



Bible Student's Notebook™

The Herald of His Grace

Presenting *every man* perfect in Christ Jesus. Colossians 1:28

Volume XV
Issue 375

What Is Death?

by – Dan Sheridan

IS THERE SUCH A THING AS SPIRITUAL DEATH?

How often do you hear people use the phrase “spiritual death”? Did you ever ask yourself if such a phrase is found in Scripture?

There is no such thing as “spiritual death.” According to 1 Corinthians 15, the first man was *not* spiritual – but natural/soulish.

There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, “The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.” Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven.

As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly (:44-49).

DEATH IS A RETURN

So, how can a being that isn’t “spiritual” die a “spiritual” death?

When God told Adam that he was going to die if he ate the fruit from the forbidden tree, He didn’t speculate about some *part* of him dying – he knew exactly what God meant: he knew he was going back to *dust*. Read Genesis 3:19. The penalty for disobedience



was a return to dust – *death is a return to dust*. Death is Genesis 2:7 in reverse. Adam wasn’t alive or conscious before he was formed, and he isn’t conscious now that he has *returned*. He’s dead. The dead aren’t alive.

And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul ... And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die ... Because thou hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it ... In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return (2:7, 16-17; 3:17, 19).

ORTHODOX ZOMBIES: WHERE DO YOU PUT THE “LIVING DEAD”?

Using terminology like “spiritual death” led to the doctrine of eternal torment, because if you believe that people die spiritually, they actually *survive* “physical death.” So, where do you put the “spiritually dead” who never actually died? In heaven, hell or purgatory.

(see *DEATH*, page 3363)

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This free weekly electronic publication (52 times a year) is dedicated to:

- the proclamation of the riches of God's abundant, exceeding grace (Romans 5:20; 11:6; Ephesians 1:7);
- the affirmation of God's purpose to save all mankind through the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (I Timothy 2:3, 4; 4:10; Titus 2:11);
- the "preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began" (Romans 16:25);
- true freedom and liberty apart from law (Galatians 5:1);
- the organic nature of the church, the Body of Christ (I Corinthians 12);
- the distinct message and ministry of Paul, the apostle to the nations (Romans 11:13);
- the importance of receiving all whom Christ has received (Romans 14-15);
- the recovery of rich Biblical truth that has too long remained hidden under the veils of traditionalism, prejudice, misunderstanding, and fear (Mark 7:7, 13);
- the completeness of the believer in Christ (Colossians 2:10), with:
 - total freedom from sins (Colossians 1:14);
 - identity in His death, burial, and resurrection (Romans 6);
 - adult sonship position (Galatians 4).

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PO Box 265, Windber, PA 15963

Office: (800) 784-6010

Local: (814) 701-0063

Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr. – Editor

(clyde@studysshelf.com)

André Sneider – Managing Editor

Rick Lemons – Associate Editor

Department Managers and Assistant Editors

Windber, PA: Clyde L. Pilkington, III, Nathan H. Pilkington,
Janet L. Maher, Aaron Locker

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DEATH (continued from front page)

You see? False terminology leads to a host of evils! The dead are actually alive according to orthodox theology. They are zombies!

**SATAN’S THEOLOGY:
GOD LIED ABOUT DEATH**

Satan’s first lie was about death:

And the serpent said unto the woman, “Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil” (Genesis 3:4-5).

In other words, Satan was saying that God was lying about the wages of sin. Satan said that the dead aren’t really dead – he said that men never *really* die!

Satan says death is to be absent from the body (“*to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord*” – a horrible misquotation of Paul in II Corinthians 5:8; cf. Philippians 1:23).

His lie is that death is:

- Life in a better place;
- A promotion to glory;
- A chariot ride to glory Life;
- That men never really die because they have “immortal souls”;
- Torment in hell;
- Purgatory;
- Utopia;
- Another dimension;
- Life in the heart of the earth –

Anything but what it really is – the opposite of life.

**WILLIAM TYNDALE DRAWS SWORDS
WITH THE CHAMPION OF ORTHODOXY**

This reformer and Bible translator agreed with the Lord Jesus and Paul about the state of the dead, which brought him into conflict with orthodoxy. The champion of orthodoxy of that day was Sir Thomas Moore. He hated the teaching of Tyndale. Tyndale believed that life is a gift from God given in resurrection.

Tyndale was opposed to the teaching of orthodoxy which said that man had an “immortal soul.” Sir Thomas Moore called those who believed like Tyndale a “pestilential sect,” because they held that “all souls lie and sleep till doomsday.”

In 1530 Tyndale responded to Moore:

And ye, in putting them [the departed souls] in heaven, hell, and purgatory, destroy the arguments wherewith Christ and Paul prove the resurrection. ... And again, if the souls be in heaven, tell me why they be not in as good case as the angels be? And then what cause is there of the resurrection?

He also said:

The true faith putteth the resurrection, which we be warned to look for every hour. The heathen philosophers, denying that, did put that the souls did ever live. And the pope joineth the spiritual doctrine of Christ and the fleshly doctrine of philosophers together; things so contrary that they cannot agree, no more than the Spirit and the flesh do in a Christian man. And because the fleshly-minded pope consenteth unto heathen doctrine, therefore he corrupteth the Scripture to stablish it.

Tyndale also said about Moore’s teaching:

And when he [Moore] proveth that the saints be in heaven in glory with Christ already, saying, “If God be their God, they be in heaven, for he is not the God of the dead” [Mark 12:27]; there he stealeth away Christ’s argument, wherewith he proveth the resurrection: that Abraham and all saints should rise again, and not that their souls were in heaven; which doctrine was not yet in the world. And with that doctrine he taketh away the resurrection quite, and maketh Christ’s argument of none effect.

Tyndale gets sarcastic when Moore places his authority above Scripture. Since Moore teaches the opposite of Scripture, Tyndale mocks Moore by suggesting that Paul should have learned from Moore

(see DEATH, page 3366)

Prayer

by — E.W. Bullinger (1837-1913)

In the natural world of physiology, we do not concern ourselves with the phenomena of digestion, but with the obtaining and partaking of our food. It is a sign of an abnormal condition of things if we occupy ourselves with the analysis of our food, or with the process of digestion.



must sink and die.

In like manner, when we substitute the consideration of what prayer is or ought to be, or when or how it should be made, or have to search for suitable words to express the prayer, it ceases to serve its purpose and no longer is the cause or effect of true spiritual vitality.

So it is with our breathing. Our one concern, physiologically, is to obtain pure air, and to breathe it. If we trouble ourselves with the act of breathing itself, we should soon be afraid to breathe at all.

Breathing is at once the effect and the cause of natural life. Prayer is at once the cause and maintenance of spiritual life.

So long as we think nothing about either, we both eat and breathe while we unconsciously carry out the laws of physiology.

To be real, it must be the outcome of the possession of spiritual life. It must be spiritually spontaneous and as much without artificial plan and design as is our natural breathing. The moment it is otherwise, it ceases to be real prayer.

It is even so in the spiritual world. If we content ourselves with analyzing and describing the Word of God, we shall never “grow thereby.” If we would be properly nourished by it, we must actually feed on it – each one for himself. It will not strengthen us merely to listen to addresses about food, or on the art of carving it – we must partake of it ourselves and “inwardly digest it.”

Prayer, therefore, does not necessarily require words.

I called upon thy name, O LORD, out of the low dungeon. Thou hast heard my voice: hide not thine ear at my breathing, at my cry (Lamentations 3:55-56).

So with prayer, it is our spiritual breath. The moment we think about how we ought to breathe, or occupy ourselves with what breathing is, instead of breathing, we

It may be only the groaning, as of Israel.



Names and Order of the Books of the Old Testament, The

by — E.W. Bullinger

To get back to the “original” is ever the endeavor of the careful Bible student. To find that he has followed in the study of the Holy Scriptures some man-devised classification of the Sacred Writings is disheartening, yet such is the condition of all who have based spiritual thought and exegesis on the names and order of the books of the Old Testament as they appear in our Bibles. The “authority” for them is a human one dating back to about 300 B.C. How seriously the original order and the original names were tampered with in this change is shown in this book, and the true names and order of all of the books are clearly set forth as they appear in the original Hebrew, and in harmony with the Divine imprimatur of Luke 24:44. It will be seen at once that the information contained between the covers of this book is of vital importance as fundamental knowledge for the Bible Student.

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It came to pass in process of time that the king of Egypt died: and the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried, and their cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage. And God heard their groaning, and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob (Exodus 2:23-24).

In other words, prayer is occupation of the spirit with God; it has to do with Him. Hence it is that we so often find prayer expressed by the word “cry.” Listen to these examples of David:

Hearken unto the voice of my cry, my King, and my God: for unto Thee will I pray (Psalm 5:2).

Attend unto my cry, give ear unto my prayer (Psalm 17:1).

I called upon the LORD, and cried unto my God (Psalm 18:6).

Unto Thee will I cry, O LORD my rock (Psalm 28:1).

Hear the voice of my supplications, when I cry unto Thee (Psalm 28:2).

Hear my prayer, O LORD, and give ear unto my cry (Psalm 39:12).

I waited patiently for the LORD; and He inclined unto me, and heard my cry (Psalm 40:1).

Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and He shall hear my voice (Psalm 55:17).

Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer (Psalm 61:1).

I cry unto Thee daily (Psalm 86:3).

Let my prayer come before Thee: incline Thine ear unto my cry (Psalm 88:2).

Hear my prayer, O LORD, and let my cry come unto Thee (Psalm 102:1).

They cry unto the LORD in their trouble (Psalm 107:19, 28).

LORD, I cry unto Thee (Psalm 141:1).

It is not that He is ignorant of our needs, but prayer is meant to force us into the place of helplessness. It is meant to put us before the mighty God with our faces in the dust, confessing in ourselves that we are nothing and have nothing and can do nothing; but that our only hope and help is in God.

Those who know the place in which the very act of prayer is meant to put them cannot boast of any stock of grace, for God does not entrust them with the keeping of it.

It is not begging, as though one knew what to ask, that we have here. Babes cry! – and no plea is so strong with a mother. It is more so with Him who hearkens to the cry of His people, the groan of the oppressed in the pit of corruption.

I will cry unto God most high; unto God that performeth [all things] for me (Psalm 57:2).

God most High is the God who “performeth [all things] for me,” David says. Notice that the words “all things” are not in the Hebrew. The ellipsis is left for each one to fill in the blank according to his need.

Various Translators have filled in the words according to their own ideas. One supplies the word “purposes,” another, “His mercy,” others, “His promises” or, “my desires.” It is needless for us to supply anything. If we supply one thing we necessarily shut out other things.

Note, it does not say I will enable you to do it. No! It is better than that: it is “I will do it” – it is “God who performeth [all things] for me.”

Many believers want to perform their own things for themselves, and ask only for a little enabling help. Others only want God to perform certain definite things for them. They thus “limit God.”

What a snare is this! We see only one way of help or blessing, or deliverance, and we ask for that. We know not how many better ways the Lord has in His infinite wisdom. We know of one way, and we “limit” Him by asking for this, to our own hindrance and hurt.

We, who cannot manage our own affairs, do not hesitate to take on us the affairs of the universe, and ask for this and that to be done here and there. We could not do less, if we were omniscient!

If any ask us whether we are not definite in our prayer, we reply, “We would be if we were omniscient! We would ►

✍ We ought to trust God even when we cannot trace Him in the path He is pleased to pursue toward His goal. – Frank Neil Pohorlak
be if we did not fear to limit the Infinite, Almighty God.”

Oh! How blessed to have to do with “*God most high,*”
“*God that performeth all things for me*” – God, Who
knows what is best.

If we knew anything of His infinite wisdom, of His in-
finite power, of His infinite love, we should not be oc-
cupying ourselves even with our own “surrender” but we
should be crying to “*God most high,*” Who performs His
will for us, and does whatsoever He pleases.

DEATH (continued from page 3363)

the real truth about death!

Nay, Paul, thou art unlearned; go to Master
Moore, and learn a new way. We be not most mis-
erable [I Corinthians 15:9], though we rise not
again; for our souls go to heaven as soon as we be
dead, and are there in as great joy as Christ that is
risen again. And I marvel that Paul had not com-
forted the Thessalonians with that doctrine, if he
had wist it, that the souls of their dead had been
in joy; as he did with the resurrection, that their
dead should rise again [I Thessalonians 4:13-14].
If the souls be in heaven, in as great glory as the
angels, after your doctrine, shew me what cause
should be of the resurrection.

This is not some point which we hope ultimately to reach;
but it is the point from which we should start. No one can
imagine what the blessed end of peace and rest would be
which is reached from such a starting place.

Ah! “*God most High*” is our God. Truly we may say with
David,

*I will cry unto God most high, unto God that perfor-
meth [all things] for me.* ■

ASKING THE RIGHT QUESTION

The glory of the Scriptures is resurrection. The Bible’s
question isn’t, “Where will you go when you die?”
but rather, “If a man die, shall he live again?” That’s
what Job asked (Job 14:14).

All false religions teach an “after-life”; but the glory
of the gospel is that Christ died and rose again, and
He is the first-fruit of those who sleep.

Never glorify death. It’s an enemy, not a friend. ■

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Redemption of the Lower Creation

by — A.E. Knoch (1874-1965)

The **premonition**¹ of the creation is awaiting the unveiling of the sons of God. For to vanity was **the creation** subjected, not voluntarily, but because of Him Who subjects it, in expectation that **the creation** itself, also, shall be freed from the slavery of corruption into the glorious freedom of the children of God. For we are aware that **the entire creation** is groaning and travailing together until now (Romans 8:19-22).

All creation shares with man in redemption. By man creation was subjected to vanity, by man also creation will be redeemed from the bondage of corruption. The commission in the last chapter of Mark is the *Creation Commission*, based on the resurrection of Christ as Son of Man, and accompanied by powers requisite to restore it to primordial bliss.



Once this fact is apprehended, we possess a key which gives point and color to some seemingly strange details. Isaiah pictures with fondness the blessedness of material and animal creation under the personal rule of the Messiah.

Then the wolf will sojourn with the he-lamb, and the leopard will recline with the kid. And the calf and the sheltered lion will graze together, and a small lad will lead among them. And the young cow and the bear will graze together, and together they will recline their young. And the lion, as the beeve, will eat crushed straw. And the sucking will revel over the hole of a cobra, and on the light-shaft of a yellow viper the weanling his hand obtrudes. They will not do evil, nor will they ruin, in all My holy mountain, for full is the earth of the knowledge of Yahweh, as water for the sea floor is a covering (Isaiah 11:6-9).

“Then a wolf and a lambkin will graze alike, and the lion, as the beeve, will eat crushed straw, and the serpent has soil for its bread. They will not do evil, nor ruin in all My holy mountain,” says Yahweh (65:25).

Mark’s words, “*And He was with the wild beasts*” (Mark

1. FROM-SKULL-SEEM: “an intuitive opinion” (*Concordant Keyword Concordance*).

“An intuitive, unintelligent, subconscious attitude toward the future.” A.E. Knoch, *Problem of Translation: Premonition* [apokaradokia] (*Unsearchable Riches Magazine*, Volume 26, page 41).

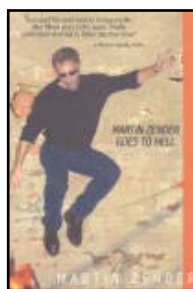
“Anticipation of an event without conscious reason” (*Merriam-Webster*).

1:13), are in keeping with these prophesies. He begins with a foretaste of that coming transformation, and ends with the signs directed to earth’s restoration (Mark 16:15-19). Every creature will be emancipated from vanity through the resurrection of Christ. Its fruition is awaiting the manifestation of the sons of God (Romans 8:21).

Adam was under the Creator, but above the creation. He was appointed to have dominion over all things in the earth, and there was a close link between him and the creation over which he was given ascendancy; his body was made of the dust of the ground. Thus, when man fell, the whole creation became involved in the ruin, though not of its own volition.

In consequence of his transgression Adam became mortal. We are thus prepared to see the grand meaning of the resurrection of Christ for creation at large. Just as corruption, radiating from the first man as a center, pervaded and permeated the entire universe, just so life, radiating from the second man as a center, will permeate and pervade to the remotest corner of the universe.

Thus viewed, the resurrection of Christ in a glorious spiritual body is a pledge of creation’s deliverance from ▶



Martin Zender Goes to Hell

by — Martin Zender

(#6494) 78 pages, PB
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The author embarks on a point-by-point refutation of the doctrine of eternal torment. In simple words he tackles all of the critical topics: Jesus’ threats to the Israelites, the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, the lake of fire, the Greek words translated “hell,” the Greek word commonly translated “eternal.”

the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. The hope of creation is bound up in the resurrection of the Son of Man, which is the basis of the *Creation Commission*.

Go into all the world; herald the evangel to the entire creation (Mark 16:15).

The resurrection of the Son of God has a wider range of beneficence than we are accustomed to consider. God's glory demands that not only mankind who sinned and marred His glorious creation, but every whit of that creation itself shall be restored to Him in more than pristine perfectness. Man has many characteristics in common with the lower creatures, and is linked to them by the possession of a body made alive by a spirit, resulting in a living soul.

This is the reason why Christ did not simply tell His apostles to go to every "nation" or all "men"; but using a word of special emphasis, He tells them to go into every part of the world and proclaim the good news of His resurrection to every "creature." Man is not the only creature on the earth.

Man is not the only one to be blessed by the resurrection of the Son of God. The lower creatures have suffered with man. They have come in for a share of the corruption and bondage and death which is his due, and theirs only because they were put under him.

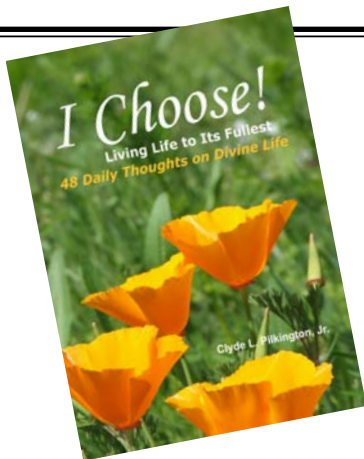
Let us rejoice then that these who suffer on our account shall obtain deliverance, too, by the same power which redeems our mortal bodies.

Paul could say also to the Colossians,

Since surely you are persisting in the faith grounded and settled, and are not being removed from the expectation of the evangel which you hear, which is being heralded in the entire creation which is under heaven, of which I, Paul, became the dispenser (Colossians 1:23).

The burden of Colossians is, of course, the present *secret economy* which is concerned with *heaven's restoration*, not the earth. Yet it is, at the same time, an answer to Gnosticism which hopelessly estranged not only man, but the whole creation as well. The doctrine of the inherent evil of all matter is met by the statement that we have been reconciled by the body of His flesh and, further, by the fact that a good news "*is being heralded in the entire creation which is under heaven.*"

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Volume 1, pages 39, 243 ff.
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by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

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