When man dies, the spirit goes to Hades, and the body goes to the grave. Hades is divided into two compartments: Paradise, the abode of the righteous, and Tartarus, the abode of the wicked. After the resurrection and judgment, righteous souls will leave Paradise and dwell in heaven; wicked souls will leave Tartarus and dwell in hell or Gehenna.

A. Hades (unseen or invisible world) is the realm of disembodied spirits—Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (Thayer) defines it as "the common receptacle of disembodied spirits" It is the realm of all disembodied spirits, both righteous and wicked, between death and the resurrection. The word "Hades" is mentioned ten times in the ASV translation and is never translated as "Hell"

B. Gehenna (hell) is the final abode of the wicked. This word is used twelve times in the ASV and is always translated as "Hell" Therefore; Gehenna is the designation of the place and state of just retribution for impenitent sinners after judgment...the place of final punishment.

C. Tartarus is the temporary abode of the wicked- **(2 Peter 2:4)**
"For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell (Tartarus) and committed them to chains^[b] of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment;" **(Jude 6)** also refers to Tartarus; "And the angels who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day-" Today the word "hell" is correctly applied to Gehenna, but not to Hades. Tartarus is not Gehenna. Tartarus is only the place of painful restraint, where the souls of the wicked are reserved to the final judgment.

D. There is a temporary place of rest in Hades-Paradise has always implied a state of happiness and comfort wherever it is used. Christ used the term to refer to the abode of the righteous spirits in Hades separated from the abode of the wicked in Hades by a great gulf **(Lk 16:26)** "And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, in order that those who would pass from here to you may not be able, and none may cross from there to us.'" Abraham's bosom is not heaven, but a figurative phrase expressing innermost communion **(Job 3:17)** "There the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary are at rest."

At the time of their death, Christ and the penitent thief were together in Paradise **(Lk 23:43)**. Their bodies were not together in the tomb, but their spirits were together in Paradise. Christ went to Hades **(Acts 2:27,31)** and Paradise, therefore Paradise is in Hades. Christ left Hades upon His resurrection and now sits at the right hand of God in heaven **(Acts 2:30-33)** "Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants on his throne,³¹ he foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption.³² This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses.

³³ Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing." We see Hades is not heaven, nor any part of the final abode of the righteous.

Although the spirit of Christ came from Hades when His body arose from the tomb, the soul of the thief yet remains in Hades, and will continue there until the resurrection of all the dead at the last day.

E. There is a place of torment in Hades—As we have seen, Hades is the temporary abode of all disembodied spirits between physical death and the resurrection and judgment. The righteous will abide in this blissful state until the resurrection at which time they will be greatly exalted to a higher state of being in heaven. The wicked are also in Hades, but in a different compartment, Tartarus, waiting in anguish for the resurrection and their final condemnation to eternal suffering in hell (Gehenna) fire. **(2 Peter 2:9)** "then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials, ^[a] and to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment,"

The punishment of the wicked after death but before resurrection and judgment is both severe and continuous, but there is a distinct difference in the mode and degree of punishment of Tartarus and Gehenna. The punishment of Tartarus is to the disembodied spirit, whereas the punishment of Gehenna is that of both the soul and the resurrected body **(Mt 10:28)** "And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell." The full degree of happiness or misery will come after the judgment in eternity when the righteous will be welcomed into heaven and the wicked cast into hell **(Mt 25:46)** "And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

F. Paradise-generally means "a pleasure garden, a place of delight" It is used in the Scriptures in three different senses:

1. Garden of Eden (Septuagint Version **Gen 2:8**; antitype **Rev 2:7**)

2. Place of rest for the righteous spirits after death **(Lk 23:43)**

3. Heaven **(Mt 25:46; Rev 22:1-5)**

As with numerous words in the Bible the correct meaning is dependent on the context in which the word or sense of the word is used.

Chapter Eleven-What is the state of the spirits in Hades?

The Bible does not tell us all we would like to know concerning the condition of souls in the spirit-realm. It does assure us that life continues after death and considers the completion of human destiny as taking place when soul and body are re-united in a future world, eternity after judgment. (1) Lazarus does not speak of his four days in Hades prior to his resurrection by Christ; (2) Paul does not mention what he saw I "the third heaven" we must be content with what God has seen best to reveal to us. We can be assured that the wonders and blessings for the righteous in eternity will far surpass the imaginations of the greatest minds on earth.

A. Do the dead see us?-God has not revealed much in the Scriptures about this subject, but we do know that the rich man remembered he had five unfaithful brothers on earth when he died, but no mention of their activities after he died.

(Ecc1 9:5-6) "For the living know that they will die, but the dead know nothing, and they have no more reward, for the memory of them is forgotten. ⁶ Their love and their hate and their envy have already perished, and forever they have no more share in all that is done under the sun." Death breaks all ties between the living and the dead. The dead no longer have any knowledge of what goes on here.

B. What is the form of the disembodied spirits?-God has not spoken directly on this question, but we do have some information on the subject: **(Mt 17:3-4)** "And behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him. ⁴ And Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good that we are here. If you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah." Here Peter, in some way, recognized Moses and Elijah. Christ represented the rich man recognizing Lazarus in Hades **(Lk 16:23)** People will be the same individuals in Hades as they were on earth. They will feel themselves to be a living continuation of the past. They will be conscious that they are themselves and not another. One's distinct individuality will survive in Hades and throughout all eternity.

C. Why is there suffering in Hades?-The Bible plainly says the rich man was in Hades and he was in anguish **(Lk 16:24)** Example: two men arrested and jailed for a murder; one knows he is innocent and the other knows he is guilty. Is the mental state of each man prior to trial and judgment different even though they are temporarily in the same condition? Even people on earth may have Paradise or Tartarus in their hearts **(Mark 6:16)** Herod Antipas. The rich man's memory of his misdeeds, lost opportunities, and the terrible condition of this brothers all brought torment in Hades. Everyone will remember their past lives at judgment **(Mt 25:34-45)** Memory retains things acquired in life; and in Hades, at the judgment, and in eternity, nothing will be forgotten. The torment memory in Hades and Hell surely will be as intense to the soul as material fire is to the quivering flesh.

The torment is not from an angry God meting out punishment **(Lk 16:25)** but rather the consequence of living sinfully in a moral universe.

D. Does death change one's condition?—The person who will find happiness in the hereafter is the one who has developed a delight in spiritual values during his earthly existence, and this development of spiritual character takes effort. The one prepared to enjoy the things God has promised the righteous is the one who now, in this life, enjoys the worship of God, the study of His will, and all things holy and righteous.

The old maxim, "Heaven is a prepared place for prepared people," is true **(Acts 1:25)** "to take the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place." to the surroundings and company that were appropriate to his conduct and interests on earth. At judgment every man will go to his own place, the place he himself has made certain by the choices and deeds of his life. **(Heb 5:9)** "And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him," **(Prov. 14:32)** "The wicked is overthrown through his evildoing, but the righteous finds refuge in his death." **(Eccl 11:3)** "...if a tree falls to the south or to the north, in the place where the tree falls, there it will lie."

E. What is the gulf in Hades?-It is not a chasm measured in feet or yards, but a moral separation-a division in character. A like gulf exists in this life: the two men in side-by-side jail cells; A co-worker or relative. The realization in Hades that one's choices in life led to this eternal state of remorse, sorrow and self-hate will be unfathomably painful

F. Why is the final judgment necessary? Since every soul in Hades knows where they will spend eternity, why a final judgment?

1. Those still living when time ends have not been assigned to bliss or misery; so they must be judged.

2. The degree of happiness or misery everyone will receive in soul and body for eternity has not yet been designated.

3. Righteousness must be displayed publicly that God may be glorified and Christ and the honor of His people vindicated. All men, even those who nailed Him to the cross, must see Him in all His glory. At the judgment, then, the justice of God will become evident.

4. The essence of judgment is exposure. Every deed which man has ever performed, every word he has ever spoken, every thought he has ever conceived, every ambition ever cherished, must be laid bare for himself and all to see. **(Rev 20:12)** "And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done." Take time to ponder the enormity of that personal revelation before every person who has ever existed from the beginning of mankind..

5. The consequences of one's works on earth will follow him to the judgment. **(Rev 14:13)** Only the final day of God's judgment can determine what the full extent of one's life has been. The Lord at that time will hold men responsible not only for the commission of their own deeds, but also for the consequences resulting from their deeds. **(Jere 17:10)** "I the LORD search the heart and test the mind, to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his deeds."

Chapter Twelve-What about Purgatory?-A theory that in Hades the souls make satisfaction by suffering for sins committed after baptism, the period of time depending on the degree of their guilt. Once they are purged, they then go to heaven. Those who hold to this theory believe the "Church" on earth has power by her prayers and sacrifices of mass to shorten these sufferings or remit them altogether. Prayers, money, and good works done by the living in behalf of those dead who are in purgatory will expedite their release. The idea of purgatory has no foundation in the Bible **(Lk 16:26)** "And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, in order that those who would pass from here to you may not be able, and none may cross from there to us."

A major aspect of this unscriptural theory is that the Pope and his subordinates have power over the unseen world to retain or remit sins of departed spirits. **Mt 16:19** is misused to support this theory. The same promise was later given to the other apostles **(Mt. 18:18)**. Peter never spoke of himself as the head of the church on earth nor exercised any authority over the other apostles. Peter's power was only declarative (Acts 2:36-38) He declared Christ's terms for pardon. The power to forgive sins is the exclusive prerogative of God **(Mark 2:7)** "Why does this man speak like that? He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

Another tenet of this false theory is the "invocation of saints" or praying for the dead—nowhere in the Bible did Christ or any inspired man tell the living they should pray for the dead, the souls in Hades. **(Rom 8:34)** "Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us."; **(Heb 7:25)** "Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost^[a] those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them."; **(1 Tim 2:5)** "For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man^[a] Christ Jesus,"

Chapter Thirteen—Is there a second chance?

If the lost were given another opportunity for repentance, would not this tend to nullify the purpose of this early life?

A. Christ preached to the spirits in prison **(1 Peter 3:18-20)**

"For Christ also suffered^[a] once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit, ¹⁹ in which^[b] he went and proclaimed^[c] to the spirits in prison, ²⁰ because^[d] they formerly did not obey, when God's patience waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through water."

The false interpretation of these verses runs counter to plain Bible teaching:

1. Why did Christ select the few of Noah's generation and neglect all others who died impenitent?

2. If all lost souls in Hades are given a chance to repent, why would anyone refuse? This would leave Gehenna (Hell) empty.

3. How does a second chance at salvation mesh with clear statements about the gulf between Paradise and Tartarus in Hades being fixed? (**Lk 16:26**)

4. How can God be "no respecter of persons" (**Acts 10:34**) and offer the post-mortem gospel to some and not others?

5. How do proponents of this theory squeeze in this "second chance into the following verse: (**Heb 9:27**) "And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment,"

B. The Gospel was preached to the dead (**1 Pet 4:6**) " For this is why the gospel was preached even to those who are dead, that though judged in the flesh the way people are, they might live in the spirit the way God does."

A simple review of the tense of verbs used here explains this passage. The gospel was (past tense) preached to them that are (present tense) dead. The people said to be dead were alive in the world at the time the gospel was preached to them, but dead when Peter wrote the epistle.

C. What about baptism for the dead (vicarious baptism)? (**1 Cor 15:29**) "Otherwise, what do people mean by being baptized on behalf of the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, why are people baptized on their behalf?"

1. The whole chapter to the Corinthians was for the purpose of assuring them that their dead loved ones will be raised in the resurrection of all mankind at the last day.

2. Verse 29 simply makes the argument that if the dead are not raised, why be baptized in preparation for death, since there is no resurrection to life after death?

3. This interpretation would contradict the many plain passages that teach personal responsibility for one's conduct, be it good or bad, at the day of judgment (**2 Cor 5:10**) " For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil."

D. Does the Bible teach reincarnation?-the rebirth of a departed soul in another body, human or animal.

1. The Bible teaches a resurrection of all the bodies of all people (**1 Cor 15:22**) "For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive," but reincarnation means living again on earth in a different physical body.

2. Reincarnation contradicts (**Heb 9:27**) "And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment," and is a chief doctrine of Hinduism and witchcraft.

Chapter Fourteen - Can the living communicate with the dead?

The unknown frightens man. So, regardless of the reasons, there are those who are eager to talk with departed spirits, to life the curtain and see things yet to come. As we shall see, God has long ago forbid men to enter into this sphere.

A. Divination - An attempt to obtain secret knowledge and foretell future events by means of signs, augurs, or the claimed influence of some spirit.

1. God forbade association with such false prophets (**Jere 27:9-10**) "So do not listen to your prophets, your diviners, your dreamers, your fortune-tellers, or your sorcerers, who are saying to you, 'You shall not serve the king of Babylon.' ¹⁰ For it is a lie that they are prophesying to you, with the result that you will be removed far from your land, and I will drive you out, and you will perish."

2. God made it abundantly clear only He had the power to foretell the future (**Isa 46:9-10**) "remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from

ancient times things not yet done, saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose,'"

B. Witchcraft - The power of a person to possess supernatural or magical powers by contact with evil spirits.

In every form of witchcraft there was an appeal to a power not acting in subordination to divine law (**Ex 22:18**) "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live." (KJV)

C. Sorcery - a pretended familiarity with the spirits of the dead and was originally an attempt to foresee and foretell the future by using incantations (*a series of word said as a magic spell or charm*) or magical formulas.

D. Wizardry - A soothsayer, magician, or one possessed with a spirit of divination who claimed to know the secrets of the unseen world and pretended to have the ability to converse with the spirits of the dead; today often called a "a spirit medium." (**Lev 20:27**) "A man also or woman that hath a familiar spirit, or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to death: they shall stone them with stones: their blood shall be upon them."

E. Familiar spirits - Mediums who supposedly had an invisible spirit, subject to their call, who would inspire them when they sought his direction. **(Lev 19:31)** "Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards, to be defiled by them: I am the LORD your God."

F. Necromancy - A necromancer was one who had a familiar spirit, a person who was supposed to have power to call up the spirits of the dead to learn of them things respecting future events. **(Deut 18:10-12)** "There shall not be found among you anyone who burns his son or his daughter as an offering, ^[a] anyone who practices divination or tells fortunes or interprets omens, or a sorcerer ¹¹ or a charmer or a medium or a necromancer or one who inquires of the dead, ¹² for whoever does these things is an abomination to the LORD. And because of these abominations the LORD your God is driving them out before you."

G. Sorcery in the New Testament **(Acts 8:9-24)** " But there was a man named Simon, who had previously practiced magic in the city and amazed the people of Samaria, saying that he himself was somebody great. ¹⁰ They all paid attention to him, from the least to the greatest, saying, "This man is the power of God that is called Great." ¹¹ And they paid attention to him because for a long time he had amazed them with his magic. ¹² But when they believed Philip as he preached good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. ¹³ Even Simon himself believed, and after being baptized he continued with Philip. And seeing signs and great miracles [\[b\]](#) performed, he was amazed.¹⁴ Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John, ¹⁵ who came down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit, ¹⁶ for he had not yet fallen on any of them, but they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ¹⁷ Then they laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit. ¹⁸ Now when Simon saw that the Spirit was given through the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money, ¹⁹ saying, "Give me this power also, so that anyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit."

²⁰ But Peter said to him, "May your silver perish with you, because you thought you could obtain the gift of God with money!

²¹ You have neither part nor lot in this matter, for your heart is not right before God. ²² Repent, therefore, of this wickedness of yours, and pray to the Lord that, if possible, the intent of your heart may be forgiven you. ²³ For I see that you are in the gall^[c] of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity."

²⁴ And Simon answered, "Pray for me to the Lord, that nothing of what you have said may come upon me."

1. **(Gal 5:19-21)** "Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, ²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, ²¹ envy, ^[a] drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God."

2. **(Rev 21:8)** "But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death."

3. (**Rev 22:15**) "Outside are the dogs and sorcerers and the sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood."

4. From these passages in both Testaments, it must be reasoned that Satan is the author of this unholy system of sorcery. Now, since God has given His Word, which is sufficient for instruction (**2 Tim 3:16,17**), man ought not seek more knowledge by forbidden methods.

H. Demon possession today?-God allowed Satan to exhibit an unusual amount of influence during the first century, but Jesus would destroy the works of the devil (**Lk 10:17-19**) "The seventy-two returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name!" ¹⁸ And he said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. ¹⁹ Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you."

When the Lord ascended to heaven He gave the necessary gifts for the early church to deal with cases of demon possession (**Acts 19:13-16**) "Then some of the itinerant Jewish exorcists undertook to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, "I adjure you by the Jesus whom Paul proclaims." ¹⁴ Seven sons of a Jewish high priest named Sceva were doing this. ¹⁵ But the evil spirit answered them, "Jesus I know, and Paul I recognize, but who are you?" ¹⁶ And the man in whom was the evil spirit leaped on them, mastered all^[a] of them and overpowered them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded." God permitted the spirits of wicked men to exit the Hadean realm to possess some people on earth; with the passing of the apostles, passed also the age of demon possession. (**Zech 13:2**) "And on that day, declares the LORD of hosts, I will cut off the names of the idols from the land, so that they shall be remembered no more. And also I will remove from the land the prophets and the spirit of uncleanness. (**1 John 3:8**) "Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil."

Chapter Fifteen - Will Jesus come again?

The second coming of Christ is an unquestionably established promise of the Bible (**John 14:2-3**) "In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?^[a] ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. (**Heb 9:28**) "so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him."

We also know that when He does come again it will signal the end of time (**1 Cor 15:24**) "Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power."

A. How will the Lord return?

1. He will NOT come quietly (**2 Thes 1:7-8**) "and to grant relief to you who are afflicted as well as to us, when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels ⁸ in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus."

For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first."

2. He will be visible to all (**Rev 1:7**) "Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail^[a] on account of him. Even so. Amen."

3. He will come suddenly, without immediate warning (**2 Pet 3:10**) "But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies^[a] will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed."

B. When will He return?

1. (**Deut 29:29**) ""The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law." (**Mk 13:32**) "But concerning that day or that hour, no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father."

2. The world's business will be going on as usual, with many unprepared **(Mt. 24:37-39)** "For as were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. ³⁸ For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, ³⁹ and they were unaware until the flood came and swept them all away, so will be the coming of the Son of Man."

3. We have been given fair warning **(Mt 24:44)** "Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."

C. Christ's language in Matthew 24 is often misapplied. He carefully answered two different questions from His apostles:

1. When will the overthrow of Jerusalem and the destruction of the temple occur? **(Mt 24:4-28)**

2. What shall be the sign of His return and the end of the world? **(Mt 24:36-51)**

3. **(Mt 24:29-35)** are transitional in nature

4. Jesus divided the future into two distinct periods in His response: (1) from the time of this discourse to the destruction of Jerusalem; (2) from this destruction to the His second coming and the end of the world.

D. What will happen when Jesus comes?

1. The world will end and the earth will be burned up with all the works it contains (**2 Pet 3:7-10**) "But by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.⁸ But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. ⁹ The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, ^[a] not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. ¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies ^[b] will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed."

2. There will be the simultaneous resurrection of all mankind, both the good and the bad (**John 5:28-29**) "Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice ²⁹ and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment."

3. There will be the final judgment (**Mt 25:31-32**) ""When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. ³² Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. (**Rev 20:11-12**) "Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them. ¹² And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done."

Chapter Sixteen - Will the body be raised?

History has shown us that man has always believed he was made to live in a higher and nobler existence than this earth-life. Why is there this universal longing for life beyond the grave? Surely it was implanted by our Creator.

A. Jesus taught the resurrection of the body (**John 5:28-29**) "Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice ²⁹ and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment."

B. The apostles taught the resurrection (**1 Cor 6:14**) "And God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by his power."

C. Old Testament writers mentioned the resurrection (**Psa 17:15**) "As for me, I shall behold your face in righteousness; when I awake, I shall be satisfied with your likeness."

D. Only the body will be raised-Only our body dies, our spirit, at physical death, goes to God (**Eccl 12:7**). Jesus will bring the spirits when He comes again (**1 Thes 4:14-16**) "For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁵ For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord,^[a] that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first."

E. Jesus' resurrection is pledge and proof of man's resurrection (**John 14:9**) "Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live."
(**John 11:25**) "Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life.^[a] Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live"

F. The resurrection body will be different-This body will be suitable for the eternal realm, retaining its identity, but greatly changed (ugly caterpillar to beautiful butterfly) Change does not destroy continuity.

G. Our resurrected body will be a glorious body **(1 Cor 15:42-44)**

"So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable. ⁴³ It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. ⁴⁴ It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body." Our resurrected body will retain its identity and integrity but will be the same only in the sense that it will have sprung from that buried body (acorn > oak tree)

1. Present body - corruptible, subject to death/decay;
future body - incorruptible, deathless, never decay

2. Present body - sown in dishonor, seat of passions and lusts; future body - glorious, deserving of honor and praise, purged of everything low and vile.

3. Present body - sown in weakness, liable to disease, sickness and death; future body - powerful, unfailing vigor, capable of unwearying activity.

4. Present body - sown a natural or animal body fitted for this life; future body - spiritual, suited for our spirit and the eternal realm

* The Bible does not describe the resurrection-body of unbelievers??

H. Our resurrected bodies will be like Christ's body (**Phil 3:21**) "who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself."

I. It will be the same spirit or person that once dwelt in the earthly body that shall be in the raised body. We will rejoice to re-enter our old bodies, so completely repaired and highly improved-vigorous, incorruptible, and immortal. We shall never again fear pain, sorrow or death

Chapter Seventeen - What about the Judgment?

Some say "nothing is certain except death and taxes." We can add the Judgment to that phrase (**Rom 14:10-12**) "Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God; ¹¹ for it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess^[a] to God."¹² So then each of us will give an account of himself to God."

A. Absolute justice cannot exist in this world because those who write, interpret, and pass judgement on laws are imperfect in every aspect of their being. **(Gen 18:25)** "Far be it from you to do such a thing, to put the righteous to death with the wicked, so that the righteous fare as the wicked! Far be that from you! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do what is just?"

B. Christ will be the judge **(John 5:22)** "The Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son," **(Acts 17:31)** "because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead." **(Mt 25:31-46)**

C. Man will be judged by deeds, words, and thoughts **(Ecc1 12:14)** "For God will bring every deed into judgment, with^[a] every secret thing, whether good or evil." **(Mt 12:36-37)** "I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak, ³⁷ for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned."

D. Christ is the perfect judge (**John 2:24-25**) "But Jesus on his part did not entrust himself to them, because he knew all people²⁵ and needed no one to bear witness about man, for he himself knew what was in man." (**Heb 4:15**) "For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin."

E. In reality, what will be judged on the Last Day, will be man's faith in Jesus Christ made known by his obedience to the Lord's will in accordance with his ability and opportunities (**Eph 2:8-9**) "For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast."; (**Mt 7:21-23**) "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.²² On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?'²³ And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'" "

F. All men will be judged impartially by God's Word (**Acts 10:34-35**) "So Peter opened his mouth and said: "Truly I understand that God shows no partiality,³⁵ but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him."; (**John 12:48**) "The one who rejects me and does not receive my words has a judge; the word that I have spoken will judge him on the last day."

G. All should prepare now for the judgment (**Amos 4:12**)
"Therefore thus I will do to you, O Israel; because I will do this to you, prepare to meet your God, O Israel!"

H. Judgment on the last day-Many people have misconceptions about the quality and timing of events relating to judgment and final reward or punishment:

1. Nowhere does the Bible state that the righteous will received their eternal reward or the wicked their eternal punishment at death (**Heb 9:27**) "And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment," (**Mt 16:27**) "For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done."

2. The righteous will NOT enter into full realization of their everlasting joy immediately at death, independently of their resurrection-bodies. Before a man's spirit re-inhabits his glorified body, he remains in an imperfect condition incapable of experiencing salvation in the highest and fullest sense. The Bible always represents the final states of both good and evil as lying beyond the resurrection and judgment.

Chapter Eighteen-When will the spirits leave Hades?

A. Christ has the keys-When Christ appeared to John on Patmos, He said, "I was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of death and Hades" (**Rev 1:18**). This means that Jesus has the power over death (dead bodies) and Hades (over the spirits in their disembodied state). Jesus has this power because He conquered death and Satan (**2 Tim 1:10**) "and which now has been manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel," (**John 12:31**) "Now is the judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out." Jesus will use this power at the end of time to raise all dead bodies and release all spirits from Hades.

(**John 5:28-29**) "Do not marvel at this, for an hour is come when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice ²⁹ and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment." At this time death and Hades will be abolished (**Rev 20:13-14**) "And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. ¹⁴ Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire."

B. The present state of all disembodied spirits is an incomplete or imperfect one (**Heb 11:39-40**) " And all these, though commended through their faith, did not receive what was promised, ⁴⁰ since God had provided something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect."

C. Jesus will come for His disciples at the end of time when the righteous spirits have been released from Hades and re-inhabit their glorified bodies fit for heaven (**John 14:3**) "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also."

D. God's established order is that neither the righteous nor the wicked enter their final abode at death. The Bible teaches that all people go to Hades at death and will remain there until the resurrection and judgment. This intermediate state is temporary, constituting neither the ultimate bliss of the saved nor the ultimate doom of the lost. Final reward or punishment cannot be rendered with the reunion of body and spirit.

Chapter Nineteen - How are the righteous dead with the Lord?

This chapter will address the erroneous belief of some that today the righteous souls go immediately to heaven at death. Hades exists today only for the wicked.

A. Our character is formed in this life

True, but **2 Cor 5:10** clearly states that God will judge every man by his works and the influences he has exerted (**Rev 14:13**) "for their works will follow with them." The design of the judgment is the public declaration of God's righteous judgment and the Lord has declared that all men will be present for this final judgment. *The Christian will be openly acknowledged in the day of judgment - just as he openly acknowledged Christ during his life*

(Mt 10:32-33) "So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven, but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven."

B. The righteous dead are happy with the Lord - **(2 Cor 5:8)**

"Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord."

The proper interpretation of this scripture is that the departing righteous person goes into the care and keeping of the Lord, not that the spirit goes immediately to its eternal reward in heaven where Christ resides. Paul did not expect at death to go immediately to his eternal reward **(2 Tim 4:8)** "Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing." Peter on his Pentecost sermon said "for David did not ascend into the heavens" **(Acts 2:34)**

C. Paradise refers to heaven - (**2 Cor 12:2-4**) "know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows.
³ And I know that this man was caught up into paradise—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows— ⁴ and he heard things that cannot be told, which man may not utter."

As we previously discussed, this Persian word primarily means "a garden, a pleasure garden, or a park." The word is used in Scripture in three different senses:

1. The Garden of Eden - **Gen 2:8ff**
2. Place of rest for righteous spirits after death - **Lk 16:22**
3. Heaven - **Rev 2:7**

D. Destruction of Jerusalem, A.D. 70 - Jesus came back and judged the world and since then righteous souls at their death go immediately to heaven.

There is no Scripture that support this theory. If it were true, God would bring them out of heaven, take them to judgment, then send them back to heaven, where they have been since the time of their death - God is not frivolous!

Chapter Twenty - What about the Millennium?

The word *premillennialism* (pre "before, mille "a thousand," annus "a year," ism "a belief") is used to designate the supposed reign of Christ for a thousand years on this earth before the end of time. Following the one thousand year period, Satan will be loosed for a little season. After Satan's brief release, the wicked will be judged, and that will be the end of time.

Hence, *premillennialism* is the doctrine that the second coming of Christ precedes the millennium, and the millennium means the thousand-year reign of Christ on this earth after His second coming.

Proof-Text? (**Rev 20:1-7**) "Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the bottomless pit^[a] and a great chain. ² And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, ³ and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he might not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were ended. After that he must be released for a little while. ⁴ Then I saw thrones, and seated on them were those to whom the authority to judge was committed.

Also I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. ⁵ The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended. This is the first resurrection. ⁶ Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a thousand years. ⁷ And when the thousand years are ended, Satan will be released from his prison”

*All reasonable scholars agree that the language of Revelation is highly figurative. To interpret certain verses as literal one must be completely certain that this interpretation does not conflict with any plain teaching in the Bible on that subject in question.

A. What Revelation 20 does not teach

1. The Scripture does not mention the second coming of Christ. **(v.1)** *"I saw an angel coming down out of heaven"*

2. The Scripture does not mention a bodily resurrection. **(v.4)** *"I saw the souls",* not bodies.

3. The Scripture does not mention a reign on earth. **(v.4)** *"I saw thrones, and they sat upon them..and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."* John did not say they lived and reigned with Christ ON THE EARTH a thousand years. The phrase, "on the earth" is not even in the text.

4. The Scripture does not mention all the righteous. **(v.4)** *"souls of them that had been beheaded"*

5. The Scripture does not mention Christ on earth. There is no statement that Christ is on earth or any Scripture which teaches that Christ will ever set foot on the earth again.

6. The Scripture does not mention Jerusalem as the capital city, with Christ as King.

7. The Scripture does not mention the length of Christ's reign, only that the souls of martyrs lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

8. The entire book of Revelation abounds with symbols (**Rev 1:1**) "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants—things which must shortly take place. And He sent and *signified (sign-i-fied) it* by His angel to His servant John," Premillennialists insist upon a literal interpretation only when it is useful to maintain their theory.

B. The theory contradicts the Bible

1. Two bodily resurrections - the theory makes two future bodily resurrections, separated by a thousand years. The Bible teaches but one resurrection of all souls (**John 5:28-29**) "Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice ²⁹ and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment."

2. Righteous raised a thousand years before the last day, whereas the Scriptures teach that the righteous will be raised at "the last day." (**John 6:40**) "For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day."

3. A future earthly kingdom - The kingdom of Christ will be on earth and at some point in the future. The church and the kingdom of Christ on earth are one in the same (**Mt 16:18-19**) "Upon this rock I will build my church..I will give unto thee the keys to the kingdom of heaven" Both started at the same time, Pentecost. Premillennialism makes Christ king over a material kingdom, not a spiritual kingdom as shown in Scripture (**John 18:36**) "Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world."

C. Summary

1. Satan is bound by the influence of God's Word. People are free to obey Christ if they so desire. Satan is limited in his power to persecute Christians and influence non-Christians, but he does persecute some today. (**Mt 12:29**) "Or how can someone enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? Then indeed he may plunder his house."

2. There is no time between the resurrection of the righteous at the last day and the resurrection and judgment of the wicked. (**2 Thes 1:7**) "and to grant relief to you who are afflicted as well as to us, when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels"

3. There are no multiple comings of the Lord. All passages referring to the Lord's second coming, the event is always singular-coming, not comings. There is just one future personal coming of Christ (**Heb 9:28**) "so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him."

Chapter Twenty-one - What about the battle of Armageddon?

Premillennialists believe this battle will take place just before the second phase of the second coming of Christ and when He comes He will end the battle and set up His universal material kingdom.

There is no evidence that this language is anything but symbolic indicating that in the final struggle the forces of good will prevail.

We are well aware that the church is locked in a life-and-death spiritual struggle with Satan **(2 Cor 10:3-5)** "For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. ⁴ For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. ⁵ We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ,"

Victory is assured **(Rev 17:14)** "They will make war on the Lamb, and the Lamb will conquer them, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those with him are called and chosen and faithful." **(Rev 12:11)** "And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death."

Chapter Twenty-two - What about the Jews?

Premillennialists usually advocate the return of the Jews to Palestine and their conversion to Christianity just prior to the Lord's coming and the end of time. Is this what the Bible teaches?

A. The Jews have returned to Palestine

1. God promised the land of Canaan to the Jews (**Gen 12:7; 13:15**) "Then the LORD appeared to Abram and said, "To your offspring I will give this land." So he built there an altar to the LORD, who had appeared to him." "for all the land that you see I will give to you and to your offspring forever"

2. God delivered on that promise (**Joshua 21:43,45**)" Thus the LORD gave to Israel all the land that he swore to give to their fathers. And they took possession of it, and they settled there." "Not one word of all the good promises that the LORD had made to the house of Israel had failed; all came to pass."

3. God's promise was plainly conditional (**Deut 4:25-27**)"
²⁵ "When you father children and children's children, and have grown old in the land, if you act corruptly by making a carved image in the form of anything, and by doing what is evil in the sight of the LORD your God, so as to provoke him to anger, ²⁶ I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that you will soon utterly perish from the land that you are going over the Jordan to possess. You will not live long in it, but will be utterly destroyed. ²⁷ And the LORD will scatter you among the peoples, and you will be left few in number among the nations where the LORD will drive you."

4. Israel sinned and were removed from the land (**2 Kings 17:1-23**)

5. God promised Israel would return to their land (**Jere 30:1-3**) "The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD: ² "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Write in a book all the words that I have spoken to you. ³ For behold, days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will restore the fortunes of my people, Israel and Judah, says the LORD, and I will bring them back to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall take possession of it."

6. God's promise was fulfilled when the Jews returned from their Assyrian and Babylonian captivity (**Ezra 1:1-4**) "In the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom and also put it in writing: ² "Thus says Cyrus king of Persia: The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he has charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. ³ Whoever is among you of all his people, may his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and rebuild the house of the LORD, the God of Israel—he is the God who is in Jerusalem. ⁴ And let each survivor, in whatever place he sojourns, be assisted by the men of his place with silver and gold, with goods and with beasts, besides freewill offerings for the house of God that is in Jerusalem."

7. There are now no unfulfilled prophecies for the Jews of any future temporal blessings in Palestine or any other country (**Jere 19:11**) "and shall say to them, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts: So will I break this people and this city, as one breaks a potter's vessel, so that it can never be mended. Men shall bury in Topheth because there will be no place else to bury.

8. The establishment of the state of Israel in 1948 was not the fulfillment of any Biblical prophecy and it did not include all of Palestine. The Jews have no divine right to Palestine today.

B. True Israelites Today

1. God no longer deals with Jews as a "chosen people", but as individuals to whom salvation is offered by faith in Christ.

2. God's children in this Christian Age are not fleshly Israelites, but spiritual Israelites, regardless of race or color. (**Rom 10:11-13**) "For the Scripture says, "Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame." ¹² For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him. ¹³ For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

3. Paul identified the house of Israel today (**Phil 3:3**)
"For we are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God.
Know then that it is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham.
and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh—";
(**Rom 9:6-7**) "But it is not as though the word of God has failed.
For not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel, ⁷ and
not all are children of Abraham because they are his offspring,
but "Through Isaac shall your offspring be named."; (**Gal 3:7**)
"Know then that it is those of faith who are the sons of
Abraham."

4. **Rom 11:26** "And so all Israel will be saved.." NKJV. The
ESV translation is a more accurate rendering "And in this way
all Israel will be saved.." ESV. The only way Israel can be
saved is to accept Christ individually through a living,
obedient faith.

Chapter Twenty-Three - Will Hell be Eternal Punishment?

Final retribution begins on the last day, and not at death or in death. The wicked, in body and soul, will be sent to hell after Judgment (**Mt. 10:28**) "And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell." (**John 5:28-29**). " Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice ²⁹ and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment. This is the second death (**Rev 20:14**)" Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death," the first being the separation of body and spirit at physical death.

A. Great suffering in hell - (**Mt 5:22**)" But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, 'You fool!' will be liable to the hell^[e] of fire." (**Mt 13:49-50**)"So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous ⁵⁰ and throw them into the fiery furnace. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Eternal punishment for the wicked is a prominent doctrine of Christ Himself. Anyone who asserts the wicked will not be punished slanders the Word of God!

B. Suffering for the wicked begins immediately after death - (**Lk 16:19-31**) "There was a rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. ²⁰ And at his gate was laid a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, ²¹ who desired to be fed with what fell from the rich man's table. Moreover, even the dogs came and licked his sores. ²² The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham's side. ^[a] The rich man also died and was buried, ²³ and in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side. ²⁴ And he called out, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in anguish in this flame.'²⁵ But Abraham said, 'Child, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner bad things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish. ²⁶ And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, in order that those who would pass from here to you may not be able, and none may cross from there to us.'

²⁷ And he said, 'Then I beg you, father, to send him to my father's house— ²⁸ for I have five brothers—so that he may warn them, lest they also come into this place of torment.' ²⁹ But Abraham said, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.' ³⁰ And he said, 'No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.' ³¹ He said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead.'"

but eternal punishment in hell (Gehenna) follows man's final sentence at judgment (**Rev 14:11**)" And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever, and they have no rest, day or night, these worshipers of the beast and its image, and whoever receives the mark of its name."

C. Eternal - Punishment of the wicked will last exactly as long as the happiness of the righteous (**Mt 25:46**) "And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life." The same Greek word "aionios" meaning unending or age-lasting is used to describe both groups.

D. Others speak - Paul (**2 Thes 1:9**) " They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might,"; Daniel (**Dan 12:2**) "And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."; Jude (**Jude 7,13**) "just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, which likewise indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural desire, serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire. "wild waves of the sea, casting up the foam of their own shame; wandering stars, for whom the gloom of utter darkness has been reserved forever."; and Peter (**2 Pet 2:13**) " suffering wrong as the wage for their wrongdoing. They count it pleasure to revel in the daytime. They are blots and blemishes, reveling in their deceptions,^[a] while they feast with you."

E. Valley of Hinnom - Gehenna at first literally referred to a valley southeast of Jerusalem where refuse burned continuously (**2 Chron 28:3**) This valley contained dry and wet refuse; the dry burned incessantly and the wet (discarded meat, rags, etc.) seethed with indescribable worms (**Mk 9:47-49**) " And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into hell, ..

⁴⁸ 'where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched.' ⁴⁹ For everyone will be salted with fire." This is figurative language used by Christ. Fire represents the intensity of suffering. There will be no literal body to be affected by fire or worms in hell, but one's mental faculties will be retained. The fire depicts the internal and spiritual suffering from the soul's sense of wrong. Surely no human language can describe the horrors that will be in hell!

F. The inhabitants of hell - Hell was not originally intended for man (**Mt 25:41**) "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.'" but the occupants will be the wicked of all ages. When man chooses to violate divine law, he must suffer the consequences (**Ezk 18:20**)" The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not suffer for the iniquity of the father, nor the father suffer for the iniquity of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself."

G. A loving God - (**1 John 4:8**) "Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love." A just God (**Gen 18:25**) "Far be it from you to do such a thing, to put the righteous to death with the wicked, so that the righteous fare as the wicked! Far be that from you! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do what is just?" There is no contradiction between the love of God and the wrath of God (**Rom 11:22**) "Note then the kindness and the severity of God: severity toward those who have fallen, but God's kindness to you, provided you continue in his kindness. Otherwise you too will be cut off."

If God did not punish the wicked, His love for us would be meaningless and His required obedience hypocritical.

H. Everyone will reap what he sows - (**Gal 6:7-8**) "Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap. ⁸ For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life." God is no respecter of persons (**Acts 10:34**) if some are eternally lost it will be the doom they have deliberately chosen in spite of God's warnings to save them from it. Man's destiny in eternity will result from his character made in this life.

He will go to hell of his own accord, and because his character is suited for that place (**Acts 1:25**)" to take the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place."

A soul in love with sin can find no restful place in a holy heaven. The quality of character will be the same after death as it was before.

I. Sin must be punished - Every law has its penalty, else it is no law. If God failed to punish those whom He has said He would punish, we would have no assurance He will bless those whom He has said he would bless.

J. There will be a day of reckoning for every transgressor of God's law - (**Jude 14-15**) "It was also about these that Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying, "Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of his holy ones, ¹⁵ to execute judgment on all and to convict all the ungodly of all their deeds of ungodliness that they have committed in such an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things that ungodly sinners have spoken against him."

(**2 Thes 1:7-9**)" and to grant relief to you who are afflicted as well as to us, when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels ⁸ in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. ⁹ They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from^[a] the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might,"

K. The fear of hell - God intended fear to be a factor in inhibiting sin - (**Rom 2:4-5**) " Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance? ⁵ But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed. God would have all men to be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth," (**1 Tim 2:4**)" who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth." but if one is determined to go to hell, God will not stop him.

L. Degrees of punishment - Scriptures teach this principle:

1. Each person will be rewarded according to his works. Misery in the future world is always represented as a direct result and consequence of this life. This life and the future life are connected like cause and effect - like sowing and reaping (**Rom 2:5-11**)" But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed. ⁶ He will render to each one according to his works: ⁷ to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life; ⁸ but for those who are self-seeking^[a] and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury. ⁹ There will be tribulation and distress for every human being who does evil, the Jew first and also the Greek, ¹⁰ but glory and honor and peace for everyone who does good, the Jew first and also the Greek. ¹¹ For God shows no partiality." (**2 Cor 5:10**)"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil."

At judgment man will have a different body but he will be the same being-retaining the consciousness of all that he participated in while here on earth. Just as sinners on earth are not equal in character, neither will they be in hell.

2. Jesus talked about "greater condemnation" (**Mk 12:38-40**) "And in his teaching he said, "Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes and like greetings in the marketplaces ³⁹ and have the best seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at feasts, ⁴⁰ who devour widows' houses and for a pretense make long prayers. They will receive the greater condemnation." The word "greater" is comparative; greater condemnation means more severe punishment. There is a difference between not know God's law and knowing it and not obeying it. (**Acts 17:30**)" The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent," (**Num 15:27-31**) "If one person sins unintentionally, he shall offer a female goat a year old for a sin offering. ²⁸ And the priest shall make atonement before the LORD for the person who makes a mistake, when he sins unintentionally, to make atonement for him, and he shall be forgiven. ²⁹ You shall have one law for him who does anything unintentionally, for him who is native among the people of Israel and for the stranger who sojourns among them...

But the person who does anything with a high hand, whether he is native or a sojourner, reviles the LORD, and that person shall be cut off from among his people. ³¹ Because he has despised the word of the LORD and has broken his commandment, that person shall be utterly cut off; his iniquity shall be on him." Degrees of punishment, due to greater or lesser opportunities to know the truth is suggested by Christ in His analogy of the two servants (**Lk 12:47-48**) "And that servant who knew his master's will but did not get ready or act according to his will, will receive a severe beating. ⁴⁸ But the one who did not know, and did what deserved a beating, will receive a light beating. Everyone to whom much was given, of him much will be required, and from him to whom they entrusted much, they will demand the more." Jesus makes another comparison in **Mt 10:14-15** "And if anyone will not receive you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet when you leave that house or town. ¹⁵ Truly, I say to you, it will be more bearable on the day of judgment for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah than for that town."

The phrase "more bearable" means "more easily borne."

M. How long eternity? The time from creation to the end of the world is a mere fragment of eternity, a break between eternity past and eternity future. Soon-God only knows when-time will be no more, and only eternity will remain.

Chapter Twenty-four - Will the wicked be annihilated?

Annihilationists believe those in Christ will be saved and become immortal, but the wicked will cease to be (be annihilated) both in body and spirit at the resurrection and judgment. This theory, although comforting to the wicked, must be rejected as false for a number of reasons:

A. Death is not non-existence -

1. As we have previously studied, death means a physical or spiritual separation

2. (**Gen 2:17**) *"but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat^[a] of it you shall surely die."* The "death" threatened here was spiritual, loss of God's favor and it fell on the transgressors that day.

3. The terms *life* and *death* are used metaphorically in the Bible to indicate conditions of existence.

4. Eternal life is NOT a synonym for immortality; it is a "gift from God" to those who already have a conscious, eternal existence and it can never be possessed by the wicked (**Rom 6:23**) *"For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

5. Literal death involves separation of soul and body; figuratively, death involves separation of the individual from God, and the second death means eternal separation from the fullness of joy which those in possession of eternal life experience in heaven

6. The second death, is a symbolic way of speaking of eternal punishment, it does not mean eternal non-existence

7. Since only the body dies in a literal sense, death of the soul in hell can be affirmed only in a moral and figurative sense.

B. Eternal punishment -

1. Suggests the idea of suffering while there is a living being to feel it. Pain and suffering implies a conscious subject, and if the person does not exist, he cannot be punished.

2. The same Greek word, "aionios" is used to describe the joys of the righteous and the torments of the wicked, yet no one argues that the blessedness of the righteous will cease after a term of years, because the Bible declares it is eternal.

3. Annihilationists consider the sinner's non-existence to be eternal punishment because it continues forever. It cannot be punishment since the wicked are not conscious to endure it.

4. The Lord affirmed that the misery of the wicked will be as durable as the joys of the righteous (**Mt 25:46**) " *And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.*"

C. Degrees of punishment - As we have previously studied, the Bible clearly teaches there will be degrees of punishment for the wicked. The annihilated could not experience weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth. If annihilation was the eternal punishment, the wicked have little to fear after the judgment.

D. According to annihilationists there is no difference between the state of the sinner at physical death and after the resurrection. If this is the case a wicked spirit would be blotted out of existence at death then brought back into existence at the resurrection only to be blotted out of existence again at the judgment. God is not the author of confusion (**1 Cor 14:33**)

E. Righteous punished - Annihilationists consign the souls of the righteous to the same non-existence at death, awaiting the resurrection, as the wicked will suffer after the final judgment. Lazarus and the Rich Man would surely disagree (**Lk 16**)

F. Encourages unrighteous living - Sinners know everyone is going to die, if they will, at some point in the future simply "cease to be" what positive or negative incentive do they have to live a righteous life here on earth? (**1 Cor 15:32**) *"What do I gain if, humanly speaking, I fought with beasts at Ephesus? If the dead are not raised, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die."* Christ stated in **Mt 26:24** that because of the terrible doom awaiting Judas it would have been better if he had not been born. If he will simply cease to exist after death his future condition is no different than his condition before he was born.

G. Wicked burned up - Annihilationists misinterpret **Malachi 4:1-3** *"For behold, the day is coming, burning like an oven, when all the arrogant and all evildoers will be stubble. The day that is coming shall set them ablaze, says the LORD of hosts, so that it will leave them neither root nor branch. ² But for you who fear my name, the sun of righteousness shall rise with healing in its wings. You shall go out leaping like calves from the stall. ³ And you shall tread down the wicked, for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet, on the day when I act, says the LORD of hosts."* to mean "burned up" equates with being put out of existence. Our souls are not combustible material that God's wrath will decompose to punish us. According to the First Law of Thermodynamics burning annihilates nothing, but merely changes its elemental form and it continues to exist.

H. Other figures of speech - Annihilationists misinterpret words such as *hewn down, devoured, consumed, destroyed, perish, cut off, damned, and lost* to support their theory. None of these words denote annihilation. (**Ex 10:7**) KJV; "*And Pharaoh's servants said unto him, How long shall this man be a snare unto us? let the men go, that they may serve the LORD their God: knowest thou not yet that Egypt is destroyed?*" (**Job 19:10**) KJV; "*He hath destroyed me on every side, and I am gone: and mine hope hath he removed like a tree.*" (**Gal 5:15**) KJV. "*But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.*"

Chapter Twenty-five - Will any infants be lost?

A. Not born in sin - The theory of "original sin" states that all children are born with the taint of Adam's sin through inheritance and because of this depravity all infants should be baptized as soon as soon as possible. The Bible in no way teaches such falsehood:

1. (**Ezk 18:20**) "*The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not suffer for the iniquity of the father, nor the father suffer for the iniquity of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself.*"

2. Sin is an act **(1 John 3:4)** *"Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness; sin is lawlessness."* **(Isa 59:2)** *"but your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear."* **(Eph 2:1)** *"And you were dead in the trespasses and sins"*

3. Although men inherit the consequences of Adam's sin - physical death - they do not inherit sin. **(1 Cor 15:22)** *"For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive."*

4. The Scriptures clearly teach that infants are born pure and innocent **(Mt 19:14)** KJV *"But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven."*

B. Infant baptism? - According to Scripture, baptism must be preceded by teaching, hearing, faith, repentance, and confession of faith in Christ as the Son of God.

1. Making disciples requires teaching **(Mt 28:19)** *"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,"* Infants are excluded from obedience to this command because they are incapable of grasping spiritual concepts

2. Being taught requires the ability to understand what is heard (**Acts 18:8**) "*Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord, together with his entire household. And many of the Corinthians hearing Paul believed and were baptized.*" Infants are not capable of understanding sounds they hear.

3. Faith is a requirement for baptism (**Mk 16:15-16**) "*And he said to them, "Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation. ¹⁶ Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.*" Infants do not have the ability to believe

4. The lost must turn away from their sins (repent) prior to Scriptural baptism (**Acts 2:38**) "*And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."* Infants cannot repent for they have not sinned

5. Confession of one's belief that Jesus Christ is the Son of God is a prerequisite to baptism (**Acts 8:36-37**) "*Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, "See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?"*

Then Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may. "And he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." (**Rom 10:10**) "*For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.*

Infants obviously cannot confess their belief.

6. Only the lost need to be saved. Little children are not lost, they are safe, and have no need to be baptized.

7. Scriptures such as **Acts 16:15, 32-33** "*And after she was baptized, and her household as well, she urged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay." And she prevailed upon us. And they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house.³³ And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their wounds; and he was baptized at once, he and all his family."* are often cited as proof that infants were baptized; but adherents make the unproven assumption that the "households" of Lydia and the Jailer contained small children.

C. Sprinkling infants is not baptism -

1. This act is unscriptural, baptism is a burial and resurrection (immersion) **(Rom 6:4)**; "*We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.*" **(Col 2:12)**; "*having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead.*" **(Acts 8:38-39)** "*And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. ³⁹ And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord carried Philip away, and the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing.*"

2. Baptism is for (unto) remission of sins only to a penitent (remorseful, regretful, ashamed) **(Acts 2:38; 22:16)** "*And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. And now why do you wait? Rise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on his name."*"

3. Approval of the practice by uninspired men does not make right (**Mt 15:9**)" *in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.'*"

4. The church has no right to legislate doctrine; the church is to obey the King (**Mt 28:19**) "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in^[a] the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit," and Christ nowhere authorizes infant baptism.

5. Sinners are cleansed by the blood of Christ through the grace of God (**1 John 1:7; 2:2**); "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. He is the propitiation (appeasement) for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world." (**Eph 2:8**); "For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God," (**Titus 3:4-5**) "But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, ⁵ he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, when they comply with the terms of pardon"

(1 Pet 3:20-21) " because^[a] they formerly did not obey, when God's patience waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through water. ²¹ Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,"

C. When Accountable? - The Bible does not set the age of a person's accountability. This depends on several factors including home and church training and mental ability. The Scriptures teach that one's obedience must be "from the heart" **(Rom 6:17)** *"But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed,;* **(John 6:45)** *" It is written in the Prophets, 'And they will all be taught by God.' Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me-*

Therefore, until children reach the age of sensibility or accountability and sin against God, they have no need to be baptized. Where there is no accountability, there is no responsibility (including the mentally incompetent.) For an infant to pass from this life into the next in purity and innocence is sweetness unsurpassed. *(meditate on this!)*

D. David's faith - (**2 Sam 12:23**) *"But now he is dead. Why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he will not return to me."* When parent of a lost infant contemplate the spiritual and physical dangers with which this world is engulfed, they can be grateful their little ones were freed from such things.

Chapter Twenty-six - What is Heaven like?

A. Heaven is a place - it does not have a physical location but it is somewhere in the region of God's creation, a place where His throne is located (**Deut 26:15**) *"Look down from your holy habitation, from heaven, and bless your people Israel and the ground that you have given us, as you swore to our fathers, a land flowing with milk and honey."* Abraham, while in Canaan, looked forward to future happiness in the permanent home of the righteous (**Heb 11:10,16**) *"For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God. But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city. Heaven is a place, not a myth."*

(**John 14:2-3**) "In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also." Heaven is a real place and its inhabitants are real people in glorified resurrected and changed bodies

B. Heaven is also a condition - Instead of thinking of heaven as a place to go, we should think of it as something we have to be; a state or condition of our heart. There will be no heaven for those whose heaven does not begin first within their souls. (**Mt 5:8**) "*Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.*" Heaven is only for the righteous (**Rev 21:27; 20:15**) "*But nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.*" Mankind must prepare for heaven while they are living on earth by letting heaven get into them here before they can get into heaven there. Heaven is only for those who prove their love to the Lord by developing a Christ-like character. Therefore, our eternal destiny depends upon our character; only the pure in heart will enjoy God's fellowship in heaven.

C. Not all in heaven (**I Cor 6:9-10**) " Or do you not know that the unrighteous^[a] will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality,^[b] ¹⁰ nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. - All will say they want to enjoy heaven after they die, but they do not want to be heavenly-minded while on earth (want cake and ...) (**Heb 12:14**) KJV
"Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord) Who will be in heaven? God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, holy angels, redeemed and infants. (**Mt 25:34,46**)" the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

D. Types of heaven - Eden, Canaan, and Jerusalem are used by the Holy Spirit to describe heaven because they were originally important to man. They are used as figures of speech to help finite man envision the infinite beauties of heaven. Eden was a Paradise (place of pleasure) lost, while heaven will be a Paradise gained

(**Rev 2:7; 22:1-2**). "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God. Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb ² through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life^[b] with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. 'Canaan was a land "flowing with milk and honey" but Abraham desired a "better country" (**Heb 11:16**) "But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city." After Israel settled in Canaan, Jerusalem became the chief place in the land where God was worshipped. John wrote of heaven as a glorious and holy city (**Rev 21:1-22:5**)

E. New heaven and new earth - Those that believe after Judgment some of the redeemed will live forever on this physical earth have clearly misinterpreted Bible teaching on heaven.

(Mt 5:18; 2 Peter 3:10) KJV. *"For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished.";* *"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.* One of the fundamental rules of Biblical Hermeneutics is that difficult verses are to be studied in light of other clear scriptures on the same topic or subject.

Therefore **(Rev 21:1-2)** *"Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. ² And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."* must be interpreted based on the plain teaching of Matthew and Peter concerning the fate of our physical earth. The "first heaven and the first earth" refer to the physical universe. The terms "new heaven and new earth" are used to contrast the new, spiritual creation with the old physical creation. The term "new earth" was used by earlier writers to describe a dramatic change in the order of things

(Isa 65:17; 66:22) *"For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind."* *"For as the new heavens and the new earth that I make shall remain before me, says the LORD, so shall your offspring and your name remain"*

John was using terms familiar to his readers (**Gen 1:1**) "*In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.*" The Holy Spirit used the terms "new heaven and "new earth" to assure Christians that, when this present universe is removed, there will still be a suitable environment in which they can exist and function.

F. Why in symbols? -How can a spiritual place be described to an audience who has only known a material existence? Man is limited in his capacity to understand heaven because he has no frame of reference (describe the beauties and delights of a tropical region to one who has only known snow and ice?) All unseen states must be presented through the medium of what is seen and understood. (Illustration of blind child seeing for the first time)

G. Eternal life in heaven - Eternal life means so much more than just eternal existence. It will be a life of abounding joy and happiness; perfect peace. While for the righteous dead, Hades will be a time of blissful rest, heaven will be eternal active living in service, worship and fellowship with God and the saved.

H. The walls of the eternal city represent security and protection from the wicked; no enemy can ever touch the saved again. The gates represent entrance with free admission to all the redeemed from every generation and corner of the earth.

I. Worship in heaven - There will be no temple in the city because the whole city will be a place to meet and worship God. We will offer praise to God forever (**Rev 14:2**) "*And I heard a voice from heaven like the roar of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder. The voice I heard was like the sound of harpists playing on their harps,*"

J. Serve in heaven - Although heaven is a place of rest (**Job 3:17; Heb 4:9**) "*There the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary are at rest.*" "So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God," it will not be a place of inactivity. (**Rev 7:15; 22:3**) "*Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will shelter them with his presence.*" "No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him."

K. Mysteries made clear - All God's judgments will be made known and things will be seen in an entirely different light (**Rom 8:28**) "*And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.*"; (**2 Cor 4:17**) "*For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison,*"

L. Degrees in heaven - As there are different degrees of happiness of the saints on earth; there will be different degrees of honor and happiness in heaven. Those who suffer much and endure hardness as good soldiers of Christ should receive a corresponding reward by being highly glorified with Him. The saint who has been less useful will be happy; but his happiness, although to him eternal and full, will not be as intense. This difference of happiness among the righteous will spring from the different capacities of their souls and not from things external. Heaven will be alike to all, and yet on account of their various capacities, all will not be alike in heaven. (**Heb 5:12-14**) "*For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food, ¹³ for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child..*

But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil."

Inasmuch as the saints are far from being equal in grace and happiness in the kingdom of God in this life, so the different degrees of service rendered on earth will determine the different degrees of glory in heaven. Do you think we will enjoy heaven as much as the apostle Paul?

M. God is no respecter of persons - This is true (Rom 2:11) but He is a respecter of works and character (**2 Cor 5:10; Rev 20:12**) "*For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.*" "*And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done.*" Every scripture which declares that God will render to all according to their works indicates different degrees of reward in heaven.

Rewards in heaven will be equal in the sense that each saved person will be filled with good; but rewards will vary, in the sense that the capacity of one will be greater than that of another. Each redeemed child of God will receive as great a measure of reward as he deserves and is prepared for.

(Rev 7:13-17) *"Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, "Who are these, clothed in white robes, and from where have they come?" ¹⁴ I said to him, "Sir, you know." And he said to me, "These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."¹⁵ "Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will shelter them with his presence. ¹⁶ They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any scorching heat. ¹⁷ For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of living water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."*

N. Face to face with Christ - Perhaps the crowning glory of heaven will be to see the blessed Savior face to face (**Isa 33:17**); *"Your eyes will behold the king in his beauty; they will see a land that stretches afar."* (**1 John 3:2**) *"Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.;"* (**Psa 17:15**) *"As for me, I shall behold your face in righteousness; when I awake, I shall be satisfied with your likeness.;"* (**John 17:24**) *"Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world."* It is not the place so much as the company that will make heaven so beautiful. This is heaven - to be forever with the Lord, and all the saved (**1 Thes 4:17**) *"Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord."*

O. The way to heaven - (**John 14:6**) *"Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.;"* (**Mt 7:21**) *"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven." ..*

(Rev 2:10; 22:14) *"Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and for ten days you will have tribulation. Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life."* *"Blessed are those who wash their robes,^[a] so that they may have the right to the tree of life and that they may enter the city by the gates."*

It is through faith in Christ - an obedient, living, active faith in the Son of God that one finally reaches the everlasting abode of the righteous.

P. Conclusion - Eternal life is a free gift from God (**Rom 6:23**) *"For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."* but the Father offers salvation through Christ upon condition of obedience to the gospel; such obedience does not purchase salvation. Salvation has been provided to all as a free gift from God; it is up to us to comply with the conditions set forth in the gospel in order to obtain that free gift. Jesus Christ is "the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey Him" (**Heb 5:9**) "And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him"; (**1 Pet 1:22**). "Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart,"

Paul declared that he was "in hope of eternal life" (**Titus 1:2**) "*in hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began*" Hope is made up of desire and expectation; one does not hope for that which he already has.

(**Rom 8:24-25**) "*For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? ²⁵ But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.*" The faithful child of God has eternal life in prospect, in promise, but not in realization. This reward will be given to the faithful children of God at the consummation of all things at the final judgment. Then the righteous will go away to eternal life (**Mt 25:46**); "*And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.*"; (**Mk 10:29-30**) "*Jesus said, "Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands, for my sake and for the gospel, ³⁰ who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and in the age to come eternal life.*

Chapter Twenty-seven - What about future recognition?

Although the Bible does not speak directly on the subject, many passages of Scriptures seem to imply that we will recognize each other in heaven.

A. Arguments for future recognition -

1. Christians through the ages have yearned for future recognition of loved ones. Many believe these feelings are prophetic of their fulfillment. Our loved ones are linked to us by ties of memory and affection. Love is eternal; we love the dead even as the living. God would hardly have put this yearning in the hearts of His people if it were never to be gratified.

2. Memory and personal identity, which are the essential elements of future recognition, will be retained in the future life. If in the judgment day each person stands there in his own distinctive character, having full recollection of this life (**Mt 25:34-46**) "*Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world..*

³⁵ For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ³⁶ I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.' ³⁷ Then the righteous will answer him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink?.. ³⁸ And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? ³⁹ And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?' ⁴⁰ And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers,^[a] you did it to me.' ⁴¹ "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. ⁴² For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, ⁴³ I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.' ⁴⁴ Then they also will answer, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?' ⁴⁵ Then he will answer them, saying, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.' ⁴⁶ And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

The state after the resurrection, therefore, is one in which there is preserved the individuality of each person and a memory of his past life, even though he will be in a different body. In Hades, the rich man was told, "Son, remember.." (Lk 16:25)

Even the idea of rewards in the future life for deeds done in this life implies the memory of such deeds as the person's own (Rev 5:9-10) "And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, ¹⁰ and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth."

The souls John saw under the alter retained their memory (Rev 6:9-10) "When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the witness they had borne. ¹⁰ They cried out with a loud voice, "O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?"

3. The Bible indicates future recognition by taking this doctrine for granted.

a. Jesus taught the sociability of the heavenly state under the figure of a feast (**Mt 8:11**) *"I tell you, many will come from east and west and recline at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven,"*

(John 14:2-3) *"In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?^[a] ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.*

b. Jesus presented heaven to John as a city, implying community and fellowship (**Rev 21**). Every true idea of the eternal home for the redeemed stresses fellowship with God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, angels, and all the saved. This will be one of the chief privileges of eternal blessedness.

4. Future recognition is intimated by John's experience on the isle of Patmos (**Rev 1:13**) KJV. *"and in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash around his chest."* John knew the person looked like Jesus; the Lord possessed a glorified likeness of what He was on earth

5. The transfiguration scene, in which Moses and Elijah re-appeared on earth and talked with Christ in the presence of Peter, James and John, implies that Moses and Elijah recognized each other, that both recognized Christ, and that the three apostles recognized them as Moses and Elijah.

(Mt 17:1-5) *"And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James, and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. ² And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light. ³ And behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him. ⁴ And Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good that we are here. If you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah." ⁵ He was still speaking when, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my beloved Son,^[a] with whom I am well pleased; listen to him."*

6. David took comfort in the physical death of his child knowing he would see him again in the afterlife. **(2 Sam 12:23)** *"But now he is dead. Why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he will not return to me."* What comfort could David find in the thought that he would go to his child, if that child would never be known to him on the other side of death?

7. Paul said he would be happy in heaven to know that those he converted had remained faithful and would be among the saved.

(Phil 2:14-16) *"Do all things without grumbling or disputing,
¹⁵ that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God
without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted
generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world,
¹⁶ holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ
I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain."*

If he did not recognize them, how could he be proud of them?

8. Christ promised the dying thief on the cross that "Today you will be with me in Paradise" (**Lk 23:43**) Indicating future recognition in the afterlife. The rich man recognized two persons in Hades; Lazarus and the Abraham (**Lk 16:23**). The Scriptures teach that the impressions of this life are faithfully preserved and are capable of being reproduced in the next life.

B. Arguments against future recognition -

1. How can memory continue if the brain is dissolved? Our brain tissue is constantly being replaced, but we retain our memory. It is better to say that memory is a function of the mind and it is merely expressed by the brain in this life. The mind is immortal. (*relation of the organist and his organ*)

2. How can spirits recognize each other when both are formless and featureless? This question is based on the assumption that spirit-beings are formless and invisible. The saved in heaven will be real people, formal and visible. Our glorified bodies will be incorruptible, powerful, immortal, and spiritual (**1 Cor 15:42-54**) *"So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable. ⁴³ It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. ⁴⁴ It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. ⁴⁵ Thus it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being";^[a] the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. ⁴⁶ But it is not the spiritual that is first but the natural, and then the spiritual..*

⁴⁷ The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. ⁴⁸ As was the man of dust, so also are those who are of the dust, and as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. ⁴⁹ Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall^[b] also bear the image of the man of heaven.⁵⁰ I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.. ⁵¹ Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, ⁵² in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. ⁵³ For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. ⁵⁴ When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written:

"Death is swallowed up in victory."

Body and soul will constitute glorified humanity in heaven.

3. Bodily changes in death and resurrection will make future recognition highly improbable, if not impossible. The Scriptures intimate that the redeemed will retain all those marks and characteristics of individuality by which they were known and distinguished. An aged mother and her grown son fondly remember each other from the days of his youth and her young adulthood although neither look anything like then now.

4. Since there will be no marriage relationship in heaven this must mean personal recognition will cease. Christ did not say former husbands and wives would not be acquainted with each other in heaven. It is not the remembrance of this relationship that is to be obliterated, but simply the earthly relation itself is not to be continued in heaven.

5. Future recognition would mean that we would remember missing friends and relatives bringing sorrow in heaven. The answer to this objection is that God has promised that the redeemed in heaven would be perfectly happy and He can make it so, for He is infinite in power and mercy. **(Rev 21:4)** *"He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away."*

Furthermore, the redeemed in heaven will then realize that God has done right with all mankind and submit to His decree. Aaron understood this principle when God took his sons Nadab and Abihu (**Lev 10:1-3**). *"Now Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put fire in it and laid incense on it and offered unauthorized^[a] fire before the LORD, which he had not commanded them. ² And fire came out from before the LORD and consumed them, and they died before the LORD.. ³ Then Moses said to Aaron, "This is what the LORD has said: 'Among those who are near me I will be sanctified, and before all the people I will be glorified.'" And Aaron held his peace. As Abraham said "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" (**Gen 18:25**)*

Moreover, the sufferings of the wicked and unremorseful will be known by the Lord and His angels (**Rev 14:10**) *"he also will drink the wine of God's wrath, poured full strength into the cup of his anger, and he will be tormented with fire and sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb.,"* yet God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, and the angels will still be happy in heaven while knowing that some are damned forever. Who has loved those souls more than the Savior? If the just punishment of the wicked and unfaithful children of God does not pain God, it will not pain those redeemed.

(2 Pet 2:20-22) "For if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world through the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the last state has become worse for them than the first. ²¹ For it would have been better for them never to have known the way of righteousness than after knowing it to turn back from the holy commandment delivered to them.. ²² What the true proverb says has happened to them: "The dog returns to its own vomit, and the sow, after washing herself, returns to wallow in the mire."

Surely no one wants to be lost because a relative is lost. The rich man in torment did not want any of his brothers to come to that place of suffering (**Lk 16:27-28**) " And he said, 'Then I beg you, father, to send him to my father's house- ²⁸ for I have five brothers^[a]-so that he may warn them, lest they also come into this place of torment.'.

A Source of Consolation - We have the blessed hope in knowing that we will meet one another again and live forever in heaven with the Lord (**1 Thes 4:17-18**) "*Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.*"¹⁸ *Therefore encourage one another with these words.*" We have only a hint of the pleasures that await us beyond the grave (**1 John 3:2**) "*Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears^[a] we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.*" (**Deut 29:29**). "*The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.*"

Our separation will be brief and the reunion glorious because we will meet again never to part. This hope should be a source of great comfort in our times of bereavement.