

Rightly Dividing
The Word
of Truth
Bible Study Course

Most professing Christians claim to believe that Jesus Christ was resurrected from the dead. You can see their proclamation of this faith in the church marquees and banners on Easter Sunday: “He is Risen!” However, because of their additional belief in the *immortality of the soul*, they render that belief in the resurrection from the dead for the Christian to a plane of meaninglessness. Perhaps you are wondering what is meant by that statement. This study will provide a thorough discussion of the subject. It draws God’s truth about it from numerous scriptures that are either missed or ignored by mainstream “Christianity.” Study this thoroughly.

Lesson Ten: The Resurrections of the Dead

Larry E. Ford

If Christ is preached as [having been] raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised; if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified of God that He raised Christ, whom He did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. (1 Corinthians 15:12-15; RSV)

For [Christ's] sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as refuse, in order that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection. That, if possible, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. (Philippians 3:8-1; RSV)

Abraham...offered up Isaac...[because] He considered that God was able to raise men even from the dead. (Hebrews 11:17-19; RSV)

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Introduction

Most professing Christians claim to believe that Jesus Christ was resurrected from the dead. You can see their proclamation of this faith in the church marquees and banners on Easter Sunday: “He is Risen!” However, because of their *additional* belief in the *immortality of the soul*, they render that belief in the resurrection from the dead for the Christian to a plane of meaninglessness. Perhaps you are wondering what I mean by that. Well, let me explain it in a way that will provide the basis and foundation for the rest of the study.

Defining Terms

Definition of terms is an important part of getting concepts across to people. If two people use the same term, but have *differing* definitions for the term, then there is the surface appearance of a measure of agreement – yet, the existence of disagreement lies beneath the surface.

It is like the old Bill Cosby routine about having surgery using only a local anesthetic. The doctor says: “Scalpel! Sponge! Clamp! Oops!” Cosby, at that point, says: “‘Oops?’ What do you mean ‘Oops!’ I know what I mean when I say ‘Oops!’ ... but I don’t know what you mean when you say ‘Oops!’”

In this case, a *definition of terms* is needed to sort out the meaning. The problem is simple – and summed up in this question: What does the *Bible* mean when it uses the term *dead*? I know what pagan philosophers who perpetuated the concept of the immortal soul meant when they used the term.

Our problem is whether or not the **Bible** means the same thing when it uses the term **dead**.

Let's consider an example from a typical "Christian" doctrinal statement. In his book, *The Baptist Faith and Message* (Convention Press, Nashville, 1971), which is based on the doctrinal platform adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1971, Herschel H. Hobbs set forth the statements of faith they agreed upon by consensus that year. In the introduction of the book, he clearly states that: "Such statements have never been regarded as complete, infallible statements of faith, nor as official creeds carrying mandatory authority" (p. 4). That disclaimer should be a cautionary note to all who read and study through this book.

Nevertheless, let's consider what they generally agreed upon in their formulation about what **man** is.

Because of sin, "man's **animal** principal of life shall cease; his **body** shall return to the ground (Gen. 3:19). But his **soul**, the **real person**, is **immortal**. It will **never** cease to be" (p. 51; emphases added).

What is his point here? Since the human body is thought to be the **animating force** for the immortal soul – based on Plato's philosophy – the **body** is the "animal principal of life" discussed in Hobbs's definition of **man**.

Hobbs continued his definition of **man** by saying:

"Man is **twofold** in nature. He is both spirit and body. Man is not a body and has a soul. **He is a soul and has a body**" (Ibid.; emphases added).

So, according to this doctrinal statement, the **real** person is an **immortal soul**; the **body** is merely a place for it to dwell until the body dies from one cause or another. According to this doctrinal statement, the real person **never** dies because

s/he is immortal – incapable of dying! According to Plato, the immortal soul never has been capable of dying. Does God’s word agree with that idea?

Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 15:46: “The spirit body did not come first; the physical body came first. The spirit body will come later.” What Paul is discussing here is when a person receives immortality. The answer is a rebuke of traditional Christian teachings.

Your next questions should be: Does this agree with the popular concept taught in traditional Christianity and other world religions? If not, why not? Read Paul’s complete answer in verses 35-50, which begins with the analogy of a dead seed. In a process, there is a sequence in time for each step to occur. So, Paul gave the answer in verses 46-50 about man bearing the earthly image first and then the spiritual image.

But, notice in verses 35-54 how plainly he demonstrated the process:

(a) A seed (the “body”) must “die” and be planted (buried) in order for it to be made alive again.

(b) There is a difference between the natural, corruptible body that is “sown” (that is, buried in the grave) and the spiritual, incorruptible body that will emerge from the grave.

(c) We are like Adam in that we have earthly bodies (that is, we are made of the dust of the earth like Adam – see Genesis 2:7 and 3:19; also, Psalm 103:13-18).

(d) We shall be [future tense] like Jesus Christ was after His resurrection and have a heavenly (that is, a spirit) body.

(e) This will occur only when Christ returns to set up the Kingdom of God.

(f) Since flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God (that is, be in the God Family – see Hebrews 2), then the mortal must put on immortality, and the corruptible must put on incorruption at that time because it does not presently have it.

It is self-evident that it must be put on if you do not presently have it. Consider this point very carefully because it is a key to understanding this important biblical truth – and this study.

Paul wrote that the physical body ultimately must be changed from flesh to spirit because “at the last trumpet ... the mortal must put on immortality...” (v. 53). This is an echo of what Jesus told Nicodemus in John 3:1-8: “Flesh gives birth to flesh; Spirit gives birth to spirit. You must be born again” (emphases added).

If man is presently flesh (mortal) and will later be changed to spirit, could man presently be an immortal soul? No! Why? Because he is mortal and must die before he can be made alive again in a different form.

Once you understand that man is mortal and cannot put on immortality until Christ returns ... or later ..., all other questions about the immortality of the soul and what happens immediately after you die are totally unnecessary.

Knowing the real issue helps to cut straight through all of the arguments about the immortal soul and the accompanying issues. And, knowing what the Bible actually says also makes a great deal of difference in the wisdom of your argument. So, where does this leave us with the definition of the term “dead”?

In Plato’s work “Gorgias,” he reveals his philosophy in a conversation Socrates is having with Callicles. Socrates

explains that *death* occurs when the soul is separated from the body. In this concept, it is conceivable for a body to continue to live without a soul being lodged within it. The soul would not be able to benefit any further from what that particular body might contribute to its efforts to regain the heavenly heights ... but a “death” would occur.

At the same time, the soul is *automatically* ejected if the body dies – something the soul is incapable of doing during the lifetime of the human even if it wants very desperately to do so. Upon the death of the body, the body can and will disintegrate and go back to the natural elements from which it was created.

Now, ask yourself what it would mean to Plato and Socrates for that body to die. Even Hobbs admits that when the body has served the purpose of housing the real person – the soul – it will return to the dust of the ground from which it was created.

Because it generally takes the soul 10,000 years to return to the heavenly heights from which it fell (in the Greek concept), it can inhabit numerous human bodies and other living beings. In this concept, it appears that the body’s only function is to provide the soul with a vehicle in which to travel for a space of time – with “death” occurring when body and soul are separated. But ... what happens if man is neither an immortal soul nor has an immortal soul – something about himself that is inherently eternal and never dies?

Well, it changes the entire paradigm constructed by most of traditional Christianity about what the term dead means! If that paradigm is changed – and that change agrees with God’s revealed truth – then you set up the necessity for those who claim to be “Christians” to fall in line with God’s truth, as opposed to the “Christianity” that is mixed and mingled with pagan philosophy!

Now begins our search for God’s truth about the resurrection of the dead as God planned it before He even created

mankind. This is great news for those who know and live by God's truth rather than by man's traditions (see Matt. 15:1-9; Rom. 1:18-32).

If you are going to worship God in spirit and in truth (see John 4:23, 24), then you must learn the difference. It is not enough to be religious or good. You must be obedient to the will of **God** and His revealed truth.

In Christ's Service,

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Chapter One

Understanding Key Words and Phrases

In his article “The Language of the Old Testament” in *The Interpreter’s Bible* (Vol. 1, 1952, p. 230), Norman H. Snaith discusses the fallacy of translating *Hebrew* thought with a *Greek* meaning. The Greek translation of the Old Testament (the *Septuagint* – *LXX*) used the word “*psuche*” as the Greek translation of the Hebrew word “*nephesh*” (Genesis 2:7 “...and man became a *living psuche*...” [Hebrew = *nephesh*]). In Greek thought, *psuche* stands for a breath-soul and describes that part of an individual that leaves the body upon death – that is, an *immortal soul*. Do these terms have a common meaning?

Snaith says that *psuche* has no such meaning in Hebrew ... the language of the Old Testament. Pay close attention to his argument. He concludes by saying the following:

Since the word “soul” in the English translation stands for the Hebrew “*nephesh*,” *there is not one single instance in the Old Testament where the word “soul” should be thought of as that which survives death.*

When the Bible writer says ... that “God *breathed* into [man’s] nostrils the *breath* of life; and man became a living *soul*,” ... he *does not mean* that God

thereby [gave to or made] to man an *immortal soul*. He means [by the term “nephesh”] that God ... *breathed* into him His own life-giving *breath*, so that this shape of dust became alive.

...If, therefore, the belief in the immortality of the human soul is held to be a ***Christian*** doctrine, then it should be realized that it is ***not*** a ***biblical*** doctrine. The ***biblical*** doctrine is of a *resurrection life* for those who “have the spirit” and are “in Christ...” (see Romans 8:9-17; emphases added).

Does it strike you as being a bit peculiar that something can be a “Christian” doctrine, yet ***not*** be a “biblical” doctrine? Such is the nature of this problem.

John Short, in his expository comments in *The Interpreter's Bible* (Vol. 10, 1952, p. 253) about 1 Corinthians 15:51-58, wrote:

The *Christian* doctrine is not one of *immortality* but of *resurrection*. We shall do well to get this point clear. As expounded by the Apostle Paul ... man's hope of survival depends not on the *inherent immortality of his soul*, but on the act of God.

His immortality is involved in his *resurrection* [that is, it is through the *resurrection* that man achieves immortality], not his resurrection in his immortality [that is, the *body* is not raised from the grave in order to reunite it with his *immortal soul*].

There is ***nothing*** in Paul's writings nor in the N.T. to suggest that the soul is inherently [that is, in its very nature] immortal” (emphases added).

You can see in Ezekiel 18:4, 20 that souls – that is, ne-
phesh, the same word used in Genesis 2:7 – are perishable, corruptible, mortal, and capable of becoming lifeless. Also read Ecclesiastes 3:18-22; 9:4, 5, 10; 12:7; Job 10:9; 34:15; Psalm 30:9. Notice especially in Ecclesiastes that the human and the animals share the same fate in dying: returning to the dust and breathing out the “spirit” given to them by God (see Gen. 3:19).

If you favor the misconceptions and false theology of the pagan religions, then you might very well suffer the fate of those described by Jesus Christ in Matthew 7:13-23. What Snaith and Short tell us is that we must pay attention to key words and phrases. During this study, I will call your attention to them in order to lead you to understand a biblical doctrine that many profess to believe, but they mangle it by mixing it with pagan trash.

It should be pointed out that neither Snaith nor Short is associated with The Seventh Day Christian Assembly in any way whatsoever. In my writings, I use quotes from highly respected theologians to demonstrate that I am not the only one who has knowledge of these things. Nor is this knowledge the peculiar possession of The Seventh Day Christian Assembly.

God has been fulfilling an important prophecy from Amos 8:11, 12. There presently exists an absolute famine of hearing God’s truth. Parts of it are known – but parts are not enough when it is mixed with so much pagan trash that it is unrecognizable as God’s word of truth. That is the problem to which few pay attention.

If you are going to worship God in spirit and truth (see John 4:23, 24), then you must learn the difference. It is not enough to be religious and/or good. You must be obedient to God’s revealed will: His spirit and truth. You must pay attention to key words and phrases.

In the remainder of this study, please put on your “think-

ing cap” and read everything very carefully. Set your goal to surrender to God’s truth and rid yourself of all of the religious beliefs and practices that oppose it. Paying attention to key words and phrases is especially important ... as is discovering where in God’s word you can find His truth.

Chapter Two

Definitions of Terms

As stated in Lesson 1, any who have read Plato's work *Phaedrus* will understand that he is generally credited as being a great proponent of the concept of the immortality of the soul – which actually came from the Egyptians and the Eleusinian and Orphic mystery religions that emanated out of the Babylonian Mystery Religions (refer to Deut. 12:29-32).

Plato said that: (a) the soul *pre-exists* with God; (b) it is *uncreated* – which presupposes that it has existed for *eternity alongside* God; and, (c) when the soul “falls” from its heavenly heights, it needs a *human body* (preferably a philosopher or an artist) to help it regain its wings so it can soar back to its heavenly heights.

Why did “Christianity” accept this *pagan* concept? Is this where they got the unscriptural concept of going to “heaven” or “hell” when you die? Neither was promised by God!

What is “Death”?

The concept, as stated in the Introduction, presupposes that the immortal soul exists *first* as an eternal being and is at some point in time put into a human body until that body dies and releases it. It can go on to inhabit other bodies because of the *10,000-year* penalty that is imposed for “falling” from the heavens. This, of course, creates numerous other questions about man and his supposed *inherent immortality*: going *immediately* to heaven or hell at death (the reward of the “saved” or “unsaved”), reincarnation, limbo,

purgatory, *et cetera*. And ... this affects the traditional Christian definition of being dead. Now ... why should this concern you?

Plato's concept is a key component in traditional Christian theology. Why? Because much of the Greek and Roman religion, philosophy, government, and education have been inculcated into modern European-descended societies.

"Christian" Neoplatonists, like Bishop Augustine of Hippo (who admitted in his work *Confessions* how deeply he was influenced by the works of notable Neoplatonists like Plotinus and Porphyry) and Origen, are largely responsible for syncretizing Plato's teachings with biblical concepts.

This is an important point to understand. Pay attention to how this affects the traditional "Christian" definition of death. Is it biblical truth? If not, why should any Christian use pagan concepts in spreading God's truth (see Deut. 12:29-32 again)? This is where definitions of terms and understanding key words and phrases are brought to bear in sifting out God's truth from pagan concepts.

In Job 18, Bildad the Shuhite is chiding Job about the malady in which he finds himself. Just in case Job is being punished for some wickedness that he will not admit, Bildad decides to discuss the misery of the wicked with him. In doing so, he makes this interesting point: "[The wicked person] is torn from the tent in which he trusted, and brought to the king of terrors...." (v. 14; RSV). What does he mean?

In this vivid description, Bildad casts death in the character of the king of terrors. Why? Because the fear of death exists among men – even though they might have a settled faith about what lies beyond. The mystery of the unknown can still inject an unsettling element into the strongest of faiths.

Solomon added his wisdom to this by writing that: "The living at least know that they will die! But the dead know nothing; they don't even have their memories" (Eccle. 9:5; *Living Bible*; emphases added).

In Hebrew theology, death is a terminus point – there is nothing to be had in or beyond the grave: no work, no thought, no knowledge, no invention, no wisdom – nothing (v. 10) ... unless God decides to intervene on behalf of the dead and raise them back to life through a resurrection from the dead.

Recovery from Death

As we have seen in the introductory remarks, Hebrew theology does not conceive of there being any such thing as an immortal soul. They did not conceive of man either being or having any such thing. With that in mind, read 2 Corinthians 5:1-5. What is Paul calling “our earthly house of this tabernacle”? (Other translations use the term tent instead of tabernacle.)

Does the True Christian long to have a “heavenly building made by God” (2 Cor. 5:1-5)? Do we presently have it, or do we long for it – groan for it – to be given to us? If we do not have it presently, what does Paul mean when he says that God has given us “the Spirit as a guarantee” that we will have it (v. 5; future tense; emphasis added)?

If you have God’s guarantee that you will have it in the future, would you be overly concerned about going to the grave and lying there for a while without any consciousness and returning to the dust? Paul is speaking here of the temporary nature of the human body (tent) and the desire of the human to have a permanent body from God.

He shows that God gives to the True Christian His own personal guarantee – the Holy Spirit – that s/he will have that permanent body in the future. This indicates that there is nothing inherently immortal about the human being.

Now read Ephesians 1:13, 14. By what means does God identify us as His very own people? What does Paul mean that this identification seal is “the guarantee [earnest; down

payment] of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it" (RSV; emphases added)? Here, Paul is speaking of the possession of our new, spirit bodies.

True Christians are given God's Holy Spirit, not only as an identification marker that they belong to Him through Jesus Christ, but also as a down payment – a security deposit of sorts – toward the redemption of the body in the future.

Our bodies must be redeemed if we are to inherit something for eternity. In other words, Christ is going to free us from the bondage of death – the grave. In order to do that, He must also free us from the penalties of our sins. This is another indication that man is mortal, not inherently immortal. The preposition until is an important signal. How so?

The Greek term is *eis* (pronounced *ice*). Prepositions are the words that express position and movement, possession, time, and how an action is completed. All languages contain such words and phrases. Read Ephesians 1:13, 14 again. Pay attention to the expression "...you were sealed with that holy spirit of promise..." What does that mean?

When you make your profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, are baptized, and have hands laid upon you for the receipt of holy spirit, God seals you with that holy spirit to identify you as one who will be changed from flesh to spirit composition at the return of Jesus Christ.

He will change the living and dead true Christians from flesh to immortal spirit (see 1 Cor. 15:46-55). Note that, at the return of Jesus Christ, those thus sealed will put on incorruption and immortality (v. 53, 54.). That seal is God's guarantee that it will happen at that time ... not before. Such a concept negates the commonly held belief about the immortal soul and going immediately to heaven or hell when you die.

When correctly understood, you should now comprehend that the preposition until in Ephesians 1:14 has to do with time and how an action is completed. You are the pur-

chased possession of God through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ! Ephesians 1:14 also indicates that **you** have not presently been redeemed. Such a statement goes against the claims of traditional, denominational Christianity because of their false doctrines are centered on the immortal soul concept. How can we know God's revealed truth about this matter?

Again, it is derived from the meaning of the word redemption in v. 14. If you have not been taught, or been willing to be taught, the importance of language, then you have been deprived of the means by which God can truly communicate with you and impress upon you the significance of His truth.

There is a reason why Jesus Christ is referred to as being the Word God (that is: the Spokesman; John 1:1-3; Gen. 1). Even if you are alive when Jesus Christ returns, your human body must, nevertheless, die (Heb. 9:27). With that instruction in mind, let's learn something else about redemption.

In Ephesians 1:14, Paul uses the Greek term apolutrosis ("until the redemption of the purchased possession"). It is not a complicated concept to understand if you know how to get from A to Z.

Read 2 Corinthians 4:7-5:10. Pay close attention to the concept of moving from the "earthen vessel" to the "house which is from heaven." Paul is making a distinction between our fleshly bodies and our spirit bodies. We do not presently have our spirit bodies. If the spirit body has to be put on, then we do not presently have one.

Now pay attention to 2 Corinthians 5:5 where Paul says that God has given us "...the earnest of the spirit..." (*KJV*). When you comprehend that, turn to 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20. Understand that you have been purchased by God through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. As a professing true Christian, God has made a deposit on your redemption. This tells us that we have not yet become the fullness of what God intends

for us to be. Even though we have the Holy Spirit as a guarantee that we will achieve a higher level of existence, that time has not yet arrived.

Now read Ephesians 1:3-14. Paul explains what God and His Christ planned before the creation of the orderly universe (vv. 4, 5): to adopt us into the Elohim Family through Jesus Christ and treat us as though we are His natural-born children. The problem is simple: They did not intend that we would be eternal flesh-and-blood beings, so they had to make it possible for us to become spirit-beings as They are.

This is exactly the concept involved in Genesis 1:26-28: being created in the image and likeness of Elohim. Genesis 2:7 shows that mankind was first made as an earthen vessel. From that point on, mankind would have to be trained to think and act like the Elohim kind. That suggests that an “end product” is expected from that training. If they fail to become the spiritual end-product of that training, then their fate will be to return to the dust out of which they were made (Gen. 2:7, 17; 3:19-24). Read also Hebrews 10:26, 27, 35, 36 and Hebrews 12.

This is where we need to understand what else They planned to do if mankind failed the first part of Their plan. This is where we must understand Their great love for Their creation ... and how to redeem it if something went wrong.

Chapter Three

Understanding Human Mortality

The quote below sums up very concisely the generally-held belief of denominational “Christianity” about what man is. From this description, you should get an idea about the difference between *mortality* and *immortality*. The commentary that follows should give you a simple, Bible-based explanation about the difference between the two ... and how God planned to implement both of them relative to man’s existence. You should be able to understand what the Lord God meant when He told Adam that eating from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil would bring upon mankind a death sentence.

The “Immortal Soul” Doctrine

The following quote was included in a summarization of a major denomination’s agreed-upon statements of belief agreed upon in their 1971 convention:

Three things may be noted about man. His body is akin to the natural element. His physical life is akin to all animal life. But as a *living soul* he is made in God’s image and likeness. It should be noted that man was made to live forever. It was after he sinned that he became subject to death. However, for that reason man’s animal principle of life shall cease; his body shall return to the ground (Gen. 3:19). But

his soul, *the real person*, is immortal. It will never cease to be.

Man is twofold in nature. He is both spirit and body. Man is *not* a body and has a soul. *He is a soul and has a body*. The body is mortal; the soul is immortal. (Herschel H. Hobbs: The Baptist Faith and Message, Convention Press, Nashville, TN, 1971; emphases added)

If man's *body* is akin to the natural element, that conclusion is reached by understanding Genesis 2:7: the Lord God created the human body out of the dust of the earth and breathed the breath of life into him. If man's *physical life* is akin to all animal life, that conclusion is reached by reading Ecclesiastes 3:18-22; 9:4-10; and 12:1-7. Mankind and animals alike will die and return to the *dust*. However, if man is an *immortal soul* that has a body, that conclusion is drawn from some source other than the *scriptural* record.

Job 14: A Concise Definition of What a Human Is

Traditional "Christianity" seems to pick and choose which parts of the Old Testament they will validate as being God's truth. Few pay attention to Job's definition of a human being ... even though Job was considered by the Lord God to have been a righteous man (Job 1:8; 2:3). Job 14 is part of Job's righteousness being unveiled to the men who came to sit with him during this very intensive test of his righteousness.

Make note of what Job told those men in Job 14. Verses 1-14 were not allowed to "speak" in the above quote by Hobbs. Note especially v. 10. The "ghost" given up by man at his death is not a *spirit* like an immortal soul or any other kind of disembodied spirit. It is the same with scriptures like

Lamentations 1:19, Mark 15:37, and Acts 5:5. It simply means that they breathed out their last breath. When the Lord God created man (Gen. 2:7), He breathed into him the “breath of life.” That “breath” was the driving power for man to become a “living soul” ... that is: a living, **breathing** being. The human body needs the oxygen contained in it.

I am surprised that the above quote from Hobbs was not as thoroughly researched as it could have been ... that it so easily made an **unscholarly** connection between the expression “living soul” (KJV) and “immortal soul.” I wrote about this in BSC Lesson Three: What is Man? (p. 10).

I also explained the concept of “living soul” on pp. 16-18. Refresh your memory about the term and how some translators use the **pagan** concept of the immortal soul to define the **Hebrew** term nephesh and how Bible translators use a Greek term to define a Hebrew term. The Greek term psyche stands for a “breath-soul” that leaves the body upon death. Homer and others equated that with the immortal soul.

In Norman Snaith’s commentary in *The Interpreter’s Bible* (vol. 1, p. 230), he warns that using **psyche** in that manner *corrupts* the Hebrew meaning of the term **nephesh**: “a living, breathing being.” The Lord God did not impart an immortal soul of any kind into the human body.

Snaith concludes his commentary by saying:

If, therefore, the belief in the immortality of the human soul is held to be a **Christian doctrine**, then it should be realized that it is **not a biblical doctrine**. The biblical doctrine is of a resurrection from the dead [that is: restoring life to the dead] for those who have [God’s holy spirit] and are ‘in Christ’ (emphases added).

The concept of the immortal soul was **never** God’s revelation in either testament of the Bible. It was introduced by

the Gentile Christians who separated themselves from the Jewish Christian sect named in Acts 15:1-21, 24:5, and 28:22. Formerly, they were pagans.

Christianity was, at first, a Jewish sect. When the Romans began to severely persecute the Jews, many in the Gentile group did not want to be identified with Jewish Christendom. So, they withdrew and created their own brand of non-Jewish “Christianity.” Major theological concepts were abandoned or changed by mixing and mingling pagan concepts into a watered down “Christian” theology (refer to Deut. 12:29-32). They exist today as 32,000+ “Christian” denominations all around the world.

Job precisely lays out the concept of human mortality in Job 14:1-14. The most prominent and conspicuous points are made in vv. 2, 5, 10-14. How can you misunderstand such statements as: (a) man lying down and wasting away in the grave (vv. 10-12) and (b) having an appointed time to be revived and brought forth out of the grave (vv. 13-15)?

Jesus Christ taught us a similar lesson in Matthew 12:38-40 by telling His disciples that He would lie dead in the grave for three days and three nights like Jonah was dead for three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish.

Do not fall for “work around” theology that tries to explain away His very plain statement about His and Jonah’s death. Yet, traditional “Christianity” would have you believe that He died at sundown on Friday and was raised from the dead at sunrise on Sunday morning. Can you count three days and three nights better than that? They pretend to do so every year from Good Friday to Easter morning at sunrise. I hope you can count better than that. You can read of similar pagan practices among the Jews in Jeremiah 44:15-19 and Ezekiel 8:4-18. There is the source of the immortality of the soul.

What does this show us about human mortality? We are not as described by Hobbs. There is no such thing as an

immortal soul that uses the human body as a “house” until the body dies. That is theological hogwash! How does Job describe the plight of man in 14:10-15?

What happens to man when he dies? Does Job mention anything about an indwelling immortal soul? What is the ghost of which he speaks? “Gives up the ghost” means that he breathes out his last breath. The Hebrew term from which it is translated is gava, which means “to breathe out; to expire; to perish; to die.” It is **not** a reference to an immortal soul or any other kind of indwelling spirit ... good or bad.

Now read carefully verse 12. How long will he lie in the grave in his decaying condition (“continues not” [KJV; RSV]; “does not remain” [Modern Language]; “quickly disappears” [Living Bible])? To what does Job compare death?

Sleep is a euphemism (a harmless, inoffensive word or expression used in place of one that is deemed offensive or suggests something unpleasant) for death. If you have ever slept soundly through the night without dreaming, then you can understand the comparison. If you have ever been put under the influence of an anesthetic prior to surgery, then you can understand the imagery. You are completely unaware of what is going on and the passage of time. You know absolutely nothing, nor are you aware of the passage of time until your next waking moment.

The doctrine of the immortal soul presupposes, however, that you are fully aware and active immediately after the death of the body – that you are either having a wonderful time with Jesus in heaven or screaming yourself silly as you roast in hellfire for eternity. **That** is a contradiction of what God has revealed!

Read again Job 14:13-15. Where does Job wish to be put for his own protection? Why? What does he mean by expecting a change to come? How will he know that his time in the grave is over? Does he expect God to call the righteous person out of the grave (v. 15)?

Job apparently knew that God is going to bring wrath upon His creation in one form or another because of the sinful ways of mankind. It is evident that he would prefer to be in the grave when this time of wrath is being prosecuted. In that way, God would “hide” him. His expectation and faith were that God would thereafter call him – and others like him – out of the grave when that time of wrath is over.

That is not unlike the resurrection of the dead at the end of the tribulation period and the Day of God’s wrath spoken of in scripture (read Matthew 24:21, 22). Read John 5:24-29. How do these verses explain Jesus’ comment about passing from death to life? How will Jesus get people out of their graves (vv. 25, 28)? How many resurrections does He mention here? What is the difference between them? What would you expect a resurrection to damnation to be?

Read Malachi 4:1 and Revelation 20:14, 15. The *KJV* translation “death and hell” in Revelation 20:14 is rendered in other translations as “death and Hades” (*Modern Language; RSV; Jerusalem; Moffatt*). Luther renders it: “...Tod und sein Reich...” (“Death and its Kingdom”, which would infer “death and its inhabitants”; see also 1 Corinthians 15:24-26).

That can also infer that “death and the grave” will be destroyed if Jesus Christ ultimately destroys death. If you include Romans 6:23, then you should know that Jesus Christ will ultimately destroy sin. How about a resurrection to life? Do these two concepts agree with Job’s concept? If the unsaved dead are destroyed, then there is no longer any need to have graves (Mal. 4:1-3; 1 Cor. 15:24-28).

The Lord God’s Judgment of Adam and Eve

Given what you have been taught thus far, would it have been possible for Adam and Eve to live out a natural life-span and still die a death from which they could not, or

would not, be recovered? Here is where you have to get closer to understanding the entire matter. But you will have to properly understand Genesis 3:19, 22-24.

What was God's sentence upon Adam and Eve for their sin? Does *returning to the dust* imply only a ***natural*** death? What does "casting them out of the Garden" and "guarding the Tree of ***Life***" imply? Would they have access to ***life*** beyond the grave – the *ability* to be ***recovered*** from the dust to which they were to return – if they did not have further access to ***life***? What does Genesis 3:22-24 tell you about that?

What if God had provided a means by which they *could* be ***recovered*** from that dust – even though they would still have to die the natural death and decay back to the dust? This is the problem Paul discusses in Romans 1:18-26.

The Serpent changed God's truth into a lie, and Adam and Eve fell prey to it. Now read Genesis 3:22-24. Why did the Lord God ***deny*** them access to the *Tree of Life*? ***He denied them the privilege of living forever.*** That means that, at some future time, they would turn to dust and cease to exist ... unless some *mitigating circumstance* would allow for their *recovery* even from the dust. That is still a possibility.

Does mankind still have such a *limited* life-span? Read Job 14:1-5. How does Job compare mankind to a flower and a shadow? Can mankind *automatically* live beyond the *limited* life span that God has given him? If he has a *limited* life span, can he be ***inherently immortal***? (Compare this to Genesis 6:3 and Psalm 103:13-16.) These are important elements to know and understand while you are rightly dividing God's word of truth precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little, there a little.

The Apostle Paul's Commentary

Now read Hebrews 9:27. Is mankind expected to die at

least once? Would you consider that to be his *natural* death – whether timely or untimely? What does Paul imply when he says “...but *after this* comes the *judgment*” (emphasis added)? This, no doubt, is framed around Genesis 2:15-17; 3:19-24 where Adam was warned about “eating” from the “tree of the knowledge of good and evil” as opposed to the “tree of life” and all the other fruit-bearing trees in the Garden of Eden.

The sequence we see there is: life, death, return to the dust. Nothing is said about an immortal soul indwelling the human body. That sequence implies one *death* ... and the ensuing *judgment* is to return to the dust out of which they were made. Embalming the dead only retards the disintegration process. Paul implies that the same *judgment* sequence thereafter applies to all humans.

Notice Paul’s use of *sequence* in his statement in v. 27: *death* and *judgment*. We know of at least two scriptural references where a human died more than once: Jonah (see Matt. 12:40) and Lazarus (John 11:1-46). Matthew 27:52, 53 implies a physical resurrection to human life of many dead believers when Jesus Christ died on the cross. They were not *spirits*; they were *humans* who were raised from the dead to *human* life.

There is no indication of how long they had been dead or who they were. But ... they went into Jerusalem and communicated with many there. So, even though Paul’s statement is generally true, there have been exceptions and extenuating circumstances that allowed exceptions to the rule.

Had any of those who were resurrected been given a *final judgment* – like going to heaven or hell? Apparently not ... mainly because the time for *judgment* has not yet come (see Matt. 25:31-34). Even then, judgment will consist of either entering the Kingdom of God (Rev. 20:1, 2, 10; 22:3) or being destroyed in the Lake of Fire (Rev. 20:15; see also Mal. 4:1-3; Isa. 65:17-25). Human *mortality* will cease to exist

only through Jesus Christ and the sacrifice He made for our sins.

Chapter Four

Understanding “Redemption”

Now read Romans 8:20-25. To what was the creation subjected because of mankind’s sin? Does that include man-kind? Yes. What, exactly, is the vanity and bondage to corruption (KJV), frustration and enslavement to decay (*Modern Language*), and futility and bondage to decay (RSV) of which Paul speaks in vv. 20, 21? What is the redemption of the body of which he speaks in v. 23? Do verses 23, 24 tell you that you presently have this redemption? How do definitions of terms help you to understand this mystery of God?

What is “Death”?

In Romans 8:20-25, Paul uses the Greek term phthora to describe the condition to which the creation has been subjected because of sin. In Romans 6:23, he says that “the wages of sin is death” (emphases added). Connecting the “dots,” we should understand that creation has a death sentence hanging over it because of sin. “Death” is the cessation of life. That death sentence includes mankind.

Read carefully Ecclesiastes 3:18-22. The main thought there is that animals and humans suffer the same fate: “...all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again” (v. 20; emphases added). That statement contradicts the concept held by most of traditional Christianity that man either is, or has, an immortal soul.

As Paul puts it, all of creation groans to be delivered

from this vanity and bondage to corruption. Phthora means: “ruin, destruction, dissolution, deterioration, corruption” – all of which imply the ultimate death and destruction of all that presently exists. Too many “intelligent” people sigh and cry over “climate change” without understanding that it is God-induced because of our sins (Gen. 3:17-24; Lev. 26:14-46; Deut. 28:15-68).

Paul positively asserts that there will be some who will be delivered from this death sentence: the Children of God. Everyone else will be ultimately destroyed and cast into utter oblivion – a state of non-existence in which they are totally erased from the mind and memory of God and all of those who are ultimately redeemed out of it (Isa. 65:16; Mal. 4:1; Rev. 20:14, 15).

No one but Jesus Christ has presently experienced that redemption (see Acts 26:22, 23; 1 Cor. 15:12-20). It is something for which we, in faith, still hope. Paul says that we do not have it if we are still hoping for it.

Jesus Christ was the captain of our salvation (Heb. 2:10). What does that mean? The term captain is translated from the Greek term archegos, which has a variety of meanings that apply. In this situation, the Greek term essentially means: “leader, ruler, prince.” However, there are other definitions that bring more clarity to the term: pioneer and first-born being two of them. In that sense, Jesus was the first-born child of God where a human was changed from flesh to spirit. He was, in fact, the prototype of that process.

The archegos is the one who begins something as the first in a series ... supplying the impetus (the force or energy by which something moves) by which others will follow. He is also the originator/founder of that something (Phil. 2:5-13).

In an odd sense, the expression can include the term guinea pig (any subject used in an experiment). That is the sense of Acts 26:23. He was the “pioneer.” Because of the

success of Jesus Christ's death and resurrection (redemption), He made it possible for humans to also make the transition from flesh to spirit (see John 3:3-8) at the appointed time. It is called being "born again." It is more than a spiritual conversion of the mind and heart.

Read Hebrews 10:1-15 with that in mind. In those verses, Paul explains that the animal sacrifices were types and symbols of a greater sacrifice that was to come. The animal sacrifices were repetitious year-after-year ... and did not accomplish what the greater sacrifice would accomplish. So, what was the solution? A once-and-for-all sacrifice (Heb. 10:10, 12). At this point, you should read John 6:35-65. What does this mean?

In Hebrews 10:5, Paul explains the role played by Jesus Christ in the sacrificial situation: "You have fitted me with a body." In order to understand the archegos concept, you need to understand the concept of this "body." Paul covered it in Philippians 2:5-11 and Colossians 1:12-20. Peter covered it in 1 Peter 1:18-21. Once you have studied those three scriptural references, you should understand the following explanation. Pay very close attention to the details.

Paul shows in Philippians 2:5-11 that the Word God was equal with His divine partner (v. 6; see also John 3:1-3, 14). Before the creation of the orderly universe, He gave up that equality by volunteering to become a human sacrifice for any sins future mankind might commit (vv. 6-8). That is what made Him captain. "God" had never before taken on the human body.

Peter compliments this message by showing in 1 Peter 1:18-20 that this decision was made before the creation of the orderly universe ... before any of the present creation had taken place. Peter shows that He would become a living human sacrifice for the sins of mankind.

In essence, the Word volunteered to be the "guinea pig" for the process by which humans would be able to die and

later raised to eternal spirit composition like Elohim has. In order for that to be done, the Word would have to be “fitted” with a **human** body (John 3:14; Matt. 1; Luke 2).

What does Paul show us in Colossians 1:12-20? Verse 12 says that God has made it possible for us to participate in that same process of being changed from flesh to eternal spirit. In vv. 13, 14, he calls it being “...translated into the kingdom of His dear Son” by redemption (Greek = apolutrosis). That word apolutrosis means that all of our sins will be forgiven, and we will be freed from the limitations of the human body of flesh-and-blood (see 1 Cor. 15:52-54; 4:7-5:8; Eph. 1:3-14). Colossians 1:19 shows that the Father gave Jesus Christ all the power of the Godhead to be the Chief Executive Officer of this plan (Matt. 28:18-20).

Now read Romans 6:23 again. What is the **gift** of God? Eternal life. Would you have eternal life if, after the death of the human body, you continue to exist as an immortal soul (as some claim: the **real person**) that is burning forever, but not consumed, in hellfire? Yes. Is that kind of eternal life the opposite of the death that is brought by sin? Yes. Would it be necessary, therefore, for us to understand the true difference between life and death? Absolutely! Here is where the definition of terms is critical to our understanding of God’s word. Read carefully the following historical record.

The “Immortal Soul” Concept

Socrates traveled to Egypt to study their concept of the immortal soul. The Egyptians did not create the immortal soul concept; they learned it from the Eleusinian Mystery religion which originally was created by the Babylonian Mystery religion. Socrates then taught this concept to his most famous student, Plato. However, Plato was not Socrates’s only student ... so, the concept was more widely spread than through Plato. Plato, in turn, gave this definition

of death in his book *The Phaedo*:

The [immortal] soul, whose inseparable attribute is life, will never admit to life's opposite, death. Thus, the soul is shown to be immortal, and since immortal, indestructible. ... Do we believe there is such a thing as death? To be sure. And is this nothing but the separation of the soul and body? And being dead is the attainment of this separation, when the soul exists in herself and separate from the body, and the body is parted from the soul. That is death. ... Death is merely the separation of the soul and body" (emphases added).

However, Plato never considered the immortal souls as having being dead before their original fall from the heavenly heights ... which necessitated the occupation of a human body (or bodies) in order to regain their positions in the heavenly heights through a series of reincarnations over 10,000 years!

Note this definition by Hobbs: "The moment that [Adam and Eve] chose Satan's will instead of God's will, they died spiritually" (p. 54; emphases added). He based that concept on the fact that they did not immediately physically die when they ate the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil.

Is that the length and breadth and depth and height of what the Lord God meant in Genesis 2:17 when He told Adam that eating the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil would bring to him death? Is spiritual separation from God all that was included in that warning? Did God mean only that man's soul was going to be separated from his body? Or, that a spiritual relationship was not going to exist between God and man? This is important information for understanding God's truth.

These definitions presuppose that an indestructible im-

mortal soul can burn for ever and ever in hellfire and still be considered dead – by virtue of being separated from the body and spiritually separated from God! The general traditional “Christian” claim is that the body will return to dust and the immortal soul will go either to heaven or hell. At Christ’s return, the “Christian’s” body and soul will be reunited. That is traditional “Christianity’s” bastardized concept of Platonic theology derived from paganism. Does that agree with the term redemption? No. Why?

We have to look at and seriously consider other factors revealed in God’s truth. One of those factors is contingent on what God considers death to be.

God’s Definition of “Death”

The above Platonic concept is not death by God’s definition. And ... we must understand God’s definition if we are to understand from what we are being delivered through Jesus Christ.

In John 3:16, what does Jesus mean when He says that those who believe on the Son of God shall not perish? How are perishing and condemnation (spoken of in vv. 17, 18) connected?

The Greek term John uses for perish is apollumi, which means “to be destroyed, ruined.” When something is destroyed, it is put to an end. There is nothing left of it. When something is ruined, it is destroyed beyond recovery. To perish is to become destroyed or ruined beyond recovery. To be condemned, in this case, means to be sentenced to destruction and ruin.

Read Genesis 2:17 again. What does God mean by the term die? Does it mean to merely have a limited lifespan? The human body was not intended to be the eternal body of man. Genesis 1:26-28 presupposes that being created in the image of God has a greater goal than the mere physical hu-

man body. We can derive the solution to this mystery from Ephesians 1:3-14.

Paul shows there that God the Father and Jesus Christ had a plan, before the creation of the orderly universe, to adopt mankind into the Elohim Family through Jesus Christ. This plan stipulated that man had to be holy, without blame, and loving (v. 4) in order to qualify for that adoption. It also implies that we have to be changed into God's spirit in order to become part of the Elohim Family.

For all practical purposes, before They created anything, God and the Word (John 1:1-3, 14) had an established law of behavior not unlike the Ten Commandments: love God supremely and love your neighbor as you love yourself. No ... hating yourself does not allow you to hate your neighbor.

They anticipated that mankind would possibly fall under the influence of sin (transgressing God's law) because they understood that giving them the freedom of choice could eventually include the choice to transgress that law. Our proof of that claim is found in 1 Peter 1:18-20.

There, Peter speaks of action taken before the creation of the orderly universe (v. 20 ... related to Ephesians 1:3-14). That was when the Word (the One who became Jesus Christ) volunteered to be a blood sacrifice for any sins mankind might commit and disqualify himself/herself from the ultimate goal of adoption into the Elohim Family (see also Philippians 2:5-11). That is when He volunteered to be the "guinea pig" for the ultimate redemption of mankind.

God's Definition of "Redemption"

Why give this lengthy explanation? This is a sort of explanation of the pre-creation history of Elohim's forethought about redemption. If you pay attention to this discussion, you should come to a point where you realize that salvation is not a matter of saving your immortal soul! You do not

have an immortal soul! It is about how to successfully complete the redemption process! If you do not pay attention to the definitions of terms, then you can be led astray from God's truth and lose your opportunity to be redeemed!

The operative word in Ephesians 1:14 is redemption. The Greek term is apolutrosis. The definition of that word means two things: (1) deliverance from the consequences of one's sins, and (2) deliverance from the limitations of the fleshly body. God and the Word figured that out before the creation of the orderly universe.

They determined before the creation of the orderly universe that, ultimately, humans will be given a spirit body like theirs and become totally free of everything we are as humans so that we can be true members of the Elohim Family (see also Gen. 1:26-28 again). It is, in simple terms, an adoption process ... a legal process by which we will be taken into the Elohim Family and treated as though we are naturally born children.

Nowhere in paganism is the immortal soul thought of being the same as the "God" kind. As Socrates and Plato opined: immortal souls were uncreated and existed alongside of "God." Therefore, they are naturally indestructible.

The angels are not "Elohim" ... even though they are spirit beings. Angels can be destroyed if their actions warrant it. Revelation 20:10 ("tormented day and night for ever and ever") has more to do with the absolute certainty of their fate than it does the longevity of it. Ezekiel 28:13-18 is a discussion of the archangel Lucifer (who became Satan the Devil), his sin, and his fate. Read very carefully v. 18, 19. What do you think the expressions "I will bring you to ashes upon the earth" and "never shall you be [exist] any more" mean? The absolute certainty of his death and destruction. Isaiah 65:16, 17 supports that conclusion. Why will Elohim erase such things from Their memory?

The deliverance from the limitations of the flesh-and-

bones body is the point at which we are given the *spirit* body mentioned in 1 Corinthians 15:46, 50-54. That is when humans achieve the finalization of the **adoption** process discussed in Ephesians 1:3-14.

The basic rules of adoption require that the adopted person is to be given full membership in the adopting family with no distinction being made between them and any natural-born children that exist. Nevertheless, we will bear the **full image** of the God-kind (see 1 John 3:2). Why? Read 1 Corinthians 15:50. What does it say about flesh-and-blood being an **inheritor** in the *God* realm? It cannot be done. Something has to be done to facilitate that action.

This is the point of Jesus's conversation with Nicodemus in John 3:3-8. It is a matter of being **born again**. Jesus's remark in v. 13 should give a big signal that no human except Jesus Christ has completed the **born-again** process (see also John 3:13). All dead humans are still lying lifeless in their graves ... and will not have access to the **completion** of the **born-again** process until Jesus Christ returns to put it into effect.

That is Paul's point in 1 Corinthians 15:50-54 and 2 Corinthians 4:7-5:8. Read those references carefully because they reveal how the "earthen vessel" (4:7; 5:1) will be changed into a "house which is from heaven" (5:2-4). That does not mean that they will go to heaven to get it.

Now read Revelation 20:4, 5. It was revealed to the Apostle John that the return of Jesus Christ effects the **first** resurrection. What have I taught you about **ordinal numbers**? It is simple: *First* presupposes *second* and can include an order out to *ad infinitum*. There will be more than one resurrection of the dead (see also Rev. 20:5-15).

If Acts 26:22, 23 and 1 Corinthians 15:20 tell us that Jesus was the "**firstfruits** of them that have died," then we should understand that other "fruits" **must be** produced. Those raised to eternal spirit life **at Christ's return** will be

the other “firstfruits” that are required. From there, there is room for other “fruits” to be “harvested” *ad infinitum*.

Paul goes through the process in 1 Corinthians 15:35-54. Read it carefully ... noting Paul’s comment in vv. 46-49. Presently, we are bodies of death because at some point we will die and go to our graves. If we have to lie there for very long, we will return to our dust. But ... we have this great hope of redemption set before us made possible through Jesus Christ (Eph. 1:3-14).

Because of the revelation made to the Apostle John in Revelation 20:5 regarding the first resurrection, we should expect at least a second resurrection. Pay attention to v. 6 and note that the people in the first resurrection will rule and reign with Jesus Christ for 1,000 years ... and the second death will have no power over them. Where will they have spent those 1,000 years?

Zechariah 14 gives us more details. Jesus Christ and the saints who have been changed from flesh to spirit at His return will engage in the battle of Armageddon (see Rev. 16:17-21). He will bring the resurrected saints (the firstfruits) with Him (v. 5; see also Rev. 19:6-21) and conquer His enemies (v. 9; Rev. 11:15). He will set His throne in Jerusalem (vv. 4, 16; Isa. 2:2-40) and begin 1,000 years of instructing the surviving human nations in His truth ... as well as any offspring they will have during that 1,000-year period of time. Why? He intends to convert them and also bring them to salvation: second “fruits”!

So, what happens at the end of the 1,000 years? Revelation 20:5 says that there will be another resurrection from the dead. It continues that thought in Revelation 20:11-15. There will be another period of judgment ... which presupposes a “harvest” of “secondfruits.”

This should tell us that the return of Jesus Christ does not mark the end of man’s access to salvation through Jesus Christ! On the contrary: redemption continues among hu-

mans! This can be understood from Isaiah 2:1-5; 65:17-25, Zechariah 14:16-21, and Revelation 20:4, 5, 11-13. More proof will be discussed later. Make sure that you have studied this thoroughly and understand all of the “proof” points thoroughly.

Three Major Concepts

So far in this discussion, we have focused on three major concepts that we need to thoroughly understand: Why God: (1) decided to create mankind in Their image; (2) gave them a standard of behavior by which to live; and (3) gave them a temporary life during which they can learn to live by Elohim’s thoughts and ways in order to be fit to be changed into Their true image and treated as though they are natural offspring (Eph. 1:3-14; Heb. 12). This is where we begin to understand the true concepts of “redemption” and “salvation.”

If you read Zechariah 14:9, you will see that Jesus Christ will become the King of the Earth and His saints will rule with Him (see end of v. 5: “all the saints with you”). After the return of Jesus Christ, there will continue to exist humans who will be taught God’s thoughts and ways (vv. 16-21; Rev. 20:4-6). Isaiah 65:17-25 teaches us the same thing. Yet, you never hear of such a thing in the preachments of traditional Christianity. Why? They have a grossly incomplete and faulty gospel (“good news”).

Also, you can see in Revelation 21:2 and 22:3 that Jesus Christ and God the Father ultimately will move their thrones to the New Earth (that is: new in quality; not a former earth that is destroyed and replaced). Jesus Christ will begin to do that at His return (Isaiah 2:1-5; Zech. 14:9; Rev. 20:4-6).

Read Isaiah 65:17-25. When Jesus Christ has defeated all of the enemies of God, the previous universal creation will undergo a “reconstruction” in which no sin will occur. You

should be able to understand that there will still be the production of human beings. Why? It is apparent that the adoption process will continue *ad infinitum*.

After all, you must understand Genesis 13:15, 16; 15:5; and 22:17 relative to Numbers 23:19. How much dust, stars, and seashore sand is there? Why have an eternal continuation of humans if there will be no more adoptions to be processed from the infinite number of Abraham's "seed"? That is ordinal "fruit" *ad infinitum*! And ... they, apparently, will live very long human lives.

Chapter Five

Understanding the “Second Death”

Revelation 20:14, 15 is where you find the mention of the second death. What does that mean? Read Revelation 20:14, 15 carefully. What do you suppose the “second death” would be? Do you think that such a condemnation would be a death from which that individual will not, and cannot, be recovered?

How would it be possible for a confessed “Christian” to be judged worthy of the second death? That is a concept not considered among “once-saved-always-saved” people. Pay very close attention to the following discussion. It is important to understand the difference between one’s conversion and one’s salvation.

Falling Away from the True Faith

Read Hebrews 9:19-28. What is Paul’s point in that declaration? He is explaining the difference between a type and the reality. The blood of the calves and goats that were offered during the Old Testament times was a type of the shed blood of the coming Saviour (see Gen. 3:14, 15; Ex. 12; Lev. 16 for examples). Also read Hebrews 10. All of this is typological language that pictures the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ in order to have one eternal holy sacrifice for all of mankind’s sins. The death of Jesus Christ is the reality of that type.

We know of situations in which humans have died and been successfully resuscitated. Does that negate all of these scriptures? No. Is there a condition here that mankind can enter and from which they cannot be retrieved? Yes. Compare this to Malachi 4:1 and Revelation 20:14, 15. What do they say? Are both references to God's word of truth?

Now read Hebrews 9:28. Does it appear that our salvation actually comes when Jesus Christ returns ... not when we make a profession of faith and get baptized? You can get God's truth about this when you properly understand the term "second death."

Before we enter that discussion, read Hebrews 6:4-6; 10:26, 27. Do you see anything there that helps you to define "death" ... and, possibly, the second "death"? Why do I ask such questions?

Hebrews 6:4-6 discusses those that "fall away" from the true faith. Verse 4 explicitly implies that they would have made a profession of faith in Jesus Christ, been baptized, had hands laid upon them for receipt of the Holy Spirit, and ... at least for a while ... practiced true religion before God and Christ. It is also apparent that they would have been blessed by God because of their practice of the true faith.

What happens to them if they "fall away"? Paul says that it is impossible for them to be reinstated because that would require another crucifixion of Jesus Christ. This is a serious matter for those whom God has called into His truth.

What about Hebrews 10:26, 27? Willful sin is the problem. It is nigh unto impossible for even the most faithful Christian to have no sin in his/her life.

Consider Matthew 6:12. The request that our debts be forgiven as we have forgiven those who are debtors against us. The Greek term is *opheilema*, which, in the ordinary sense means "a debt owed." However, in the religious sense, it means sin. *The Jerusalem Bible* translates it "failings." *The Living Bible* translates it "sins." The overarching sense of the

expression is that it is a type of sin that must be forgiven. We have to do that to our fellowman just as God has done it to us. Some translations say “trespasses.” What shall we understand here?

We have to take into consideration the false teachings of mainstream “Christianity.” The belief in man either having or being an immortal soul is adding to or taking away from God’s word of truth (see Deut. 4:2; 12:32; Josh. 1:7; Prov. 30:6; Rev. 22:18, 19). So is the doctrine of going to heaven as your eternal reward. We have covered that doctrine in several other contexts. Carefully consider the following explanation.

If you have, or are, an immortal soul that leaves the body upon its death, why would a resurrection of the body to pronounce a second death be necessary – especially if your immortal soul has already gone to its eternal fate of living in heaven or roasting in hellfire immediately at death? Why should the body and the immortal soul be reunited in order to receive a second judgment regarding heaven or hell?

Read 1 Corinthians 15:25, 26. What is Paul’s meaning of the term “death”? What is Jesus going to do to “death”? Based on what you now know, what does that mean? Why would He want to do such a thing? Conquering death means that He will thereby conquer sin. So, conquering sin will also conquer death (1 John 3:4; Rom. 6:23).

If the wages of sin is death, then Jesus will have to conquer all sin. If He does so, there will come a point in time when all that has separated us from God (see Isaiah 59:2) and caused the vanity and bondage to decay to come upon us as a curse (see Rom. 8:18-23) will be destroyed and never again allowed to exist.

In fulfillment of Isaiah 9:7; 65:17-25, humans will continue to exist on the earth without the taint of sin. The Family of God can continue to expand as the humans are educated in righteousness and subsequently changed from flesh to

spirit when they reach the point where that can be done due to proper spiritual growth and development. Death and decay will no longer be a problem. Christ will have destroyed death.

So, the ***second*** death is the ***final*** judgment against the incorrigibles: those who are ***incapable*** of being taught, corrected, or amended; not reformable: depraved, delinquent. That is the sense of Hebrews 9:26-28; 10:26-31; Revelation 20:14, 15; and Malachi 4:1-3. Make note that Malachi reveals that they will be burned to ***ashes*** ... which shows that they are ***not*** immortal souls that will be tormented ***forever*** in hellfire.

Chapter Six

The New Heavens and The New Earth

Isaiah 65:20 seems to indicate that death and sin will continue to occur during the New Heavens/New Earth period. To some, the statement that "... the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed ..." (*KJV*; emphases added) is a mysterious statement ... if such is the case in the New Heavens and New Earth. Let's investigate the logic of that thought.

The "Sinner" in Isaiah 65:20

The Hebrew word that is translated by *KJV* as "sinner" is *chata*. According to the *Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew-English Lexicon*, the term means "to miss the mark; commit an error or mistake". It does not appear to mean anything that calls for the death penalty. It is more of a performance failure that can be remedied with proper instruction and training.

Read Isaiah 30:20, 21. Notice the setting of this information. It is framed in the context of the New Heavens and New Earth period. What role do the "teachers" play? Verse 21 informs us that the human population can still "miss the mark" and "commit an error or mistake." That conclusion is deduced from the context.

Paul addresses this kind of problem in Galatians 3:23-25. In this analogy, he describes the Law of God as being a tutor for the spiritually immature who have not yet come to faith.

Contemplate what he means by that statement (v. 23). It is self-evident that Paul considers “coming to faith” as being an educational process. For that reason, he says that the law is really our tutor to bring us to Christ so that we can be in a correct relationship with God (see Eph. 1:4). Once that proper faith has come, we no longer need the tutorial services of the law because its demands of godly love toward God and our human fellows will have been learned and spiritually comprehended ... acted upon “naturally” thereafter.

How do the “teachers” in Isaiah 30:20, 21 operate? They provide guidance, instruction, and correction. It does not appear that the “guilty” party is summarily sentenced to death. It appears that such an individual will have missed the goal set before him/her ... or, failed to carry out correctly a specified right and/or duty. That is the sense of the word chata. Such like problems with “missing the mark” are common among the “young” as they go through an educational process. It should be expected as part of the learning process. Read Paul’s comments about this in Hebrews 12:1-11. We are presently receiving a similar type of education.

The “Infants of Days”

Other information in Isaiah 65:20 regarding still births (“infant of days”) and premature deaths (100 years) is considered by some scholars to be an interpolation – the insertion of something that was not originally intended. Why?

It is apparent from the beginning of v. 20 (“There shall be no more thence...”). In the context, that means that, forward from the time of the creation of the New Heavens and New Earth, no such things will exist in the New Heavens and New Earth. The term “thence” presupposes that at the moment the New Heavens and New Earth come into existence, there will be no more such like problems among the human population: no more still births and untimely abortions (“in-

fants of days”) and premature deaths.

The Law demonstrates that the human is reliant on a higher power for understanding how to love God supremely and fellow man as self. By this comment in Isaiah 32:20, 21, we can tell that God’s law will not have been discarded by the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. Rather, any kind of “missing the mark” and “errors in judgment” will be corrected in a manner that will prevent them from settling into the permanent memory of the individual human.

This is God’s revelation. For example, how much sense would it make to impose death into such an environment when the New Heavens and New Earth come as a result of Jesus Christ having defeated all of the enemies of God ... including death and the grave (1 Cor. 15:24-28; Rev. 20:14, 15)?

Chapter Seven

Understanding “Eternal” Life

Eternal *life* is given by God through Jesus Christ; it is not something that we have *inherently* in the guise of an immortal soul (Romans 6:23). Now read Hebrews 2:16-18; 4:15. Was Jesus fully *human*? Was He tempted in every way that the common, ordinary human is tempted? How was He different from us? If He was fully human, would you have expected *Him* to have or be an *immortal soul* – that is, if any such thing *really* exists?

How Pagan Concepts Change God’s Truth into a Lie (Romans 1:18-25)

By Hobbs’s definition, would the *real* Jesus have been that immortal soul? It is widely admitted that Jesus Christ was born into the *human* realm as a “full-blooded” human (John 1:1-3, 14). If He became flesh-and-blood, then it was possible for Him to die and turn to dust (Gen. 3:19). Do you see anything wrong with that idea? Do not fall prey to the idea that He was God-in-the-flesh and somehow *exempt* from the death of a human being. He was not.

Now read 1 Peter 3:18-22. Read this very carefully. Why did Jesus suffer for sins? What does Peter mean that He was “put to *death* in the flesh, but *quicken*ed [made alive] by the Spirit” (emphases added)? Pay attention to the prepositions *in* and *by*. By what means did He go and preach to the *spirits* in prison? Who were these *spirits* in prison?

If you understand that there is no such thing as an immor-

tal soul, then you will, no doubt, understand the ridiculous nature of the following discussion. Pay very close attention to the logic behind it.

Several years ago, a young theology student wrote a paper about these verses and asked me to critique it for him. His premise was that, after His crucifixion, Jesus went in the spirit to the realm of the dead to preach to the disembodied immortal souls of the people wiped out by the Flood during Noah's time so that they could be saved and transferred to heaven.

Similar concepts have been in Traditional Christian theology for centuries – some involving the salvation of the Old Testament patriarchs. He wanted me to put my stamp of approval on his premise. He was thinking that he had discovered some great scriptural truth. Right away, I saw that he had a problem with his definition of terms. If the premise from which you work is wrong, then your conclusion will also be wrong.

This concept states that while the body of Jesus Christ hung on the cross and was subsequently placed into a sepulcher, the real Jesus Christ (His immortal soul) was going about preaching to these disembodied souls! On its face, it was declaring that the real Jesus did not really die – only His human body died. Think about this in the context of Paul's discussion in 1 Corinthians 15:12-20 (re-read it).

Peter agrees with Paul because, like Paul, Peter says that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead by the Spirit. The preposition by is used in the *KJV*; whereas, the preposition in is used by many other translations: that is ... He was raised in the Spirit. While it is true that He was raised in a spirit body, that resurrection from the dead was brought about by the power of God's Holy Spirit.

Note this rendering from the *Living Bible*:

But though his body died, his spirit lived on, and it

was in the spirit that he visited the spirits in prison, and preached to them – spirits of those who, long before in the days of Noah, had refused to listen to God...” (emphases added).

Do you understand the problem with that translation? It suggests that Jesus Christ was both dead and alive at the same time! There is the problem in that conclusion.

I would not call this a translation; I would call it an interpretation suited to fit one’s personal theological paradigm about the immortal soul. If this rendering is true, how did Jesus Christ die for your sins? By being dead and alive at the same time? That is nonsense on the highest level!

The crucifixion was not the fullness of His sacrifice. He could not have been taken down from His crucifix, resuscitated, and have walked away to continue living. It was by His death that we shall be saved. So, the question here is simple: When did Jesus Christ go to these spirits in prison? Faulty translations of Scripture are a problem.

Read Matthew 12:38-40. What sign did Jesus give these scribes and Pharisees? How many days and nights would He be in the grave? If you read Jonah 2:3-7, you will need to note the description Jonah gives of how he died by drowning and being swallowed by the great fish. His prayer, whether uttered before he died or after God resuscitated him, was answered by God three days and three nights after he died. Yet, many believe that Jonah was alive for three days and three nights in the belly of that great fish!

I have seen drawings in Sunday School classes where Jonah was sitting behind a crate ... up to his buttocks in sea water ... writing some kind of manuscript by candlelight while sea trash floated around him! It impressed the children that Jonah was alive.

On the contrary, Jonah was dead in the great fish’s belly three days and three nights; Jesus was dead in the grave three

days and three nights after His death. Neither of them had any awareness of anything! No thoughts, no plans, no memories!

Read Job 14:1-15. That is a scriptural refutation of the immortal soul concept. It is as applicable to the New Testament concept of death as it is to the Old Testament concept. Accepting the pagan lie about immortal souls and going immediately to heaven or hell changes God's truth into a lie (John 4:23, 24).

The "Spirits" in Prison

Now, who were these spirits in prison? There are two places in New Testament scripture where spirits are said to have been placed into prison: 2 Peter 2:4 and Jude 6. It is unfortunate that several translations refer to them as having been cast into a **fiery hell**. What Peter actually says is that God confined them to Tartarus. This is a place of confinement where the rebellious angels are kept until God's judgment comes upon them. Jude 6 says the same thing.

The Greek word pneuma is translated spirits here. That definition is determined by the context in which it is used. The *Bauer-Arndt-Gingrich Greek/English Lexicon* says that, in this context, it refers to an independent spirit-being that cannot be perceived by the physical senses – especially to a demonic power, evil spirit, or fallen angel (pp. 681, 682).

So, we could at least understand that Jesus did **not** go to visit disembodied immortal souls during the three days and nights He was supposed to be dead. Perhaps, during the 120 years before the Flood, He went in spirit to preach to the rebellious angels led astray by Lucifer – in an effort to reconcile them to God. However, there is no immortal soul there!

Adam Clarke began writing his commentary around A.D. 1801 and finished it in A.D. 1826. That is about 25 years of researching and sorting out information. That, in

and of itself, does not *automatically* make his conclusions God's truth. However, he has an interesting comment about this scripture that gives us another possibility.

He refers to Genesis 6:3, where the Lord God (the One who became Jesus Christ – my thought, not Clarke's) states emphatically that His spirit would not endlessly strive with rebellious mankind. He set a time limit for something to happen: 120 years. During the following 120 years, Noah, a preacher of righteousness (Hebrews 11:7; 2 Peter 2:5) who was empowered by God's Holy Spirit, preached to his neighbors about the coming judgment. Did they repent? No. They mercilessly mocked and ridiculed Noah as he busied himself with building the ark.

Clarke considers this to have been the basis for their *spiritual* imprisonment, which is *yet to come to final judgment*. He concludes by saying this:

There is *no ground to believe* that the text speaks of *Christ's* going to hell to preach the gospel to the damned, or of His going to some *feigned* [imagined] place where the souls of the patriarchs were detained, to whom He preached, and whom He delivered from that place, and took with Him to paradise (*Adam Clarke's Commentary: One Volume Edition*; Ralph Earle, ed.; Baker Book House: Grand Rapids; 1967; p. 1306; emphases added).

What Clarke discusses there is true. It is validated by what Jesus Christ said in John 3:13: "No man [that is: *human*] has ascended up to *heaven*, but he that came down from *heaven*, even the Son of man [who is in *heaven*]." So, that "man" (human) who *has* gone to heaven is *Jesus* Christ. His comment was made a few millennia *after* the flood. In John 3:13, Jesus Christ also invalidates the concept of going to heaven, hell, hades, sheol, or purgatory immediately upon

death. All dead humans are lying in their graves waiting for their time for resurrection to come (see Gen. 3:19, 24; Job 14:1-15; Eccle. 3:18-22; 9:4-10; 12:7).

*** One might very well assume that *The Anchor Bible* followed Greek, Latin, and Syriac manuscripts that bracketed [who is in heaven] to demonstrate John's thoughts, not Jesus Christ's. It would be difficult to reconcile Jesus speaking on the earth to His disciples while being in heaven at the same time. ***

Clarke simply disagrees with the idea that Jesus went to an imaginary place like Sheol/Hades during Noah's time to preach to the supposed disembodied souls of those who died during the flood. It would make sense that imaginary concepts like that play no part in God's truth. Clarke makes no clarifying comment on whether or not immortal souls are equally imaginary.

Either concept leads to the same conclusion: Jesus Christ did not have an immortal soul. He died for our sins! He was dead three days and three nights. As one once-famous minister used to say about the dead: "The dead are like old Rover – when they're dead, they're dead all over" (Eccle. 9:4-10).

Only Jesus Christ, who was our example (Heb. 10:1-14), has been resurrected and made that journey to the heaven where God's throne is. And ... if you read Revelation 20 correctly ... it appears that those who will be resurrected from the dead or instantaneously changed to spirit at Christ's return will not remain there if they go because Isaiah 2:1-5; 65:17-25; Zechariah 14, and Revelation 20:4-6 explain that there is going to be lots of work to be done on the earth by Jesus Christ and those in the first resurrection to conquer all of God's enemies and bring about the times of refreshing and the restitution of all things (Acts 3:19-21; 1 Cor. 15:24-28).

Properly Understanding “Heaven”

If Jesus was factually correct about no one but Himself having ever gone to heaven, then it would cancel the concept that Enoch and Elijah were taken to heaven. That is not the only thing that would cancel that concept. It seems that 2 Kings 2:11 states that Elijah was taken to heaven by a fiery chariot. But ... you have to know what that word heaven actually means in the Hebrew language.

The Hebrew term is shameh. *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance* (key number 8064) defines it thus: “to be lofty; the sky (as aloft, the dual [usage] perh. alluding to the visible arch in which the clouds move, as well as the higher ether where the celestial bodies revolve).”

The implication is that Elijah was merely taken up into the sky close to the upper atmosphere and deposited somewhere on the earth out of the reach of King Ahab. We can also rule out his having been taken into outer space: “the higher ether where the celestial bodies revolve.”

It is interesting that 2 Chronicles 21:12-15 shows that Elijah wrote a letter to King Jehoram sometime after his experience with the fiery chariot. The implication is that he was still somewhere on the earth. However, some commentators (no doubt under the influence of concepts like immediately going to heaven or hell upon one's death and the immortality of the soul) generally attribute this to a letter written earlier by Elijah but delivered by someone after Elijah's translation to that “heaven” or death.

There is a footnote in my *KJV* that says: “Which was writ before his death.” As one commentator puts it: [Elijah], though not among mortals, still continued to speak.” Again, these comments present a contradiction to Christ's later statement about who has/has not gone to heaven (John 3:13). Which do you choose to believe?

Another commentator suggests that, before his transla-

tion, Elijah gave the letter to Elisha to give to King Jehoram after Elijah was translated to wherever he went ... possibly having been taken up into the high sky and deposited somewhere else on the earth. Jesus's comment in John 3:13 would lend some credence to that conclusion. Elijah was a human; so, he would have been included in Jesus's statement.

Here is another aspect of the argument in John 3:13: the word heaven is used three times. The Greek term is *ouranos*. In *Strong's* (key number 3772), the definition admits that it is a usage that means "an elevation in the sky." However, it adds this remark: "by extens. *heaven* (as the abode of God)."

This definition presents another problem relative to whether or not the "saved" human goes immediately to heaven when s/he dies. Why? There is no clear indication in all of Scripture where that **heaven** is located! Of course, the typical denominational "Christian" does not care where it is... as long s/he gets there after death. Clinging to that thought, they fail to understand that nothing has changed since the day of Jesus Christ's statement.

Then there is the following to consider. If you read Hebrews 11 correctly, you will find, beginning with Abel (v. 4), a considerable number of Old Testament people in the true faith endured some of the most grotesque persecutions and deaths. Paul's conclusion in vv. 38, 39 is remarkable and spiritually enlightening: "...they without us should not be made perfect." Why?

According to 1 Corinthians 15:50-54, that does not happen until Jesus Christ returns to conquer the world's evil forces and establish His Kingdom on the earth. His return is the moment at which He will begin His "first harvest" of the faithful who will put on immortality and incorruptibility (vv. 46, 51-54). That will be the time when "they" with "us" will be made perfect by being clothed with spirit bodies instead of bodies of flesh (1 Thes. 4:13-17; 2 Cor. 4:7; 5:1-8).

Eternal Life

What does all of this have to do with *eternal life*? Ephesians 1:14 gives us the best sense of what eternal life is. It comes from the single word *redemption*. This word is from the Greek term *apolutrosis*. It has two intertwined definitions: (1) release from the penalty of sin (that is: death) and (2) release from the limitations of the flesh.

Generally speaking, most people readily understand the first definition because of 1 John 3:4 ... which defines *sin*: “sin is the transgression of the law.” The term *law* refers to that which the Lord God gave to Adam in Genesis 2:16, 17 and Moses in the Old Testament. Paul reveals the consequence of *sin* in Romans 6:23: “The wages of sin is death.” John 1:29 reveals that the *entire world* has sinned in one way or another. Precious few include Genesis 2:16, 17 in the “law” of God.

By that you can conclude that Adam’s, Eve’s, and Cain’s sins were transgressions of God’s law. That law was not *Jewish* law ... as some consider the Old Testament law to have been. Whatever else you might think it to be, Paul says authoritatively in Romans 3:23: “All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.” That being the case, all are under the penalty of death for being sinners. *Apolutrosis* dictates that the death penalty will be *removed* for all who have confessed true faith in the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ.

That covers only the remedy for one’s sins and shortcomings. As long as you are alive in the flesh, you still have to be concerned about Hebrews 6:4-6 ... which tells you that you still can fall away from God’s truth and suffer eternal consequences for doing so. Before the foundation of the orderly universe, God also had a remedy for that.

The paired second definition of *apolutrosis* is very encouraging ... even though you have not yet acquired it in fact. It means that you will be released from the *limitations*

of the flesh. This is where John 3:1-13, 1 Corinthians 15:50-54, and 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17 reveal how one is released from the limitations of the flesh: you have to be born again. Your profession of true faith in Jesus Christ is your conversion. You still remain a flesh-and-blood being bound by the limitations of the flesh. You are on the path toward being born again, but you have not yet achieved that spirit condition. That experience does not come until Jesus Christ returns to “harvest” the firstfruit saints by a resurrection from the dead. Again, Paul shows in 1 Corinthians 15:46-54 what that process will be.

Chapter Eight

A Final Word

From the outset of this lesson, the typical “Christian” was put at a disadvantage. Why? The typical “Christian” does not truly conceive of there being more than one resurrection from the dead ... and that is a generous statement. Why? Their belief in the immortality of the soul hinders their understanding of the necessity of a resurrection from the dead for at least two reasons: (1) they believe that, upon the death of the human body, their immortal soul goes either to heaven or hell, and (2) they also believe that the “saved” person’s soul is rejoined to his/her body when Christ returns. In short, they have been spiritually blinded by the theology that has been borrowed from paganism.

Even then, few have been taught and/or conceived of there being more than one resurrection from the dead. Yet, in plain sight in scripture, we see one at Christ’s return and one 1,000 years afterwards (Rev. 19:1-21; 20:7-15).

It does not make a remarkable impression on the typical “Christian” that not all of the dead are raised at Christ’s return ... and those who are not will be finally raised at the end of the 1,000 years to face judgment: eternal reward or death/destruction (Rev. 20:11-13). Because of the pagan concept of the immortal soul, the typical “Christian” believes that they all went to hell when they died ... or at Christ’s return.

It is because of such spiritual lack of true knowledge, experience, and misunderstanding that this Lesson 10 was written. Remember what we studied here: key words and phrases, definitions of terms, human mortality, redemption, the second death, the new heavens and new earth, and eternal

life. It would not be *hubris* (overweening pride: being proud, arrogant, presumptuous, conceited) to say that such lessons are not generally available to the general religious public.

Think of the “road” you have traveled through this Bible Study Course to get where you are now. If you have truly learned these lessons, then you might very well know many things that your friends and acquaintances do not know.

With all of that under your proverbial “belt,” you have two more outstanding lessons that will teach you about God’s weekly and annual “sabbaths” ... as well as pertinent history about how they were disdained by “Christians” who ultimately created the “Christianity” that is most prevalent today. You will learn some of the most important details about how they literally changed God’s truth into a lie and created a “Christianity” that has no true relationship to God’s truth in Christ.

So, buckle up! You are about to take an exciting spiritual trip on some of the most amazing things you can learn about how God will save humanity through Jesus Christ ... things that are not taught in the 32,000+ “Christian” denominational churches of the world.

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Review Questions

1. What the Bible means by the term death is merely the separation of the soul from the body. (A) True (B) False
2. When Paul said that the spirit body did not come first, he essentially showed that the doctrine of the immortality of the soul is a false doctrine. (A) True (B) False

3. Ezekiel told us that the soul that sins shall surely die. This demonstrates that man is not an immortal soul. (A) True (B) False

4. Paul showed in more than one place that man is mortal, and in order for him to have life after death, he must be raised from death. (A) True (B) False

5. What does God give to the True Christian that serves as a guarantee that He will raise him from the dead?

6. From what two things is the resurrected person set free when he is redeemed from the grave?

A. _____

B. _____

7. All of creation groans for its deliverance from the bondage to corruption. (A) True (B) False

8. If there were any such thing as an immortal soul, it would have eternal life if it were made to burn forever in hellfire. (A) True (B) False

9. The death about which God warned Adam was merely spiritual separation from God. (A) True (B) False

10. John 3:16-18 shows that the unrepentant will be condemned to destruction beyond recovery. (A) True (B) False

11. The term sleep is a euphemism for _____.

12. What does it mean for a dead person to give up the ghost?

13. Is that expression a reference to an immortal soul? (A) Yes
(B) No

14. While Jesus' body was hanging on the cross and lying in the grave, Jesus was actually alive in the spirit preaching to the disembodied souls of the Old Testament saints. (A) True (B) False

15. What two types of resurrections from the dead did Jesus name?

A. _____

B. _____

16. Where did Job want to be put until God's wrath is passed?

17. Will it ever be possible for those in the first resurrection to die again? (A) Yes (B) No

18. How long of a time will separate the first and second resurrections? _____

19. What reward will those in the first resurrection receive that others will not receive?

20. When one is changed from flesh to spirit, it is the time of his being born again. (A) True (B) False

21. When Paul said that we "earnestly desir[e] to be clothed with our house which is from heaven," he was saying that our eternal reward is to go to heaven. (A) True (B) False

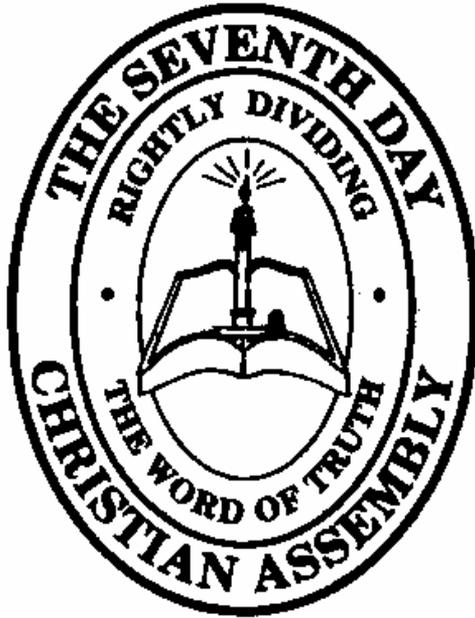
22. When Traditional Christianity uses the expression "absent from the body, present with the Lord," they wrongly assume that one immediately goes to heaven when he dies. (A) True (B) False

23. Firstfruits is an ordinal number that does not allow for any subsequent numbers. (A) True (B) False

24. Secondfruits do not come as the result of a resurrection from the dead. (A) True (B) False

25. Those who are not brought to eternal life will be destroyed – burned to ashes and left neither root nor branch. (A) True (B) False

***You can find the answers on our website @
www.theseventhdaychristianassembly.org***



Straight Talk ... Plain Truth

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