

the
FOOTSTEPS

of the

MESSIAH

A Study of the Sequence
of Prophetic Events

Revised Edition

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APPENDIX VII

Immortality

This study on immortality will be discussed in four major categories.

A. Definition

The meaning of immortality is: the eternal, continuous, and conscious existence of the soul after the death of the body. Physical death is the separation of the material part of man from the immaterial part of man. Immortality means “an eternal, continuous, and conscious existence of the immaterial part of man after the death of the body.” Immortality means “continuous consciousness.”

This study will use the term “immortality” in reference to its theological usage. Theologically, the term “immortality” refers to both the body or the material part of man, as well as the soul-spirit or the immaterial part of man. But to be technical, the biblical usage of the term is limited to the body only.

In I Corinthians 15:53-54, the Bible speaks of “putting on” immortality, and the body puts on immortality at the Rapture of the Church. For the dead believer, immortality is *put on* by means of resurrection, and for the living believer immortality is *put on* by translation. This will occur at the Rapture. So biblically speaking, the term “immortality” is used of the body only, but the theological use of the term is applied to both the body and the soul.

This discussion concerning immortality is concerned with the continuous consciousness of the soul-spirit or the immaterial part of man after physical death.

B. The Evidences of the Doctrine of Immortality

There are seventeen specific evidences for the Doctrine of Immortality, evidences that the Bible does teach continuous consciousness of the soul.

1. Gathered to His People

The first evidence of the Doctrine of Immortality is a figure of speech used in the Old Testament which relates to death: *gathered to his people*. The dead person is seen as joining a company that preceded him. For example, Genesis 25:8 states:

And Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years, and was gathered to his people.

The same statement is made in Genesis 25:17 of Ishmael:

And these are the years of the life of Ishmael, a hundred and thirty and seven years: and he gave up the ghost and died, and was gathered unto his people.

Notice that first, physical death takes place, Ishmael dies; then after death, he is seen as *gathered unto his people*, as joining a company that preceded him or that had gone on in advance.

Another example is in Genesis 35:29a:

And Isaac gave up the ghost, and died, and was gathered unto his people . . .

The next example is from the life of Jacob, in Genesis 49:29:

And he charged them, and said unto them, I am to be gathered unto my people: bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, . . .

The last example is in Genesis 49:33:

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

So in the first book of the Bible, after people die physically, they are said to be “gathered unto their people.” They are seen as joining a company of whom they are conscious and who had preceded them. Some interpreted this phrase to mean nothing more than being buried in the family cemetery. However, that would not be true of a person like Abraham whose family or clan cemetery was back in Haran.

2. Joined the Fathers

The second evidence for the Doctrine of Immortality is similar to the first: sometimes there is the expression of having “joined the fathers.” One example of this is in Genesis 15:15:

But you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried in a good old age.

The joining of the fathers precedes the burial itself.

A similar statement is made in Genesis 47:30a:

But when I sleep with my fathers, you shall carry me out of Egypt, and bury me in their burying-place.

So the fact that one goes to join his fathers is also an implication that consciousness continues even after physical death.

3. The Continuous Existence of Enoch

A third evidence for the Doctrine of Immortality is Enoch’s continuous existence; he did not die, but has gone on to continually exist somewhere. In the Old Testament, this took place in Genesis 5:24, and this is reaffirmed in the New Testament by Hebrews 11:5.

4. The Assurance of Job

A fourth evidence for the Doctrine of Immortality is found in the Book of Job, which records Job’s assurance based upon a question he himself raised and then answered. For example, in Job 14:14a the question is:

If a man die, shall he live again?

And the question that Job raised in 14:14, is answered in Job 19:25-26:

But as for me I know that my Redeemer lives, And at last he will stand up upon the earth: And after my skin, even this body, is destroyed, Then without my flesh shall I see God; . . .

Job had the assurance that even though his physical body will eventually go into physical death, nevertheless, he is going to see God apart from his body; that, too, is an evidence of immortality.

5. The Doctrine of Resurrection

The fifth evidence for the Doctrine of Immortality is based upon the Doctrine of Resurrection, because the very act of resurrection implies immortality. Otherwise, why even bother with resurrecting the dead, be they righteous or unrighteous? So contained within the very concept of resurrection is the implication of immortality. Why are they raised, but to live forever.

In the Old Testament, the Doctrine of Resurrection is taught in Isaiah 26:19; Daniel 12:2-3; and Hosea 13:14. In the New Testament, it is clearly taught in John 5:25-29, and Revelation 20:4-6, 11-15.

6. The Consciousness of the Soul

The sixth evidence for the Doctrine of Immortality is that, according to Scripture, the immaterial part of man is viewed as being with God upon death and is conscious. There are examples of this truth in both testaments. For example, in the Old Testament, this truth is found in Psalm 17:15:

As for me, I shall behold your face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with beholding your form.

Here David expressed a real faith that the soul will still be conscious in the fellowship with God even after death.

This is also taught in Psalm 73:23-25:

Nevertheless I am continually with you: You have holden my right hand. You will guide me with your counsel, And afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is none upon earth that I desire besides you.

In this Psalm, the author Asaph expressed a real faith in immortality. Even upon death he saw himself as being with God and conscious.

This is also found in Ecclesiastes 12:7; Luke 23:43; John 14:3; II Corinthians 5:1-8; and Philippians 1:22-24.

7. Joining the Dead

The seventh evidence for the Doctrine of Immortality is that David expected to be able to join his dead son after David's own death. This is a statement that he made in II Samuel 12:23:

But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he will not return to me.

Notice the way that David put it: he expected to go to the place where his deceased son was, and expected to see him at that time after death. So David expected to be able to join his dead son in a conscious way after his own death, and he expressed it in this passage. This, too, clearly shows that the Bible teaches immortality, and that immortality was a blessed hope of the Old Testament saints.

8. The Consciousness of the Souls of Sheol

The eighth evidence of the teaching for the Doctrine of Immortality is that the souls of *Sheol* are seen in continuous consciousness. A good example of this in the Old Testament is Isaiah 14:9-11:

Sheol from beneath is moved for you to meet you at your coming; it stirs up the dead for you, even all the chief ones of the earth; it has raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations. All they shall answer and say unto you, Are you also become weak as we? are you become like unto us? Your pomp is brought down to Sheol, and the noise of your viols: the worm is spread under you, and worms cover you.

In this passage the soul of the king of Babylon enters into the Hell section of *Sheol* itself, and all the souls that preceded him in Hell suddenly rise in astonishment as they see this one also entering the

domains of Hell. They are able to ask him questions and carry on a conversation. So it should not be missed that these dead ones are portrayed as being conscious.

In the New Testament, this is taught by Luke 16:19-31 in the story of the rich man and Lazarus. Though it is frequently called "The Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus," this is incorrect. Luke does not say that it is a parable, nor does Jesus begin that story as He often did by saying, "Learn a parable." Parables do not have names like "Lazarus" and "Abraham." This is a true story. Notice that after the rich man died and after Lazarus died, both of these men were conscious. Furthermore, someone else is mentioned who had also died centuries earlier: Abraham. Abraham and the rich man can carry on a conversation; they are clearly conscious although physically they have died. The story of the rich man and Lazarus, then, is another evidence for the teaching of the Doctrine of Immortality.

9. *Eternity in the Heart*

The ninth evidence for the Doctrine of Immortality is the statement made by Ecclesiastes 3:11: *he has set eternity in their heart*. The word *heart* is used frequently in Scripture as one of the facets of the immaterial part of man. Contained within the immaterial part of man, according to Ecclesiastes 3:11, is the fact that eternity has been placed in it. So contained within the immaterial part of man is the element of immortality.

10. *Samuel's Appearance to Saul*

The tenth evidence for the Doctrine of Immortality is the fact that Samuel was seen as being conscious after his own death. I Samuel 28:8-19 is the account of Saul's going to a witch to see if she could bring up the soul of Samuel from *Sheol*. Now, witches do not have that kind of power, and neither did this one. What happens in these situations is that a demon is impersonating the dead. But in this account, the real Samuel actually comes up to the surprise of the witch, which shows that she had nothing to do with it. God intervened in this instance and allowed the soul of Samuel to be brought up. Samuel was not resurrected from the dead at that point; it was simply the

spirit of Samuel, his immaterial part, that was brought up from *Sheol*. He was able to carry on this conversation with Saul, letting Saul know that his doom had come and he will die in the battle with the Philistines. But the point is that Samuel was fully conscious even after his own physical death, and that, too, shows immortality.

11. God is a God of the Living

The eleventh evidence for the doctrine of Immortality is what Jesus said about God in Matthew 22:29-32: *God is not the God of the dead, but of the living* (v. 32). Although those particular living ones he mentioned, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, were physically dead, yet God is a God of the living. The point being made is that God has a continuous conscious, living, relationship with the Patriarchs, which is one reason why He cannot leave their bodies dead. But while the resurrection of the body was still future, God already had a relationship with them because their immaterial part was very conscious.

12. Through Death is Life

The twelfth evidence for the Doctrine of Immortality is the statement made in John 11:25-26 concerning the dead Lazarus: *though he die, yet shall he live* (v. 25). Notice it does not say, "though he died, he will live." If it did, it would merely mean that eventually the dead one would be resurrected. However, John used the present tense: "though he is now dead, he is also now living;" though one dies, he still lives. He is certainly dead physically, but the immaterial part of man has a continuous, living consciousness and, therefore, Jesus can say of a dead saint, though he is dead, he is living.

13. The Promise of Future Glory

The thirteenth evidence for the teaching of the Doctrine of Immortality is the fact of the promise of future glory. The guarantee of future glory for the believer is found in Romans 8:18, and the fact that the believer is destined to be glorified also implies immortality, because the very act of glorification implies continuous eternal existence. Romans 8:18 states:

For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to us-ward.

14. *The Promise of a Future Life*

The fourteenth evidence for the Doctrine of Immortality is found in I Corinthians 15:19, which states that a lack of future life would make the believer *most pitiable*. The lack of a future life for the believer makes him *most pitiable* because believers have committed their lives to God based upon His promise of immortality. Believers have a very narrow lifestyle and discipline themselves to live in accordance with His rules and His regulations, so if there is no life after death, if there is no immortality, then all this was for nothing, and their faith was in vain. This indeed would make the believer *most pitiable*. So immortality must be true because of the kind of lifestyle we are expected to have.

15. *The Soul is Renewed*

The fifteenth evidence for the Doctrine of Immortality is the statement made in II Corinthians 4:16-18 that while the body decays, the soul *is renewed day by day*. Though the body eventually decays in death, yet the soul *is renewed day by day*. The only reason for the soul to be renewed daily is because of its immortality.

16. *Immortality Through the Gospel*

The sixteenth evidence for the Doctrine of Immortality is in II Timothy 1:10, where Paul states that both *life and immortality* are brought to light through the gospel. The very fact that he connects immortality with the gospel shows that one of the reasons for the gospel is the salvation of the soul for its continued existence.

17. *Future Rewards and Punishments*

The last evidence for the Doctrine of Immortality is the fact that future reward and future punishment imply immortality; these things would have no meaning after death unless immortality were true. This

fact is found in Matthew 11:20-24; 13:49-50; 25:34, 41, 46; Romans 2:5-11; and II Timothy 4:7-8.

C. *The Benefits of the Doctrine of Immortality*

The third major category is to discuss briefly the benefits of the Doctrine of Immortality. There are three such benefits of the Doctrine of Immortality.

1. *Our Hope of Future Joy*

Immortality provides us the hope of future joy, according to Philippians 1:23-24:

But I am in a strait betwixt the two, having the desire to depart and be with Christ; for it is very far better: yet to abide in the flesh is more needful for your sake.

In this passage Paul faced the possibility of physical death, but that gave him the hope of future joy, knowing that upon separation from the body, he is going to be in a conscious, continuous fellowship with the Lord.

2. *Our Temporary Residence in this Life*

The second benefit of the Doctrine of Immortality is the awareness that believers are only temporary residents in this life, according to Philippians 3:20:

For our citizenship is in heaven; whence also we wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ: . . .

The believer's *citizenship is in heaven*. The fact that immortality is true produces the awareness that believers are temporary residents in this life, because now their *citizenship is in heaven*. What that means practically is that all trials and tribulations in this life do not need to be taken to the point of defeat or to the point of despair or to the point of depression. Rather, believers can look upon them and say, "This, too, will pass, I am only a temporary resident on this earth, in this land. This, too, will pass. My *citizenship is in heaven*. I will some day

know the full joy of the Lord.” This is the second benefit of the Doctrine of Immortality: the awareness of temporary residence in this life and, after death, the destiny of eternal, continuous consciousness in Heaven itself.

3. Our Motivation for Righteous Living

The third benefit of the Doctrine of Immortality is that immortality provides us our motivation for living righteous, Spirit-filled, sanctified lives. A person who does not have the real, living hope of immortality struggles to make the best he can out of life right here. The unsaved struggle and strive, constantly reaching out for those higher standards of living because they do not have the hope of eternal immortality in their hearts. They do not believe in immortality, and because they do not believe in immortality, they try to get the best they can in this life. They constantly struggle with materialism.

D. False Views

The fourth major category of this study of immortality is to discuss some common false views or common misconceptions concerning immortality. There are four major wrong views.

1. Cessation of Existence

The first false view is that of cessation of existence. This is the doctrine of pure mortalism. This life is all there is and, once this body dies, there is total cessation of existence. Not only is there a cessation of consciousness, but of existence as well. This is the view of atheism. Of course, those who hold to this false view totally reject biblical revelation, for this view requires the rejection of the clear biblical teachings concerning immortality. Obviously, this is not a view that believers in the Bible should hold.

2. Transmigration of the Soul or Reincarnation

There is a second false view, also held among unbelievers, and that is the teaching of the transmigration of the soul. This is also known as

reincarnation: when the body dies, the soul continues to exist, but does not go either to Heaven or Hell; it simply transmigrates and enters into a new, living body, be it another person or even an animal. This teaching concerning the transmigration of the soul or reincarnation has no biblical evidence.

Some try to use a statement made in Luke 1:17, where it states that John the Baptist came *in the spirit and power of Elijah* the Prophet. The argument says that since Elijah was *in* John the Baptist, it teaches reincarnation, for the soul or spirit of Elijah the Prophet actually entered the body of John the Baptist when he was either conceived or born. However, that is not what Luke 1:17 is teaching. When Luke 1:17 states that John came *in the spirit and power of Elijah*, it means that both these men had the power and the presence of the same Holy Spirit. The *spirit* in this verse is the Holy Spirit, not the human spirit. The power is the power of the Holy Spirit. So both men had the power and the presence of the Holy Spirit. This does not, in any way, teach reincarnation.

Furthermore, the principle of Hebrews 9:27 militates against reincarnation: *inasmuch as it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this comes judgment*. This verse goes against the concept of transmigration of the soul. While it is true that some men have died twice in that they have been resurrected and therefore died again, that is not reincarnation; it is the same human spirit that indwelt the person before and which indwells him again. The same immaterial part of man is joined with the same material part of man in resurrection. So there is no transmigration of the soul, there is no reincarnation; it is the same spirit-soul that is brought back into that same body.

3. Conditional Immortality

The first two false views are views held by unbelievers, but the third and fourth false views are held by many believers and also held by many among the cults. The third wrong view is called "conditional immortality." Conditional immortality means the soul is not inherently immortal; immortality is not part of the make-up of the soul. Rather, immortality is a gift for the saved only. So at death, the unbeliever simply becomes non-existent, and only the believer continues to exist. This view is primarily taught by certain cults, but unfortunately,

this view is also held by many who are believers.

The various arguments used in favor of conditional immortality, as well as the arguments against it, are the same arguments for and against the fourth position, so these will be dealt with in conjunction with the fourth wrong view.

4. *Annihilationism*

The most common false view, especially because of the cults, is the fourth view: the doctrine of annihilationism. What annihilationism says is this: the unsaved soul is annihilated after a temporary period of punishment. These people do believe that the unsaved soul goes to Hell, but not for eternity, only temporarily. Eventually the unsaved soul is annihilated after suffering a duration of punishment.

a. *The Arguments in Support of Annihilationism*

What are the supporting arguments that they like to use? It is possible to subdivide the support of annihilationism in two categories: theological arguments and scriptural arguments.

(1) *The Theological Arguments*

Basically, they use eight theological arguments.

The first one is based upon the love of God; they claim that it is against the love of God for eternal punishment to be true.

The second theological argument is based upon the justice of God; there is no justice in eternal punishment.

The third theological argument is that the soul does not inherit immortality; it must be gained. This is based upon the reading of Genesis 2:7, where it states: *man became a living soul*, and also Genesis 3:19, where it states: *dust you are, and unto dust you shall return*. By combining these two passages, they say that the soul does not possess inherent immortality, but it must be gained.

The fourth theological argument is that God has failed if evil is not liquidated in its existence. Since the continued existence of the unsaved means the continued existence of evil, God would have failed if evil is not liquidated in its existence and, therefore, it will be liquidated by annihilation.

The fifth theological argument they like to use is to ask the question: "Where is the justice for dead infants and the ignorant heathen in eternal punishment?" It is unjust for those who died in infancy and those who died in ignorance to be in eternal punishment.

The sixth theological argument is that punishment is only beneficial or useful when it is used for reformation. In eternal punishment there is no reformation; therefore, there is no need for it.

The seventh theological argument is: "Why should God and the universe be burdened with the continuous existence of those who have scorned a useful life?" They see the continuous, eternal existence of the unbeliever as being a burden to God and the universe; therefore, it should be done away with.

The eighth theological argument is that the righteous ones could not enjoy bliss knowing that others are continually in Hell. Those in Heaven will simply not be able to enjoy it if they know that there are others suffering continuously in Hell.

(2) *The Scriptural Arguments*

They also use scriptural arguments, and all together there are sixteen scriptural arguments they like to use. They depend heavily upon the use of the word *destruction*.

First: Matthew 10:28, which refers to God's ability *to destroy both soul and body in hell*.

Second: Matthew 7:13, where it speaks about how *broad is the way. . . to destruction*. This *destruction* is interpreted as "ceasing to exist."

Third: Romans 9:22, where it speaks about the unbeliever being *fitted for destruction*.

Fourth: II Peter 2:1, where *false prophets* and *false teachers* bring to *themselves swift destruction*.

Fifth: Philippians 3:19, which speaks about the unbeliever *whose end is perdition*. The Greek word there, they point out, is the same as the other ones that were translated "to destroy."

Sixth: II Peter 2:12, where it speaks about those unbelievers *to be taken and destroyed*.

Seventh: I Thessalonians 5:3, where it speaks about the unbeliever's finally facing *sudden destruction*.

Eighth: II Thessalonians 2:8, which speaks about the *lawless one* destined to be destroyed.

Ninth: Ezekiel 18:4, 20, which does speak of the death of the soul.

Tenth: Psalm 146:4, which states that a man's *thoughts perish* when he dies. If his *thoughts perish*, this means the immaterial part of man ceases to exist.

Eleventh: Ecclesiastes 9:5, where it mentions that *the dead know not any thing*.

Twelfth: by combining Genesis 2:7 with 3:19 they claim that man is a soul that turns to dust upon physical death.

Thirteenth: they mention that the terms *Hades* and *Sheol* actually mean "oblivion and death"; therefore it means "a cessation of existence."

Fourteenth: Colossians 1:20, where it states that "all things are reconciled." If there is a continuous existence of the unsaved in eternal punishment, it would mean that "all things" were not reconciled; but if *all things* are reconciled, it means there is an elimination and annihilation of the unbelieving element.

Fifteenth: II Timothy 1:10, which speaks about death eventually being *abolished*.

Sixteenth: I Corinthians 15:25-26, which speaks about death being destroyed.

b. The Arguments Against Annihilationism

These arguments will be dealt with one by one in the same order as presented above.

(1) *The Theological Arguments*

First: there was the argument concerning the love of God: that the love of God would not allow for eternal punishment. However, if it is inconsistent with God's love to have man eternally punished, it would also be against God's love to have man suffer Hell temporarily or to allow man's misery at the present time. One cannot use God's love as an argument against eternal punishment and not against temporary punishment. If the love of God were inconsistent with one, it would also be inconsistent with the other. Yet they do believe in temporary punishment.

Second: concerning God's justice, it is a matter of human opinion

that the justice of God would not allow for eternal punishment. The Bible actually teaches otherwise: that the very justice of God requires eternal punishment for those who have rejected the eternal life He has provided for them.

Third: concerning their claim that the soul does not possess inherent immortality according to Luke 16:19-31, notice who was in torment. The rich man is in torment and, while his body did turn to dust, his soul did not.

Fourth: concerning the argument that God has failed if evil is not liquidated, this is an assumption that they make which they do not prove. The Bible actually teaches otherwise. If the plan of God had included the annihilation of the unsaved, then God's plan fails if it does not follow through. But if God's plan includes eternal punishment, then God has not failed.

Fifth: concerning justice for the dead infants and the ignorant heathen, here, they make an assumption that infants go to Hell. The Bible does not specify one way or the other. Furthermore, this is a human concept of divine justice that goes contrary to the biblical concept.

Sixth: the argument was that punishment is only beneficial when it is used for reformation. Since the unsaved dead are not going to be reformed during eternity, therefore, they will be annihilated. But again, this is an assumption that they make concerning the legitimate use of punishment. It is not true that punishment is only beneficial for reformation. Sometimes punishment is a punishment in and of itself. So the assumption regarding the legitimate use of punishment is not necessarily true. Eternal punishment is not for the purpose of reformation, but for the purpose of punishment itself.

Seventh: why should God and the universe be burdened with the continued existence of those who have scorned a useful life? The answer is simply because God so willed it. Furthermore, it will not be a burden. Believers are going to be in a perfect, holy state and will not sustain the same relationship to the unsaved as they do now. At that time, they will not feel this burden. They will have the mind of God and will see it from His perspective, not their own.

Eighth: the righteous could enjoy bliss only if they know that others are not suffering eternally; the righteous could not enjoy bliss knowing that others are continually suffering in Hell. But the answer here is that the righteous will enjoy the bliss of God's presence and

will not be encumbered with the present perspective regarding what is inappropriate to Heaven's bliss.

(2) *The Scriptural Arguments*

One of their major arguments was based upon the use of a Greek word *apollumi*, which is translated by the King James Version as "destroy." They refer to passages like Matthew 10:6, 28; 15:24; 16:25; and other passages.

Their first scriptural argument was based on Matthew 10:28. The word *apollumi* does not mean "utter destruction to the point of ceasing to exist." This is obvious from its usage elsewhere. It simply means "to be in a lost state." It is not used of the utter annihilation of both body and soul, because the same Greek word that is translated "destroyed" is used even of those who are still living. For example, this word is used of the living ones in Matthew 10:6, where it is translated as *lost*; in Matthew 15:24, the *lost*; in Matthew 16:25, whoever *loses*; and in Luke 19:10, *that which was lost*. So the word *apollumi* does not mean "destruction" in the sense of "cessation of existence;" it simply means "to be in a lost condition." Those eternally in Hell will not be destroyed to the point of ceasing to exist; more correctly, rather, those eternally in the Lake of Fire are simply those who are in an eternal lost state.

The second, third, fourth, and fifth scriptural arguments were based on Matthew 7:13; Romans 9:22; II Peter 2:1; and Philippians 3:19, all of which use the term "to be destroyed." But the answer here is that the statements made in these passages use the Greek word *apuleia*, which does not mean "a cessation of existence." It is used elsewhere where it simply means "to be in a wasted condition." It does not teach annihilationism; it is not the annihilation of the material, but the lostness or uselessness of that which is being described. The same word is used in Matthew 26:8 and Mark 14:4, where it is translated as merely being in "a state of wastedness." Again, these verses do not mean "annihilation of the material," but simply emphasize its lostness or its uselessness. So, these verses do not teach annihilationism.

Sixth, they use II Peter 2:12 which, in the King James Version, reads: *to be taken and destroyed*. But the Greek word here is *phthora*, which means "corruption." The victims are merely seen as being in a

state of corruption; they are to be totally corrupted as they will be in the Lake of Fire. They will be corrupted, but they do not cease to exist.

Seventh, concerning I Thessalonians 5:3, which speaks of the unbeliever as facing *sudden destruction*, the Greek word used here is *holephros*, which means “destruction.” It does not mean “destruction in the sense of annihilation;” rather, it is dealing with the physical destruction of the Great Tribulation. That verse is in the context of the Great Tribulation and speaks of the destruction of the physical world, not the destruction of the soul of the unbeliever.

Eighth, concerning II Thessalonians 2:8, which speaks of the *lawless one* as being destroyed, the Greek word here is *katargeo*, which means only “to render inoperative.” It does not mean “to annihilate,” but “to render inoperative.” In this passage, it is used of the Antichrist, and it simply states that the Antichrist’s power and authority will eventually be rendered inoperative. In fact, the meaning of this is spelled out in other passages. For example, Revelation 19:20 declares that the Antichrist will be *cast alive into the lake of fire*, and with that action, he will then be rendered inoperative, as prophesied in II Thessalonians 2:8. Furthermore, Revelation 20:10 points out that even after one thousand years in the Lake of Fire, the Antichrist is still alive in there. So II Thessalonians 2:8 does not mean “to be destroyed” in the sense of “ceasing to exist,” but “to be destroyed” in the sense of “being rendered inoperative.”

Ninth, concerning Ezekiel 18:4 and 20, which speaks about the soul as dying, the word “death” never means annihilation, as is obvious from Ephesians 2:1-3 and 9. Death is simply “a separation.” In this case, the dead soul is separated from God. A soul that is dead is a soul that has no spiritual life; the unbeliever has a spiritually dead soul, but it is not non-existent. The soul that separates from the body in an unbelieving state eventually goes into a second death, but second death is not annihilation; it simply means eternal separation from God.

Tenth, another Old Testament passage that they use is Psalm 146:4, where it states that a man’s *thoughts perish* when he dies. But actually, verses 3 and 4 taken together and in context simply teach that a man’s devices, man’s plans, and man’s thoughts cannot be carried out on the earth after physical death. He has lost any opportunity to see his plans carried out; it does not teach a cessation of existence.

Eleventh, Ecclesiastes 9:5 does speak about *the dead* not knowing

any thing, but the context of Ecclesiastes 9:5 is simply drawing the conclusion of human philosophy. Indeed, from the standpoint of human philosophy, *under the sun*, that is the way it looks (v. 6). But again, Ecclesiastes 9:5 simply spells out what human philosophy feels *under the sun*. It is not a divine decree; it is not a positive affirmation of the Word of God.

Twelfth, they combine Genesis 2:7 with 3:19, pointing out that man is a soul that turns to dust. However, according to these passages, it is the body, not the soul, that turns to dust. It was Adam's body that was created from the dust, not Adam's soul. The soul came from the breath of God, not from the dust; therefore, it is the body, not the soul, that returns to dust. Luke 16:19-31 spells out what actually happens to the soul at death.

Thirteenth, as to their claim that *Sheol* and *Hades* mean "oblivion and death," but that is not the meaning of those words, as anyone who knows Hebrew and Greek can testify. Again, Luke 16:19-31 shows that the rich man is very conscious where he is in *Sheol*, so the term cannot possibly mean "oblivion."

Fourteenth, they also use Colossians 1:20, which speaks about "all things being reconciled." But in that context, the "all things" does not mean "all things without exception;" rather, it means "all things without distinction." All kinds of things will be reconciled, but not all things as such.

Fifteenth and sixteenth, they use II Timothy 1:10 and I Corinthians 15:25-26, which speak of death as being *abolished*. However, these two verses deal only with the effects of natural death upon the body. It is the first death—physical death—that is *abolished*; the second death—eternal, spiritual death—is not. It is the abolishment of the first death that makes resurrection possible, but the second death is going to be eternal.

c. Additional Arguments Against Annihilationism

In conclusion, there are eleven additional arguments to show that the Bible does not teach annihilationism. It does teach the immortality of the soul of both the believer and the unbeliever.

(1) *Daniel's Prophecy*

The first evidence is found in Daniel 12:2, which speaks of a coming resurrection. Daniel prophesied that some are going to be resurrected to *everlasting life*, and others resurrected to *everlasting contempt*. It is inconsistent exegesis or inconsistent interpretation to claim that when it speaks of *everlasting life* for the believer, it means immortality, but when it speaks about *everlasting contempt* for the unbeliever, then it is not immortality nor eternal. The same word is used in relation to the believer and the unbeliever in the same verse. One must never interpret the Bible in such a way that the same word in the same verse means two totally different things unless it can be proved by some indication, and there is no such indication in this verse.

(2) *Eternal Life and Eternal Contempt*

Second, Matthew 25:46 points out that some go into *eternal life* while others go into *eternal punishment*. Again, if the believer receives *eternal life* and that means immortality for them, since Jesus used the same expression for the unbeliever when he speaks of *eternal punishment*, it must also mean immortality for them as well. Like Daniel 12:2, Matthew 25:46 uses the same terminology for the unbeliever as for the believer, and therefore it must mean the same thing. Again, it is simply inconsistent exegesis to take the same word and make it mean two opposite things in the same verse.

(3) *Fire of Torment*

The third additional argument is based on Mark 9:47-48, which speaks of *the fire* of torment in which the unbeliever suffers: *the fire is not quenched*. That, too, teaches against annihilationism.

(4) *Fallen Angels*

The fourth additional argument is found in Hebrews 2:16, which points out that God did not provide salvation for fallen angels. How is that relevant? Part of the teaching of the annihilationists is based upon the theological argument and the scriptural argument that the Bible promises that "all things are to be reconciled to God" (Col. 1:20). But the fact is that the "all things" here does not mean "all things without

exception;” rather, all kinds of things will be reconciled, but not every one of every kind. According to Hebrews 2:16, salvation was not provided for fallen angels, so fallen angels will never be reconciled to God, and yet they continue to be eternal beings. The fact that there is no reconciliation for fallen angels shows that the Colossians passage cannot be used to teach that all things without exception are going to be reconciled by means of the annihilation of the evil ones. It simply cannot mean that.

(5) *Eternal Judgment*

The fifth argument is found in Hebrews 6:2, which speaks of *eternal judgment*. Again, the word *eternal* here is the same one used in reference to eternal life. If for the believer the word *eternal* means “immortality,” that same word used in reference to an unbeliever must also mean “immortality.”

(6) *Eternal Punishment*

The sixth argument is found in Jude 7, which speaks of the *punishment of eternal fire*. The *fire* itself is said to be *eternal*, and the *punishment* itself is said to be *eternal*. It is not just the *fire* that is *eternal*, but the *punishment* in the *fire* that is *eternal*. If it were only temporary, as annihilationism teaches, then it is obviously not *eternal*.

(7) *The Eternal Lake of Fire*

The seventh argument is based upon Revelation 14:11, where it speaks of some being tormented in the Lake of Fire *for ever and ever*. “What does it mean to be tormented *for ever and ever*?” Annihilationism claims that the term *for ever and ever* does not mean “eternity,” it just means “a very long time.” After a very long time, they will be annihilated. The problem with that explanation of Revelation 14:11 is that the very same expression is used of God in Revelation 15:7, where God is said to live *for ever and ever*. Is God eternal or is He only temporary? Even the annihilationists believe God is eternal. Since the same expression is used of God as is used for the tormenting of the unbeliever, obviously, it cannot be temporary, but must also be eternal.

(8) *The Beast and the False Prophet*

The eighth argument is to compare Revelation 19:20 with Revelation 20:10, which shows that the Beast and the False Prophet are still in the Lake of Fire after one thousand years. Even one thousand years in the Lake of Fire is not enough for them to have been annihilated. One would assume that they would no longer have been alive if annihilationism were true.

(9) *The Greek Word Aionos*

The ninth argument is based upon the Greek word *aionos*, which is the usual term that is translated “eternal.” Those who teach annihilationism try to prove that the word *aionos* does not mean “eternal,” but simply means “for an age.” However, again it should be pointed out that the Greek word *aionos* is used of both believers and unbelievers as in Matthew 25:46. Therefore, one cannot make *aionos* mean “eternality” or “immortality” for the believer, and yet make it mean only “temporariness” for the unbeliever. If it is eternal for the believer—and annihilationists do make it mean “eternal” for the believer—they cannot then turn around and say that for the unbeliever it is only a temporary duration. One cannot take the same word and make it mean two different things. This is interpreting Scripture by one’s theology rather than deducing theology from the Scriptures, which is the proper way of developing theology.

(10) *God is Eternal*

The tenth argument against annihilationism is that the very same word, *aionos*, which the annihilationists said does not mean “eternal” in some cases, is also a word used of God. It emphasizes God’s eternalness and is used in Revelation 4:9; 10:6; 15:7; and Hebrews 9:14. Again, is God temporary or is He eternal? Even they believe that God is an eternal being. Therefore, they cannot make the same word have the opposite meaning when it refers to the unbeliever.

(11) *For Ever and Ever*

The eleventh and final argument against annihilationism is also based on the expression “for ever and ever.” This expression is used a

total of thirteen times in the Book of Revelation. Nine of those thirteen times, it is used of God, and they all agree that when it is used of God, it emphasizes eternity and immortality. Once it is used of the saints in Heaven, and they certainly believe that in the case of the saints in Heaven, these are the eternal, immortal beings. Then it is used once of Satan in the Lake of Fire and twice of the unbeliever in the Lake of Fire. But in these last three cases, they want to make it only temporary. If ten times they agree that it means "eternal," they cannot then turn around and make these last three times mean something temporary. If it is true that it teaches the immortality of God and the saints in Heaven, it must also teach the immortality of Satan and the unbelievers in the Lake of Fire. Again, we must deduce our theology from the Scriptures, not interpret Scriptures by our preconceived theology or our emotional preferences.

APPENDIX VIII

The Intermediate State Between Death and Resurrection

A. The Meaning

What is meant by the intermediate state? The basic meaning of the intermediate state is the state of existence between death and resurrection.

There are three different states in the life of man. Whether one is a believer or an unbeliever, he will experience three different states, but not the same destiny. The first state of man is from birth to death; the second state of man is from death to resurrection; and the third state of man is from resurrection to eternity.

The intermediate state is concerned with that second state of man: from death to resurrection.

B. The State of the Believer

As far as the believers are concerned, the souls of the believers at their deaths are made perfect in holiness and they immediately pass into glory; their bodies, still united to the Messiah, rest in their graves until the resurrection. That is basically what the believer experiences upon death and in the intermediate state between death and resurrection. At the point of death, the immaterial part of the believer is made perfect in holiness and passes immediately into glory, into God's presence in Heaven. The bodies are buried in the ground somewhere, but these bodies are still united to the Messiah, so they are merely resting in death in their graves until the resurrection. As far as the immaterial part of the believer is concerned, upon death his spirit or soul has perfect freedom from sin and suffering, and has great exultation and blessedness.

The Bible does give us some descriptions of what the intermediate state is like between death and resurrection for the soul of the believer.

1. A State Far Better

One passage is Philippians 1:23-24:

But I am in a strait betwixt the two, having the desire to depart and be with Christ; for it is very far better: yet to abide in the flesh is more needful for your sake.

In this passage, one is clearly told that the state of the soul after death is *very far better* than its condition while it is *in the flesh*. A change for the better takes place immediately after death. Upon death, while the material part of man—the body—stays behind, the immaterial part of man—all that pertains to the spirit and soul—enters into God's presence and is in an exulted position, a *far better* position than is found while the immaterial part of man was residing in his body.

2. A State of Rest

The intermediate state is also described as a state of rest, according to two passages. Those who have already died now exist in a state of rest.

The first passage is Revelation 6:9-11:

And when he opened the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of them that had been slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: and they cried with a great voice, saying, How long, O Master, the holy and true, do you not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And there was given them to each one a white robe; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little time, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, who should be killed even as they were, should have fulfilled their course.

A second passage emphasizing their state of rest is Revelation 14:13:

And I heard the voice from heaven saying, Write, Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; for their works follow with them.

3. A State of Consciousness

There is another passage which details the intermediate state and what life is like for the believer who has died, and that is Revelation 7:16-17:

They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun strike upon them, nor any heat: for the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall be their shepherd, and shall guide them unto fountains of waters of life: and God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes.

These two verses spell out five things about what life is like in the intermediate state for the believer. All of these are negative things that lead to positives: first, no hunger; second, no thirst; third, no sun-stroke; fourth, no heat; and fifth, no tears. The believer at this time is in a state of complete rest. He has no wants; he has no physical infirmities whatsoever. That is what life is like when a believer dies.

One thing that should be made clear is that all the Scriptures which describe the soul of the believer upon death show him to be in a state of consciousness; upon death, the believer's immaterial part is totally conscious.

C. The State of the Unbeliever

The intermediate state of the unbeliever is quite the reverse of what the state of the believer is like. There are three main passages that describe the unbeliever in the intermediate state.

1. A State of Torment

The first passage is Luke 16:19-31, which is the story of the rich man and Lazarus. Sometimes this is called "The Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus," but that is a manmade title; the Bible does not say that it is a parable. Parables do not have personal names like "Lazarus and Abraham." On the contrary, this is a story that Jesus tells, and it is treated as a true story, not merely as a parable.

In the story of the rich man and Lazarus, not only is Lazarus in a state of rest and full consciousness, the rich man is also in a state of consciousness, but he is in torment. So the state of the unbeliever's

soul between death and resurrection is a state of torment.

2. A State of Confinement

A second passage is found in I Peter 3:19, which describes these unsaved spirits as being in prison:

In which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison,...

The picture is that, since they are in Hell, they are imprisoned; they are in a state of confinement.

3. A State of Punishment

The third passage is II Peter 2:9, which describes the unbeliever's soul as being under punishment until the day of judgment:

The Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment unto the day of judgment;...

The picture here is that the unbeliever is suffering in Hell; he is confined in Hell. He is under punishment until the day of the Great White Throne Judgment, when he will be resurrected; then he will suffer something even worse than death and Hell, and that is the Lake of Fire.

4. Deductions

From these three passages, three things can be deduced about the intermediate state of the unbeliever: first, he is in a state of torment; second, he is in a state of confinement; and third, he is in this state of torment and confinement until the Great White Throne Judgment.

In all the passages that describe unbelievers in the intermediate state, they are also always shown to be in a state of consciousness. The rich man in Hell was conscious; he was able to carry on a conversation; he was able to feel things emotionally, feel things psychologically, and feel things physically. Unbelievers are always viewed as being in a state of consciousness.

So the immaterial part of the believer and the unbeliever are in a state of consciousness after death even though they are in two different

places. While the believer is in Heaven in the presence of God, the unbeliever is in Hell being tormented, but the torment will become greater after the second resurrection—the resurrection of unbelievers only.

D. The Intermediate Body

The question here is: What is the intermediate body, if any, that the believer has between death and resurrection?

1. The Issue

The issue is this: upon death, does the soul remain disembodied until the resurrection or is an intermediate body given to the soul until the resurrection?

2. The Key Passage—II Corinthians 5:1-10

For we know that if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens. For verily in this we groan, longing to be clothed upon with our habitation which is from heaven: if so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For indeed we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened; not for that we would be unclothed, but that we would be clothed upon, that what is mortal may be swallowed up of life. Now he that wrought us for this very thing is God, who gave unto us the earnest of the Spirit. Being therefore always of good courage, and knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord (for we walk by faith, not by sight); we are of good courage, I say, and are willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be at home with the Lord. Wherefore also we make it our aim, whether at home or absent, to be well-pleasing unto him. For we must all be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether it be good or bad.

This is the key passage concerning the existence or non-existence of

the intermediate body. This passage will be discussed in three parts: analysis, deduction, and conclusion.

a. Analysis

Verse one states that if the believer's *house* of his *tabernacle* be *dissolved*, if his body is dissolved by death, he has another *building from God*, a *house* that is *not made with hands*, that is, *eternal*, and is *in the heavens*.

In verse two, he points out that in our present body *we groan*. While believers are in this present body, they are *longing to be clothed upon with our habitation which is from heaven*.

Verse three states: *if so be that being clothed, we shall not be found naked*. The implication here is that the believer is naked without his body during the intermediate state.

In verse four he states:... *indeed we that are in this tabernacle do groan*,...

The believer is burdened in this body because of the body's weaknesses. The believer is not longing to be *unclothed*, but rather what the believer is longing for is to *be clothed upon*. What the believer is longing to be clothed with is spelled out in the next line:... *what is mortal may be swallowed up of life*. What Paul wrote here is a summary of his statements made in I Corinthians 15:50-58, where he emphasized that at some point—at the resurrection—mortality must put on immortality. So, what the believer wants to be clothed with is immortality and once the believer puts on immortality, *what is mortal* will indeed be *swallowed up*.

Then in verse five, he points out who the Maker of all this is: *Now he that wrought us for this very thing is God*,... God is the One Who is working in the believers to give them a body that eventually will be characterized by immortality. Temporarily, He has given the believer *the earnest of the Spirit*. The Spirit is an "earnest payment," a down payment or a reservation payment. The fact that the believer has the indwelling Holy Spirit is the guarantee that a day will come when the believer's mortal body shall put on immortality.

Verse six states that this reason, knowing that the believer has the Holy Spirit as the evidence of a down payment, should give them *good courage*. As long as the believer is living in his mortal body, this auto-

matically means that the believer is *absent from the Lord*.

The believer is not absent spiritually, of course, but he is absent physically, because verse seven states that in this life, the believer walks *by faith, not by sight*. Only when the believer goes into Heaven will he have *sight* as well as *faith*.

In verse eight, he tells the believer again to be of *good courage*. While one must recognize that as long as one is in this mortal body he is absent from the Lord, one should always be willing to give up one's life, one's mortal body, *to be at home with the Lord*. Here is a clear verse which says purely and simply that upon absence from the body, upon death, the believer is in God's presence.

In verse nine, he goes on to state: *Wherefore also we make it our aim, whether at home or absent, to be well-pleasing to him*. Knowing what the believer is now, knowing what the future holds, and knowing that the believer has the earnest of the Holy Spirit, the believer's life should be conducted consistently with the aim of being *well-pleasing* to the Lord.

In verse ten, he concludes this discussion by pointing out that once *all* believers get to Heaven with their immortal bodies they will *all* have to be *made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ*, described in I Corinthians 3:10-15. The purpose for this judgment is the receiving of rewards or not receiving rewards *that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether it be good or bad*. While the believer's works have nothing to do with his salvation—he is saved by grace apart from works—nevertheless works do determine the believer's rewards, and that in turn, determines the believer's degree of authority in the Kingdom.

b. Deductions

From the above analysis, five deductions can be drawn.

First, the question here is this: Is he speaking of an intermediate body, or is he speaking of the resurrection body? Which body does this passage really speak about? Those who believe that there will be an intermediate body use this passage to prove it, but the evidence shows this to be the resurrection body.

Second, according to verse one, this body is described as being *eternal*, and the term "*eternal body*" cannot be applied to an intermediate body, which is temporary. Since he calls this body the *eternal*

one, it is better to see this as speaking of the resurrection body, not of some intermediate body.

Third, if this is an intermediate body, what would happen to this intermediate body at the resurrection? If the body of verse one is an intermediate body, and since it is called an *eternal* body, what would happen to it, since it could not disappear? What would happen to it in the resurrection? Again, it is better to see this passage as speaking of the resurrection body, not an intermediate body.

Fourth, verses 3-4 do imply that there will be a temporary period of nakedness for the soul until it is clothed with the resurrection body. The implication is that in the intermediate state, there is no intermediate body. The believer is unclothed; he is naked; he has no body until he receives his resurrection body.

Fifth, verse ten connects the body topic with the *judgment-seat of Christ*. The *judgment-seat of Christ*, by virtue of its timing, happens after the Rapture, which is when the resurrection occurs. So by virtue of its timing, it would appear to be dealing with the resurrection body, not some intermediate body.

c. Conclusions

The conclusions can be stated in two simple points. First, this passage does not teach the existence of an intermediate body. Second, the body it deals with is the resurrection body.

3. The Question

The question is this: Can a disembodied spirit function without some kind of a body? Some claim a disembodied spirit cannot function without some kind of a body. It is this presupposition that causes some people to believe and to teach the existence of an intermediate body. But does the Bible really teach that a disembodied spirit cannot function without some kind of a body?

There are two passages of Scripture that talk about things which exist in spirit form, but do not have a body. For example John 4:24 states: *God is a Spirit*, and the Spirit is likened to wind in John 3:8. Wind does not have any specific shape, form, or body, yet the wind is able to function. In John 4:24, *God is a Spirit*, yet He is able to func-

tion without a body. Keep in mind that for all eternity past, the Second Person of the Trinity was also without a body; He took on a body only as of the Incarnation. Neither the Father nor the Spirit have a body; they are spirit beings and they are able to function apart from a body. Furthermore, Hebrews 1:14 states that the angels are spirit beings and they function without a body.

So a disembodied spirit can function without a body. One should not presuppose that it cannot and therefore conclude that there will have to be some kind of an intermediate body when the Bible nowhere speaks of the existence of such a body. Again, the teaching that such a body exists is based upon a presupposition that a disembodied spirit cannot function without some kind of a body. This is simply not true.

4. The Description

If what has been stated previously is true, what is the state of those who have died? Wherever the intermediate state of the dead is described, they are always seen as soul-spirits without bodies.

For example, in I Samuel 28:12-19, Samuel appears in the form of *a god*, meaning in the form of a spirit (v. 13). The spirit of Samuel came up from *Sheol*; Samuel came up in the form of a spirit. According to verse 14, when Samuel appeared as a spirit, he looked like he did when he had died. This shows that in the intermediate state, the soul-spirit has the same appearance as the body and yet there was no body there. The body of Samuel had died and it was still dead; Samuel was not resurrected from the dead at that point. Rather, it was his soul-spirit, the immaterial part of Samuel, that was brought up from *Sheol*. At that point, Samuel looked the same as when he had died because King Saul was able to recognize him. If Samuel had a totally different intermediate body, Saul would not have recognized him. Samuel appeared and looked the same as he did when he had died, showing that the soul-spirit has the same appearance as the body in the intermediate state, but there is no intermediate body in some glorified state.

A second passage is Luke 16:19-31, which is the story of the rich man and Lazarus in their deaths. In neither case, not with Lazarus, the rich man, not even when Abraham appears in that story, is there any mention of an intermediate body for Lazarus, for Abraham or for the rich man. Neither in Abraham's bosom nor in Hell was there any in-

intermediate body. But in that passage it is noted that they appear in death just as they appeared in life. So again, the immaterial part of man looks like the material part of man, but it is a soul-spirit; no intermediate body is mentioned.

Another evidence of the intermediate state of the dead being described as soul-spirits without bodies is in the story of the Transfiguration (Mat. 17:3; Mk. 9:4; Lk. 9:30-31). In the Transfiguration, there were two people who had come and gone before the time of Jesus: Moses and Elijah. The key person is Moses, because of the three men, he is the only one who had died. Jesus had not yet died, He was in His mortal body. In the case of Elijah, he was in his immortal body, because Elijah never died; he was raptured into Heaven, having undergone the same type of experience that living saints will undergo at the time of the Rapture of the Church. So Moses is the only one of those three who had died, yet there is nothing stated about Moses' having any kind of intermediate body. All that is stated in these three passages is that they appeared with the transfigured Messiah in glory, but it says nothing more. There is no hint in any way that there was an intermediate body of Moses. What one is told is that they do share in the *Shechaniab* Glory, but it is not necessary to have an intermediate body to share in the *Shechaniab* Glory.

One more passage that deals with the intermediate state where no bodies are mentioned is Revelation 6:9-11:

And when he opened the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of them that had been slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: and they cried with a great voice, saying, How long, O Master, the holy and true, do you not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And there was given them to each one a white robe; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little time, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, who should be killed even as they were, should have fulfilled their course.

In this passage, John sees *souls* in Heaven and, while *souls* are mentioned, bodies are not mentioned.

From these examples it should be clear that whenever the intermediate state of the dead is described, they are always seen as soul-spirits without bodies.

5. The Conclusion

The conclusion is very simple: there is no intermediate body! The body that the believer has is the only body he will ever have. When the body that is now mortal dies, the soul-spirit goes into Heaven and is unclothed. It remains naked until the body is resurrected, and then the soul-spirit is clothed again. There is no intermediate body.

E. The False Teachings

There are two major false views or false teachings on the topic of the intermediate state. The first false view is that which is known as “the second probation,” and the second major false view is known as “soul-sleeping.”

1. The Second Probation Theory

The first false view is the doctrine of the second probation, which teaches that there will be a second chance to be saved after death.

a. The Two Forms of the Second Probation Theory

There are two different forms of the theory of second probation.

(1) Limited Second Probation

The first form is the limited second probation theory, which believes that the second probation is limited to those who die in infancy or die without hearing the gospel. Those who die as infants will have a second chance to be saved later, and those who die without hearing the gospel will have a second chance to be saved later, after death.

(2) Unlimited Second Probation

There is a second form of the second probation theory and that is the “unlimited second probation theory,” which teaches that all will ultimately be saved. There are three types of the unlimited second probation.

(a) Universalism

One type is known as "universalism." Universalism teaches that all are eventually saved without the necessity of after-life repentance. A day will come when everybody is going to be saved in the second probationary period, even if they do not repent, do not believe, or do not exercise faith.

(b) Restorationism

A second form of the second probation theory is known as "restorationism." Restorationism teaches that all are saved because of a second chance to hear the gospel after death and a subsequent repentance after death. Both universalism and restorationism teach that all are going to be saved eventually; hence, it is unlimited. The difference between the two views is that universalism teaches that repentance will not be necessary for all to be saved; restorationism teaches repentance will be necessary for all to be saved, but they go on to point out that all will repent at some time after death.

(c) Universal Reconciliation

There is a third type of unlimited second probation known as "universal reconciliation." This view teaches that, after a long period of existence in the Lake of Fire, all are going to be reconciled back to God; all are going to be saved, including Satan.

The comparison: in comparing the three views of unlimited second probation, all three believe that everybody is going to be saved eventually. There are just some minor differences between them. Universalism teaches that all will be saved without repentance. Restorationism teaches all are going to be saved, but they are all going to repent first; repentance is necessary. Neither universalism nor restorationism teaches that there will be a period of temporary punishment. Universal reconciliation teaches that there will be a temporary period of punishment in the Lake of Fire, then all are going to be reconciled, including Satan.

b. Arguments in Favor of the Second Probation Theory

Those who believe in the second probation theory point to five

passages of Scripture: The first is Acts 3:21, which speaks of *the times of restoration of all things*. The second passage is I Corinthians 15:27-28, which states all things will be subjected to the Son. The third passage is Colossians 1:20, which states that God will *reconcile all things unto himself*, both in *the earth* and in *the heavens*. The fourth passage is Philippians 2:9-10, which teaches that *every knee shall bow*. The fifth passage is a combination of I Peter 3:19 with 4:6, which speaks about the gospel's being preached *to the dead*. Since it is preached *to the dead*, then it must mean a second probation.

These are the five arguments that are used to try to teach a second probation and they all use these same verses whether they hold to the limited or to one of the three forms of unlimited probation.

c. Arguments Against the Second Probation Theory

(1) *The Scriptures Used*

First, the Scriptures used in favor of it will be dealt with. The first passage is Acts 3:21, but in this verse the *all things* is limited to that which was spoken by the *prophets*, and that did not include any kind of universalism, limited or unlimited. The second passage is I Corinthians 15:27-28, but in this passage the *all things* being subject to the Son does not mean the salvation of all, but only that even the unsaved will be in subjection to Him. This is all that this passage is teaching. The third passage is Colossians 1:20, but in this verse, "reconciliation" does not mean all are saved. In fact, the very term "reconciliation" only means that all are savable. They still must believe, and if they die without believing, there is no further opportunity. The fourth passage is Philippians 2:9-10, but again this passage only shows the subjection of all to God; it does not mean the salvation of all. Even unbelievers will some day be in subjection to Him. Fifth, as to their comparison of I Peter 3:19 with 4:6, they are ignoring the fact that these are two different contexts. In 3:19 the Greek word for "preaching" is not the word that means "to preach the gospel" or "to evangelize." It is a different word, *keirusso*, that simply means "to proclaim." It is a proclamation not to save them, but a proclamation to condemn them. Furthermore, it was made to one group of spirits, those who were disobedient in Noah's day. In 4:6, the Greek wording

means that the gospel had been preached to them while they were still alive but had now passed away.

So none of these five passages that are used actually teach the doctrine of a second probation.

(2) *The Fixed State of the Unbelieving Dead*

The second argument against those who teach this doctrine is that the unbelieving dead are seen in a fixed state that cannot be altered. For example: Matthew 13:41-42 states that they are cast *into a furnace of fire: there shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth*. Matthew 22:13 states that they *cast him out into the outer darkness; there shall be the weeping and the gnashing teeth*. Matthew 24:51 states that it is a place of *weeping and the gnashing of teeth*. Matthew 25:30 states in *outer darkness: there shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth*. Luke 16:19-31 points out that the rich man could not pass from his place in Hell to Lazarus in Abraham's bosom; there was no crossing the line, and no future opportunity to do so. John 8:21 and 24 states that unless one believes, he will die in his sins and there is no possibility of belief after dying in sin. Second Peter 2:4 states that the unbelievers are committed *to pits of darkness to be reserved unto judgment* of the Great White Throne. Second Peter 2:9 says that *the unrighteous* are kept under judgment until *the day of judgment*. Jude 7 states that they are *suffering the punishment of eternal fire*. Jude 13 states that *the blackness of darkness has been reserved for ever*.

All these passages show that the unbelieving dead are seen as being in a fixed state which cannot be altered.

(3) *The Basis of the Final Judgment*

The third argument is to point out that the final judgment is based on deeds done in the flesh and not on what happens in the intermediate state (Mat. 7:22-23; 10:32-33; 25:31-46; Lk. 12:46-48; II Cor. 5:9-10; Gal. 6:7-8; II Thes. 1:7-10).

(4) *The Final Decision Made in this Life*

The fourth argument is that, according to Scripture, the final decision is made in this life (II Cor. 6:2; Heb. 9:27).

(5) *The Contradiction to Scripture*

The fifth argument is that any form of universalism is directly contrary to Scripture (Mat. 25:46; Jn. 5:29; Rev. 20:11-15).

2. *Soul-Sleeping*

The second and more popular false view is known as “soul-sleeping.” The meaning of soul-sleeping is that upon death the soul, the immaterial part of man, goes into unconscious sleep and the person who dies remains totally unconscious in body and soul until the resurrection. This false teaching of soul-sleeping will be discussed in two main parts.

a. *Arguments in Favor of Soul-Sleeping*

There are three main arguments that those who believe in soul-sleeping use to defend their position.

(1) *The Dead Viewed as Sleeping*

The first one is to refer to passages of Scripture that speak of the dead as “sleeping.” Since there are passages of Scripture that describe the dead as sleeping, they conclude from these passages that it is the soul which sleeps.

In the Old Testament, these are found in Psalm 13:3 and Daniel 12:2. In the New Testament: Matthew 9:24; 27:52; Mark 5:39; Luke 8:52; John 11:11-14; Acts 7:60; 13:36; I Corinthians 15:6, 18, 20, 51; I Thessalonians 4:13-14; and II Peter 3:4. These verses speak of the dead as sleeping, therefore, some teach from these passages that the soul sleeps.

(2) *The Dead Viewed as in an Unconscious State*

A second argument that they like to use is to point to verses which speak of the dead as being in “a state of unconsciousness;” therefore, the soul sleeps in an unconscious state until the resurrection. The passages they use are all in the Old Testament: Psalm 6:5: *in death there is no remembrance*; Psalm 30:9:... *when I go down to the pit? Shall I praise you?*; Psalm 115:17: *The dead do not praise Jehovah, they go down in si-*

lence;...; Psalm 146:4 states that the thoughts perish at death; Ecclesiastes 9:5-6:... the dead know not anything, nor have the emotions of love or hatred or envy; Ecclesiastes 9:10 states that there is no work,... device,... nor wisdom, in Sheol,...; and Isaiah 38:18-19:... Sheol cannot praise you, the dead cannot celebrate you.

These verses appear to speak of the dead as being in a state of unconsciousness, and that is the second reason some teach the doctrine of soul-sleeping.

(3) *The Determination of Eternal Destiny*

The third argument is that the eternal destiny is determined only at the final judgment, not upon death. The Scriptures they use to try to prove that point are: Matthew 7:22-23; 25:31-46; John 5:28-29; II Corinthians 5:10; and Revelation 20:11-15. On the basis of these verses, they teach that eternal destiny is determined only at final judgment, not at death. This is also used as evidence of unconscious soul-sleeping upon death until the resurrection.

b. Arguments Against Soul-sleeping

(1) *Concerning the Term "Sleep"*

The first argument concerns the term "sleep" when it is used of death. Whenever the Bible speaks of death in the sense of sleep, it is always used of the physical body and not the soul, because the appearance of a sleeping body and a dead body are very much the same. So when the Bible speaks of sleep in the sense of death, it is only used of the body, not the soul.

Furthermore, it should be pointed out that whenever the Bible uses the term "sleep" in reference to death, uniquely, it is never used of unbelievers. It is a term used only of believers, which shows God's viewpoint of the death of a believer. From God's perspective, the death of a believer is a temporary suspension of physical activity. For example, in physical sleep there is a temporary suspension of physical activity until one wakes up, but there is no suspension of the activity of the mind, the soul-spirit, and all the subconscious continues to operate. That is the way the Bible speaks of the believer. When he dies it is

viewed as sleeping in that it is a temporary suspension of physical activity until the believer wakes up in the resurrection, but there is no suspension of soul-spirit activity.

The word “sleep” in reference to death is used only of the physical body and it is only used of believers to show what God’s viewpoint is concerning the death of a believer.

(2) Concerning Consciousness After Death

The second argument that can be used against the teaching of soul-sleeping is that the Bible clearly shows that men are conscious after death. There are clear passages of Scripture that speak of the dead as being in a state of consciousness. Three passages speak of the Transfiguration: Matthew 17:1-8; Mark 9:2-8; and Luke 9:28-36. One of those men, Moses, had died and yet Moses is conscious even though he had died. In Luke 16:19-31, in the story of the rich man and Lazarus, it is obvious that the rich man is conscious, Lazarus is conscious, and Abraham is conscious, even though they are all dead. Two are recently dead and one has been long dead. Indeed, their physical bodies are asleep, but not their souls.

(3) Concerning the Existence of Angels

The third argument that can be used in response to those who teach soul-sleeping is that the existence of angels shows that spirits can live and function apart from bodies. One of the reasons people teach that soul-sleeping must be true is because they believe that disembodied spirits cannot function. That is why some teach the existence of an intermediate body and others teach soul-sleeping. However, the existence of angels shows that spirit beings can and do live and function apart from bodies (Heb. 1:14).

(4) Concerning the Term Resurrection

The fourth argument that could be used in response to those who teach soul-sleeping is that the term “resurrection” applies only to bodies, never to souls. One will never read of a soul’s being resurrected from physical death (Mat. 27:52).



(5) Concerning the Meaning of Death

The fifth argument is that the very meaning of death is that the believer enters immediately into God's presence. This is the clear teaching of Scripture: upon death, the believer enters the presence of God (Acts 7:59; Phil. 1:23; II Cor. 5:6-8; Rev. 6:9-11; 7:9-17).

(6) Concerning the Language of Appearance

The sixth argument that can be used in response to the teaching of soul-sleeping is that the passages which speak in terms of the dead being in a state of unconsciousness are not dealing with the soul's being unconscious as such. Rather, some of these passages that are used of the unconscious state are merely the language of appearance. They are in reference to the body. But the issue is not the body, the issue is the soul. Some of these passages deal merely with the inability of the dead to continue the processes that were normal while living on the earth, since the body can no longer function.

As for the Ecclesiastes passages, they record the conclusions of human philosophy and not the teaching of the Word of God. So even the passages which they use to try to show that men are unconscious after death do not teach soul-sleeping as such.

(7) Concerning the Determination of Destiny

The seventh argument that should be pointed out is that the destiny determined at the final judgment has to do only with the degree of punishment and not with the fact of punishment, present or future. There is present suffering for the soul with the worst to come after the final judgment. Now in Hell, only the soul is suffering, but later in the Lake of Fire, there will be suffering of both the soul and body. The verses that are used to try to prove that final determination is made only at the final judgement, not at death, too often confuse the various types of punishment. The issue of salvation is determined upon death; the final judgment determines only the degree of punishment. So like second probation, soul-sleeping is not the teaching of the Word of God.

APPENDIX IX

The Place of the Dead

A. The Unseen World

In the Hebrew Old Testament and the Greek New Testament there are a total of thirteen different terms describing the unseen world. These terms need to be understood to fully comprehend the place of the dead and the unseen world.

1. Sheol

The first term is the Hebrew word *Sheol* and therefore it is found only in the Old Testament.

a. The Scriptures

In the Old Testament there are a total of sixty-four references to this place, so there is extensive usage of this term. All sixty-four passages cannot be listed here, but its use is spread throughout the Old Testament, and it is not limited only to certain writers nor to a certain period of time. Among the Books of Moses, *Sheol* is mentioned in Genesis, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. In the historical books, it is mentioned in I Samuel, II Samuel, and I Kings. In the poetic books, it is mentioned in Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon. In the Major Prophets, it is found in the Books of Isaiah and Ezekiel. Among the Minor Prophets, *Sheol* is mentioned by Hosea, Amos, Jonah, and Habbakuk. *Sheol* is a place known from the beginning to the end of Old Testament history.

b. The Deductions

From these sixty-four passages where this term is used, six deductions can be drawn concerning what *Sheol* was.

First: in the Old Testament period, *Sheol* was a place that both the righteous and the unrighteous expected to go upon death (Ps. 89:48). The righteous ones, the saints of the Old Testament, expected to go down to *Sheol* in Genesis 37:35; 42:38; 44:29, 31; Job 14:13; Psalm 16:10; and Jonah 2:2. The unrighteous also expected to go down to *Sheol* in Numbers 16:30, 33; Job 24:19; Psalm 9:17; 49:14; and Ezekiel 32:21.

Second: Although both believers and unbelievers went down to *Sheol* in the Old Testament, it was far more dreadful for the unbelievers than it was for the believers (Job 24:19; Ps. 9:17; 49:14).

Third: there are different levels or compartments in *Sheol*. The fact that there are references to *the lowest Sheol* teaches the fact that there are different levels in *Sheol* or there are different compartments in *Sheol* (Deut. 32:22; Ps. 86:13).

Fourth: the direction of *Sheol* was always downward (Gen. 37:35; 42:38; 44:29, 31; Num. 16:30, 33; I Sam. 2:6; I Kg. 2:6, 9; Job 7:9; 11:8; 17:16; 21:13; Ps. 30:3; Prov. 5:5; 7:27; 15:24; Is. 5:14; 14:9; Ezek. 32:21; Amos 9:2).

Fifth: *Sheol* was a place of consciousness and those who went down to *Sheol* were in a state of consciousness (Is. 14:9-10; Jon. 2:2).

Sixth: *Sheol* was not removed from God's jurisdiction (Job 26:6; Ps. 139:8; Deut. 32:22).

2. Hades

The second term for the unseen world is the Greek word *Hades*, and therefore is only found in the New Testament.

a. The Scriptures

Hades is mentioned in ten New Testament passages. Matthew 11:23:... *you shall go down unto Hades*:...; Matthew 16:18: *the gates of Hades*; Luke 10:15:... *you shall be brought down unto Hades*; Luke 16:23:... *in Hades he lifted up his eyes*,...; Acts 2:27 quotes Psalms 16:10:... *you will not leave my soul unto Hades*,...;

Acts 2:31:... *neither was he left unto Hades*,...; Revelation 1:18: the Messiah is said to *have the keys of death and Hades*; Revelation 6:8:... *his name was Death; and Hades*,...; Revelation 20:13:... *death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them*...; and Revelation 20:14:... *death and Hades were cast into the Lake of Fire*.

b. The Deductions

From these ten references on *Hades* in the New Testament, seven deductions can be drawn. First: *Hades* is the same as *Sheol*. *Hades* is the Greek term for the Old Testament *Sheol*, so everything that is true of *Sheol* is automatically true of *Hades*. This is evident from the fact that while Psalm 16:10 used the term *Sheol*, when that verse is quoted in the New Testament (Acts 2:27, 31), it is called *Hades*. So *Sheol* and *Hades* are one and the same, *Sheol* being the Hebrew term and *Hades* being the Greek term. Second: it was a place for both the righteous and the unrighteous. In Luke 16:19-31 the unrighteous rich man is in *Hades*. But the Righteous One, Jesus, was also in *Hades*, according to Acts 2:27, 31. Third: *Hades* had two main compartments (Lk. 16:19-31). The section for the unbeliever was *Hades* Proper, and the section for the believer was known as Abraham's Bosom. More will be said about this later. Fourth: although both believers and unbelievers went down to *Hades*, it was especially severe for the unbelievers (Mat. 11:23; Lk. 10:15; 16:19-31). Fifth: the direction of *Hades* was always downward, never upward (Mat. 11:23; Lk. 10:15). Sixth: it was a place of consciousness, not a place of unconsciousness (Lk. 16:19-31). Seventh: *Hades* is a temporary state, not the eternal state (Rev. 20:11-15).

3. Abbadon

The third biblical term for the unseen world is *Abbadon*. This is a Hebrew word that means "destruction." Being a Hebrew term, all but one verse are found in the Old Testament.

a. The Scriptures

It is used a total of seven times in Scripture. Job 26:6:... *Abbadon has no covering*; Job 28:22: [*Abbadon*] *and death*; Job 31:12: *a fire that*

consumes unto [Abbadon]; Psalms 88:11: Shall your loving kindness be declared in the grave? Or your faithfulness in [Abbadon]?; Proverbs 15:11: Sheol and Abbadon are before Jehovah:...; Proverbs 27:20: Sheol and Abbadon are never satisfied;...; Revelation 9:11 calls the angel of the Abyss by his Hebrew name, Abbadon, and also gives his Greek name, Apollyon. The Greek word means the same as the Hebrew word: "Destruction."

b. The Deductions

From these seven usages, one can make three deductions. First: in three of the seven usages, it is paralleled with *Sheol* (Job 26:6; Prov. 15:11; 27:20). All of the six Old Testament references were from poetical books. Hebrew poetry is not based upon rhythm or rhyme, but upon parallelism. Hence, in these three cases *Sheol* is paralleled with *Abbadon* or *Abbadon* is paralleled with *Sheol*. Second: the term is used only negatively. There is not a single positive reference to *Abbadon*; all of them have a negative connotation. Third: *Abbadon* is a Hebrew name for the unbeliever's side of *Sheol* or *Hades*. It has been pointed out that *Hades* consists of two major compartments: a side for the righteous and a side for the unrighteous. The term *Abbadon* was a Hebrew name for the unrighteous' or the unbeliever's side of *Sheol* or *Hades*.

4. The Pit

The fourth term for the unseen world is the expression "the Pit." This is also an Old Testament name for the unseen world.

a. The Scriptures

All together there are twenty-three references to the Pit. Not all of them will be listed here, but the books where it is mentioned are: Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Isaiah, and Ezekiel, with most of the references being in Ezekiel.

b. The Deductions

From these twenty-three references, three deductions can be made. First: like *Abbadon*, it is always used in negative terms. There is never anything positive about the Pit, but only negative. Second: the direc-

tion is always downward, never upward. Third: the term the Pit is a descriptive term for the unrighteous' portion of *Sheol* or *Hades* and so the term the Pit is synonymous with *Abaddon*. The latter is the proper name and the former a descriptive name.

5. The Abyss

The fifth term for the unseen world is the word *Abyss*. The word *Abyss* has at its root such concepts as "the netherworld" or "bottomless." *Abyss* is a Greek word, and therefore only found in the New Testament.

a. The Scriptures

This word is found in nine passages, and of these nine, seven are in Revelation. Luke 8:31: *not command them to depart into the Abyss*; Romans 10:7: *Who shall descend into the Abyss?*; Revelation 9:1: *the key of the pit of the Abyss*; Revelation 9:2: *... he opened the pit of the Abyss;...*; Revelation 9:11: *the angel of the Abyss*; Revelation 11:7: *the beast that comes up out of the Abyss*; Revelation 17:8: *The beast... is about to come up out of the Abyss;...*; Revelation 20:1: *the key of the Abyss*; and Revelation 20:3: *and he cast him into the Abyss*.

b. The Deductions

From these nine references to the *Abyss*, three deductions can be made. First: the direction is always downward. Second: it is never associated with human beings; it is always associated with fallen angels with the exception of the Antichrist. Since the Antichrist will be conceived by the power of Satan, he is connected with angelic beings and therefore also with the *Abyss*. Third: the *Abyss* is that section of *Sheol* or *Hades* which is a temporary place of confinement for fallen angels. When demons are cast out of people, they sometimes spend a temporary period of time in the *Abyss* and then they are released. So it is always a temporary place of confinement. Satan will be confined in the *Abyss*, but even for him it is temporary, for one thousand years' duration (Rev. 20:3).

6. Tartarus

The sixth term that speaks of the unseen world is the Greek word *Tartarus*.

a. The Scripture

It is found in only one passage of Scripture, II Peter 2:4:

For if God spared not angels when they sinned, but cast them down to hell, and committed them to pits of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;...

b. The Deductions

Out of this one verse, five deductions can be made. First: it is called the *pits of darkness*, so it is given a negative connotation. Second: it is a place for fallen angels. Third: it is connected with fallen angels in connection with Noah. Whereas the *Abyss* is in connection with fallen angels in general, *Tartarus* is connected with fallen angels somehow related to the time of Noah. Fourth: the angels mentioned in this verse are obviously the same angels mentioned by Jude 6-7. Because of the connection between II Peter 2:4 and Jude 6-7, these angels are the same as the *sons of God* of Genesis six who intermarried with human women to try to corrupt the *seed* of the woman. Fifth: *Tartarus* is that portion of *Sheol* or *Hades* which is a permanent place of confinement for those fallen angels who sinned in Genesis six. While the *Abyss* is a temporary place of confinement for fallen angels, a place where fallen angels or demons come and go for periods of time, *Tartarus* is different; it is a permanent place of confinement. From this confinement, these angels will never be released, but will eventually go from *Tartarus* to the *Lake of Fire*. These angels will never be free again. The reason these fallen angels are kept in a special place, *Tartarus*, instead of the *Abyss*, is because of the special nature of their sin. These are the ones who in Genesis six took on male form and intermarried with human women in order to corrupt the seed of the woman of Genesis 3:15. What they produced was a grotesque race. It is because of the existence of that grotesque race that the wickedness of man reached its epitome, necessitating a worldwide flood to destroy all humanity with the exception

of one family, the family of Noah.

So then, *Tartarus* is that portion of *Sheol* or *Hades* which is a permanent place of confinement for those angels who sinned in Genesis six.

7. Hell

a. The Origin of the Word

The seventh term is "Hell." The English word "Hell" comes from a Teutonic root which means "to hide" or "to cover." There is no special Hebrew or Greek term for the word "Hell" in Scripture. That probably was not the best term to come up with, but that is the term with which the English-speaking world is familiar, so it must be used. But again, neither the Hebrew nor the Greek has a singular term that means "Hell." The concept of Hell is included in some of the concepts of *Sheol* and *Hades*, and are totally found in the concepts of *Abbadon* and the Pit. So while the Scriptures do not actually use a special term for "Hell," the concepts of Hell are definitely biblical. What people call "Hell" is what the Old Testament calls *Abbadon* or the Pit, the unrighteous side of *Sheol* or *Hades*.

Based upon what has already been stated about the unrighteous side of *Sheol* or *Hades*, and what has been stated about *Abbadon* or the Pit, this Hell contains unsaved humans only. It does not include fallen angels, because fallen angels are in two other places, the *Abbyss* or *Tartarus*. While Hell contains certain concepts of *Sheol* or *Hades* and totally the concepts of *Abbadon* and the Pit, it excludes the concepts of the *Abbyss* and *Tartarus*, for these places are for fallen angels only.

b. The Conditions in Hell

Based upon what is known of *Abbadon* or the Pit, one can determine the conditions of those in Hell. First: they exist as shades, merely shades with no more reality than that. Indeed, when the Bible describes the people already in the unrighteous side of *Sheol*, it describes them by using a Hebrew term that means "shades" (Prov. 9:18; Is. 14:9). Second: they are in torment (Lk. 16:23-25).

From what is known about *Abbadon* and the Pit, three things can be said about Hell. First: there is a total absence of righteousness.

Second: it is a place that is separated from God. Third: it is a place of judgment.

8. Gehenna

The eighth term for the unseen world is the word *Gehenna*, which is a Greek term. Three things should be mentioned about this place.

a. Origin of the Concept of Gehenna

Although the term *Gehenna* is Greek, the origin of the concept is from the Hebrew. It is actually a combination of two Hebrew words. The first word is *Gei* and the second word is *Hinnom*; *Gei Hinnom* means “the Valley of Hinnom,” which is a valley outside the walls of Jerusalem. The Valley of Hinnom circles Jerusalem along the west side of the wall around to the south side, where it meets another valley known as the Kidron Valley, coming down from the east side of the city.

The Valley of Hinnom in the Old Testament was a place where some of the wicked kings of Israel practiced human sacrifice. The practice of human sacrifice meant that it was a place for the burning of humans (II Kg. 23:10; II Chr. 28:3; 33:6; Is. 30:33; Jer. 7:31-32; 19:1-15). So the origin of the New Testament *Gehenna* comes from the Hebrew words *Gei Hinnom*. The Old Testament concept of the burning of humans physically moves into the New Testament concept with the word *Gehenna*, and describes the unseen world and the eternal burning of humans.

b. The Scriptures

There are twelve references to *Gehenna*. Eleven of these references are in the Gospels and one is outside of the Gospels: Matthew 5:22:... *and whosoever shall say, You fool, shall be in danger of the [Gehenna] of fire*; Matthew 5:29: *not your whole body be cast into [Gehenna]*; Matthew 5:30: *not your whole body go into [Gehenna]*; Matthew 10:28:... *fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in [Gehenna]*; Matthew 18:9: *to be cast into the [Gehenna] of fire*; Matthew 23:15: *a son of [Gehenna]*; Matthew 23:33:... *how shall ye escape the judgment of [Gehenna]?*; Mark 9:43: *having your two hands to go into*

[*Gehenna*]; Mark 9:45: *having your two feet to be cast into [Gehenna]*; Mark 9:47: *having two eyes to be cast into [Gehenna]*; Luke 12:5:... *Fear him, who after he has killed has the power to cast into [Gehenna]*;...; and James 3:6: *and is set on fire by [Gehenna]*.

c. The Deductions

From these twelve references in the Greek New Testament, four deductions can be drawn. First: *Gehenna* is the eternal abode of the lost, both angels and men. Second: the punishment in *Gehenna* includes both soul and body. That is why *Gehenna* must not be translated as “Hell,” nor should it be equated with Hell. Hell, as will be shown, is a temporary place and it is for the soul only, but *Gehenna* is an eternal place and it includes both the soul and the body. Third: it is an eternal torment. Fourth: *Gehenna* is associated with fire, and fire is the source of torment.

9. The Lake of Fire

The ninth term for the unseen world is the *Lake of Fire*.

a. The Scriptures

The term *Lake of Fire* is found in four passages of Scripture, all of which are in Revelation: Revelation 19:20: *the beast and the false prophet are cast into the Lake of Fire*; Revelation 20:10 states that Satan is thrown into the *Lake of Fire*; Revelation 20:14:... *death and Hades were cast into the Lake of Fire*; and Revelation 21:8, which states that the *Lake of Fire* is called *the Second Death*.

b. The Deductions

From these four references in Revelation, one can make four deductions. First: the *Lake of Fire* is the eternal abode of all lost ones, both angels and men. Second: the punishment includes both the soul and the body. Both *Death* and *Hades* are cast into the *Lake of Fire*. *Death* refers to the material part of man, the body; *Hades* refers to the immaterial part of man, the soul and spirit. The *Lake of Fire* is a punishment for both of these. Third: the *Lake of Fire* is the same as *Gehenna*.

Gehenna is the proper name and the *Lake of Fire* is a descriptive name. Fourth: the *Lake of Fire* is associated with fire and brimstone as the source of torment.

10. Abraham's Bosom

The tenth term is "Abraham's Bosom."

a. The Scripture

While in the rabbinic writings this is a very common term, in the Scriptures it is found only in Luke 16:22-23:

And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and that he was carried away by the angels into Abraham's Bosom: and the rich man also died, and was buried. And in Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and sees Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

b. The Deductions

Although it is found only in these two verses, nevertheless six things can be deduced from these two verses.

First: Abraham's Bosom is for righteous ones only; there are no unrighteous ones in Abraham's Bosom.

Second: it is located adjacent to Hell. It is not in Hell, but is located adjacent to Hell, so that those in Hell, like the rich man, are able to see what is going on in Abraham's Bosom, though they have no way of getting there.

Third: while Hell and Abraham's Bosom are next to each other, they are separated by an impassable gulf. Although each side can see the other and those in them can converse with each other, they can not cross over from one to the other.

Fourth: Abraham's Bosom is that portion of *Sheol* or *Hades* which was a place for the righteous, whereas Hell was the place for the unrighteous humans.

Fifth: the term "Abraham's Bosom" is a figure of speech describing a guest at a feast, reclining on the breast of his neighbor. Just as in the Gospel of John, John was reclining at Jesus' bosom at the Feast of

Passover, this is what Lazarus was doing in Abraham's Bosom. This is a figure of speech of a guest at a feast, reclining on the breast of his neighbor or his host.

Sixth: Abraham's Bosom symbolized blessedness after death. While Lazarus did not do well when he was living as far as the material world was concerned, after death he was indeed in a state of blessedness.

11. *Paradise*

The eleventh term concerning the unseen world is "Paradise." The Greek word and its Hebrew equivalent means "a royal park" or "a garden."

a. The Scriptures

It is a New Testament term only, and it is found in three passages: Luke 23:43, where Jesus said to the other person dying on the cross: *Today shall you be with me in Paradise*; II Corinthians 12:4, which states that Paul was caught up into *Paradise*; Revelation 2:7, which speaks of the future: *the tree of life will be in the Paradise of God*.

b. The Deductions

From these three passages, three deductions can be made concerning Paradise.

First: it is a term describing the abode of the righteous ones, no matter where that abode may be at any point in time. In Luke 23:43, it is the same as Abraham's Bosom because at that point all the righteous one went down to the righteous side of *Sheol* or *Hades*, known as Abraham's Bosom or Paradise. Until the death of Jesus, Paradise was in Abraham's Bosom.

Second: according to II Corinthians 12:4, Paradise today is in Heaven. After the Ascension of Jesus, Abraham's Bosom was eliminated. Believers no longer descend down to Abraham's Bosom, but now go directly into Heaven. Today the believer's abode is Heaven, and so now Paradise is in Heaven.

Third: Revelation 2:7 speaks of the future, when Paradise will be in the New Jerusalem, which means that the abode of Paradise will change again. As the New Jerusalem on the new earth will be the

abode of all believers after the Messianic Kingdom, even so, Paradise is going to be in the New Jerusalem.

To summarize: from Adam until the Ascension of Jesus, Paradise was in Abraham's Bosom. From the Ascension of Jesus until the end of the Millennium, Paradise is in Heaven. Then after the Millennium and for all eternity, Paradise will be in the New Jerusalem on the new earth.

12. Heaven

Another term for the unseen world is "Heaven."

a. The Distinctions

The Bible speaks of three different heavens. Not all three are concerned with the unseen world. The first heaven is the atmosphere, because that is the heaven where birds are flying (Gen. 1:20, 26; Jer. 4:25; Hag. 1:10; Mat. 8:20; 13:32; Acts 10:12; 14:17).

The second heaven is what is called "space." This is the heaven where the sun, moon, and stars are said to be located (Gen. 1:14-18; 22:17; 26:4; Mat. 24:29; Heb. 11:12; Rev. 6:13). The first and second heavens are not part of the unseen world; they are visible.

However, it is the Third Heaven which is part of the unseen world. It is the abode of God; it is where God dwells (II Cor. 12:1-4).

b. The Scriptures

There are a total of thirty-nine passages of Scripture that speak about the Third Heaven. In the Old Testament, it is found in the Books of Genesis, Deuteronomy, I Kings, II Kings, II Chronicles, Job, Psalms, Ecclesiastes, Isaiah, Daniel, and Amos. In the New Testament, the Third Heaven is found in the Books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, II Corinthians, Ephesians, Colossians, I Thessalonians, Hebrews, and I Peter.

c. The Deductions

From these thirty-nine references to the Third Heaven, one can make a total of eight deductions.

First: the existence of the Third Heaven, the abode of God, has been testified of by eyewitnesses, for there are eyewitnesses who have seen the Third Heaven. Jesus, Who came from there, testified to its existence (Jn. 6); Paul was caught up to the *Third Heaven* to receive special revelation (II Cor. 12:1-4). The Apostle John saw a vision of the *Third Heaven*, and was even told to come up there to be shown things to come (Rev. 4:1). He witnessed things in Heaven and wrote about them throughout the Book of Revelation. So its existence has been testified to by eyewitnesses.

Second: the Third Heaven is the abode of God; it is where God lives.

Third: it is also the abode of the elect angels; this is where the good, elect, holy, unfallen angels reside as well.

Fourth: Heaven is a real and definite place.

Fifth: Heaven is always upward. It is above the earth, it is above the sky, it is above space. It is above the earth, above the first heaven and above the second heaven.

Sixth: it is also the place from where God rules providentially, by sovereignty; every aspect of His rule is from the Third Heaven.

Seventh: this is the place where God receives worship.

Eighth: it is now the home of departed saints. No longer do believers go down to Abraham's Bosom; they now go directly into Heaven. It is the home of the departed saints.

13. *The New Jerusalem*

The thirteenth term used to describe the unseen world is the New Jerusalem.

a. The Scriptures

The New Jerusalem is mentioned in three passages.

First: Galatians 4:26, where it is stated that *the Jerusalem that is above is free*, unlike the Jerusalem on earth that is in bondage.

Second: Hebrews 12:22-24, which speaks of the *Heavenly Jerusalem* as being the abode of God, the elect angels, and redeemed men.

Third: Revelation 21:1-22:5, which teaches that the *New Jerusalem* will be on the *new earth* and gives some detailed descriptions of

what the *New Jerusalem* is going to be like.

b. The Deductions

From these passages of Scripture on the New Jerusalem, one can draw six deductions. First: it is now above the earth; it already exists and it is now in the Third Heaven. Second: it is the abode of the whole Triune God; it is the abode of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit. Third: it is also the abode of the elect angels; it is where the unfallen angels live. Fourth: it is also the abode of redeemed saints; it is where the redeemed saints are now. Fifth: the New Jerusalem is synonymous with Heaven; they are one and the same. One could also say that the New Jerusalem is now in Heaven, but either way they are in the same locale and are more or less synonymous. Sixth: in that future when the new earth is created, Heaven or the New Jerusalem will come down upon the new earth. The eternal abode of the Triune God, the elect angels, and the redeemed men will be in the New Jerusalem on the new earth. If one distinguishes between Heaven and the New Jerusalem, then one can say that believers now go to the New Jerusalem in Heaven, and eventually the New Jerusalem will be placed on the new earth, when the new earth is created after the Messianic Kingdom.

14. Conclusions

a. The Terms Sheol and Hades

First: *Sheol* and *Hades* are one and the same. *Sheol* is the Hebrew term and *Hades* is the Greek term for one and the same thing. The location of *Sheol* or *Hades* is in the center of the earth as can be seen in three ways. First: in the Old Testament it was called the “nether parts of the earth” (Ezek. 26:20; 31:14, 16, 18; 32:18, 24). In Ephesians 4:9-10, *Hades* was called *the lower parts of the earth*. So the *Hades* in the lower parts of the earth corresponds to the *Sheol* in the “nether parts of the earth.” Third: in Matthew 12:40, *Hades* is said to be in the *heart* or in the “center” of the earth. As far as location is concerned, *Sheol* or *Hades* is located in the center of the earth. That is one of the reasons why *Sheol* or *Hades* is temporary, because when this earth is done away with at the end of the Messianic Kingdom, *Sheol* or

Hades will no longer exist.

Second: *Sheol* or *Hades* has two primary compartments. One primary compartment was for the righteous ones, and this righteous side was known as Abraham's Bosom. Between Adam and the Ascension of Jesus, Paradise was located in Abraham's Bosom. The second primary compartment was for the unrighteous ones, both angels and humans. This second compartment has three parts. As far as humans are concerned, they are located in *Hades* Proper, better known among believers today as Hell. This part is also known by two other names: *Abbadon* and the Pit. The two other parts in the unrighteous side are for fallen angels. One of these is the *Abyss*, which is a temporary place of confinement for fallen angels. The other is *Tartarus*, which is the place of confinement for those angels who sinned in Genesis six. So *Sheol* or *Hades* had two primary compartments. The righteous side was known as Abraham's Bosom. The unrighteous side had three subdivisions of its own: for humans it is *Hades* or Hell, also known as *Abbadon* or the Pit; and for the fallen angels, the *Abyss* and *Tartarus*.

b. The Terms Gehenna and the Lake of Fire

The second conclusion to be drawn is that the terms *Gehenna* and the Lake of Fire refer to one and the same place. It is the final abode of the unrighteous ones, both angels and men. It should be kept in mind that *Sheol* or *Hades* is a temporary place, regardless of one's condition. The righteous side of *Sheol* or *Hades* has already been eliminated with the Ascension of the Messiah. The unrighteous side is also temporary, because the eternal abode of the unrighteous ones will not be Hell nor the *Abyss* nor *Tartarus*, but will be *Gehenna*, the Lake of Fire.

c. Heaven

Heaven is the abode of God; it is the abode of the elect or good angels; it is the abode of believers who have passed away; and it is the abode of the dead saints. It is the present place of Paradise. At one time Paradise was located in Abraham's Bosom, but now Paradise is in Heaven. Heaven is either the same as the New Jerusalem or the New Jerusalem is in Heaven.

B. The Place of the Dead in the Old Testament

1. The Scripture

Perhaps the best single passage that clearly pictures what the situation was before the death, Resurrection, and Ascension of Jesus is Luke 16:19-31. It is the story of the rich man and Lazarus. It should be noted that this is not a parable. Jesus did not call it a parable. Parables do not have proper names. It is a real story that Jesus told.

What is described in Luke 16:19-31 is the situation beginning with Adam until the Ascension of Jesus. When speaking of the place of the dead in the Old Testament, it does not mean Old Testament history only, but includes Old Testament history all the way through gospel history until the Ascension of Jesus. The dividing line between what is true concerning the place of the dead for the Old Testament saints and the place of the dead for the New Testament saints is the Ascension of Jesus into Heaven.

2. The Conditions from Adam to the Ascension of the Messiah

Four things can be pointed out concerning the place of the dead until the Ascension of Jesus from Luke 16:19-31.

First: every person who died, whether they were righteous or unrighteous went down to *Sheol* or *Hades* which, as was noted, is in the center of the earth.

Second: the righteous went into Abraham's Bosom, where Paradise was located at that time. While the animal blood sacrifices were sufficient to keep the Old Testament saint out of Hell, they were not sufficient to get them into Heaven. The Old Testament saint was saved the same way believers are saved today: by grace through faith. In both cases, however, there was the element of blood. Until the death of Jesus, the blood sacrifice that was necessary was that of the animal blood and the sacrificial system of the Mosaic Law. Because this was animal blood, the blood sacrifices only covered the sins of the saints, but did not remove them. As Hebrews 10:1-4 emphasizes, *it is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats* [the blood of animals] *should take away sin*. The reason the blood sacrifices, while sufficient to keep the

Old Testament Saints out of Hell, were not sufficient to get them into Heaven is because the blood sacrifices only covered sin, but they did not remove it. Nevertheless, Abraham's Bosom, where Paradise was located, was a place of bliss for the immaterial part of the Old Testament saint or the soul of the Old Testament saint.

Third: the unrighteous went into *Hades* Proper, better known as Hell or *Abbadon* or the Pit. Unlike Abraham's Bosom, *Hades* proper or Hell, was a place of torment.

Fourth: there was an impassable gulf between the two sides of *Sheol* or *Hades*. It was possible to see across this gulf, it was possible to converse across this gulf, but it was impossible to cross over from one side to the other. Obviously, if it were possible, all of the crossing would be in one direction only, as no one in Abraham's Bosom would want to go to Hell, but those in Hell would definitely desire to enter into Abraham's Bosom. This was the situation from the time of Adam until the Ascension of Jesus.

C. The Place of the Dead Today

1. The Believers

The work of the Messiah changed the whole situation for the believers. In particular, three acts of the Messiah effected that change.

First: the death of the Messiah. When Jesus died, He died for all sins. He also died for all the world's sins of all time—those committed before His death and those committed after His death. It was also the death of Jesus that removed the sins of the Old Testament saints.

Second: the descent of the Messiah. When Jesus died, His soul, His immaterial part, descended into the righteous portion of *Sheol* or *Hades*. In Matthew 12:40, Jesus predicted that He must go down into the heart of the earth where *Sheol* or *Hades* is located. Ephesians 4:9 states that Jesus *descended into the lower parts of the earth*. First Peter 3:18-19 points out that in His spirit, Jesus *preached unto the spirits in prison*. These *spirits* were the unrighteous ones in Hell. Some have misunderstood this verse and taught that since He preached, He *preached* the gospel to them and gave them a second chance to be saved. However, the Greek word that is used here is not the Greek word that means "to preach the

gospel,” but it is a Greek word that simply means “to make a proclamation.” What happened when Jesus descended is that His spirit made a proclamation that His death guarantees the judgment of the unsaved. Jesus made the proclamation to those in Hell. Because of this, some assumed that Jesus descended into Hell and this He did not. He told the dying thief on the cross that on that very day, the both of them would be in Paradise, not in Hell. When Jesus died, His spirit descended to the righteous side of *Sheol* or *Hades*, Abraham’s Bosom. As has been noted, if one were in Abraham’s Bosom, he could see those in Hell and converse with those in Hell. So the spirit of Jesus descended into Abraham’s Bosom and He made the proclamation that the death of the Messiah guaranteed their future judgment. Those who were to benefit from the death of Jesus were the souls of Abraham’s Bosom only, not the souls of Hell.

Third: the Ascension of the Messiah. When the Messiah ascended into Heaven, He took the souls of the Old Testament saints with Him; *he led captivity captive* (Eph. 4:8-10). Those who had been captive within the confines of Abraham’s Bosom were now taken out of Abraham’s Bosom. All the righteous souls who had died before the death of Jesus ascended with Jesus into Heaven. As a result Abraham’s Bosom, the righteous side of *Sheol* or *Hades*, has been eliminated and Paradise is no longer in Abraham’s Bosom. Paradise is now in the Third Heaven (II Cor. 12:1- 4).

As a result of these three acts of the Messiah, the souls of saints today go immediately into Heaven. No longer is there a temporary “holding pattern.” The moment a believer dies, he goes immediately into the presence of God. Second Corinthians 5:6-8 teaches that to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord, and the Lord is in the Third Heaven. Philippians 1:21-23 states that to depart in death is to be with the Messiah, and the Messiah is in the Third Heaven, seated at the right hand of God the Father.

2. The Unbelievers

As far as unbelievers are concerned, nothing has changed for them. What happens to unbelievers today is a continuation of what was true before the Ascension of Jesus. The souls of unbelievers still go down to *Hades* Proper or Hell.

D. The Place of the Dead in the Future

1. The Future of the Believers

a. The Messianic Kingdom

John describes the saints who are to take part in the millennial reign of the Messiah in Revelation 20:4-6.

Concerning the Church saints, in verse 4, those to whom *judgment was given* will be resurrected at the Rapture. The *judgment* spoken of here is the Judgment Seat of the Messiah, the *judgment* of the believer's works, which determines their position in the Kingdom. The Church saints will then return with Jesus at the Second Coming and they will co-reign with Him on earth for the one thousand years of the Kingdom.

The Tribulation saints, those who *had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus* will also be resurrected after the Second Coming. They will also co-reign, like the Church saints, with the Messiah for one thousand years.

As for the Old Testament saints, they will be resurrected only after the Second Coming (Is. 26:19; Dan. 12:2), and they will be inside the Promised Land during the Kingdom. The Old Testament saints will inherit all of the Promised Land.

b. The Eternal Order

The second phase of the future of the believers will be the Eternal Order or the Eternal State, which will be in the New Jerusalem. The New Jerusalem, which is now in the Third Heaven, or is the same as the Third Heaven, will come down upon that *new earth* which God will create after the Messianic Kingdom (Rev. 21:1-22:5). At that point, *Paradise* will be in the New Jerusalem upon the new earth (Rev. 2:7).

The future of the believers, ultimately in the Eternal State, will be in the New Jerusalem upon the new earth which God is going to create at that time.

2. The Future of the Unbelievers

a. The Eternal State

The unbelievers are going to remain in *Sheol* or *Hades* until the end of the Messianic Kingdom. It is only at the end of the one thousand years that the souls of the unbelievers will be taken out of *Hades* or Hell (Rev. 20:11-15). This removal of the souls out of Hell is known as the Second Resurrection because all the bodies of the unbelievers will be resurrected, and all the souls of unbelievers will be removed from Hell so, at this point, Hell is going to be eliminated.

After the Second Resurrection, in which the souls of Hell are removed and the bodies of the unbelievers are resurrected and reunited with those souls, all of these unbelievers will then stand before the Great White Throne Judgment. The purpose of the Great White Throne Judgment is not to determine whether they were saved or unsaved; that is determined forever upon death. The purpose of this Great White Throne Judgment is to determine degree of punishment, because some will suffer more severely than other.

After the Great White Throne Judgment will come the final abode of all unbelievers, which will be *Gehenna* or the Lake of Fire.

b. The Scriptures

The passages concerning *Gehenna* and the Lake of Fire were discussed earlier. From these passages it was determined that the eternal abode of the unbeliever is the Lake of Fire.

c. The Descriptive Phrases

There are nine phrases that describe the eternal state of the unbeliever. First: the *Gehenna* of fire (Mat. 5:22; 18:9). Second: the judgment of *Gehenna* (Mat. 23:33). Third: the *outer darkness*; as over against the place of light, this is the place of *outer darkness* (Mat. 8:12; 22:13; 25:30). Fourth: *unquenchable fire*; the Lake of Fire burns forever, so this is the *unquenchable fire* (Mat. 3:12; Mk. 9:43; Lk. 3:17). Fifth: *the eternal fire*; it emphasizes the eternity of the Lake of Fire (Mat. 25:41; Jude 7). Sixth: *the eternal destruction* (II Thes. 1:9); again,

it is a view of a continuous, eternal, unending destruction. It is a place of torment indeed. Seventh: *the furnace of fire*. Often the term *fire* is the issue, since that is the means of torment (Mat. 13:42, 50). Eighth: *the blackness of darkness*, again emphasizing the opposite of light (II Pet. 2:17; Jude 13). Ninth: *the second death*; the first death is physical death and *the second death* is eternal, spiritual death in the *Lake of Fire* (Rev. 2:11; 20:14; 21:8).

d. The State of the Unbeliever in the Lake of Fire

What is the state of the unbeliever in the Lake of Fire? It is a place where there is *smoke of...torment* (Rev. 14:10-11), a fire that is not quenchable (Mk. 9:48). It is a state of *weeping and gnashing of teeth* (Mat. 8:12; 13:42, 50; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30; Lk. 13:28); it is a place of unholy associations (Rev. 21:8; 22:15); it is a state of suffering the wrath of God eternally (Jn. 3:36).

e. The Deductions

Eight deductions can be drawn concerning the place of the dead in the future for the unbeliever: first, it is a total deprivation of divine favor; second, it is an endless disturbance of life; third, it is a time of pain in body and in soul; fourth, there are pangs of conscience; fifth, it is anguish; sixth, it is a place of despair; seventh, it is torment; and eighth, it is an eternal state of consciousness.

f. The Duration

The duration of this kind of torment is eternal (Rev. 14:11). It carries the same duration as the eternal bliss for the saints (Mat. 25:46). It is stated that "their worm never dies" (Mk. 9:48).

E. False Views Concerning the Place of the Dead

There are two main false views and both of these originated primarily with Roman Catholicism.

1. *The Teaching Concerning Limbus Infantum*

The first false view is known as *Limbus Infantum*. This has to do with those who die in infancy. The word *limbus* is a Latin word which means “edge.” In Catholicism the *Limbus Infantum* is a place at the edge of Hell; it is a place where unbaptized infants go. If an infant dies in an unbaptized state, he will not go to Hell because he was an infant, but neither will he go to Heaven because he was not baptized. Rather, they teach that there is a special place at the edge of Hell where an unbaptized infant goes. He suffers no punishment, but he is excluded from the blessings of Heaven.

This false teaching concerning the place of the dead can be criticized in two points. First: this entire view is based upon another false doctrine known as “baptismal regeneration,” meaning that by means of water baptism one can be saved. They believe that if an infant is baptized, those few drops of water save the infant spiritually. Because they believe in baptismal regeneration, because they believe that baptism saves the infant but a lack of baptism does not, they came up with a place that infants can go which is neither Heaven nor Hell, but a place at the edge of Hell.

Second: the Bible nowhere speaks of such a place. It is purely a tradition and one should not develop one’s theology from church tradition. The Bible is the only authority for all matters of both faith and practice.

2. *The Teaching Concerning Purgatory*

The second false view concerning the place of the dead is the teaching concerning Purgatory. This is a more common false position.

a. *The Concept of Purgatory*

The word “purgatory” comes from a Latin term that means “to purge.” Purgatory, according to Catholicism, is a place of purification for those who are not bad enough to go to Hell, but not good enough to go to Heaven. One spends a duration of time in Purgatory and then finally he can go to Heaven.

The length of time one must spend in Purgatory varies according to the needs of individuals. Time in Purgatory can be shortened by

prayers, by good works, by attending Mass, by penance, and by the purchasing of indulgences.

b. The Attempted Support for Purgatory

In trying to support this teaching from Scripture, six passages are used: Isaiah 4:4 speaks of the blood of Jerusalem being *purged*; Micah 7:8:... *when I sit in darkness, Jehovah will be a light unto me*; Zechariah 9:11:... *set free your prisoners from the pit....*; Malachi 3:2:... *for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap....*; I Corinthians 3:13-17 speaks of the *fire* at the Judgment Seat of the Messiah; and I Corinthians 15:29 speaks of the baptism for the dead.

These are the six "evidences" from Scripture that they use to try to prove the doctrine of Purgatory. In reality, however, none of them actually teach any such concept as Purgatory. Not one of the passages describes a period of purging after death for the purpose of qualifying for Heaven.

Actually, their main support is apocryphal. The key proof comes from the *Apocrypha*, not from Scripture. The particular passage that they use in the *Apocrypha* is II Maccabees 12:41-45:

All men therefore praising the Lord, the righteous judge who had opened the things that were hid betook themselves to prayer and besought him that a sin committed might wholly be put out of remembrance. Besides that noble Judah exhorted the people to keep themselves from sin for so much as they saw before their eyes the things that came to pass for the sins of those that were slain. And when he had made a gathering throughout the company to the sum of two thousand drachmas of silver, he sent it to Jerusalem to offer a sin offering doing therein very well and honestly in that he was mindful of the resurrection. For if he had not hoped that were slain should have risen again, it had been superfluous and vain to pray for the dead. And also in that he perceived that there was great favor laid up for those that died Godly, it was a holy and good though whereupon he made a reconciliation for the dead that they might be delivered from sin.

This is the main evidence that the Roman Catholic Church actually uses to teach the doctrine of Purgatory. This is why they have chosen to make the books of the Maccabees part of Scripture, though it was never accepted by the Jews and, in the time of Jesus, the books of the Maccabees were never classed among that which was known as Scripture.

c. A Critique of the Doctrine of Purgatory

Three criticisms can be leveled against the doctrine of Purgatory.

First: none of the six passages of Scripture that they cite actually teach that there is any such place as Purgatory. Isaiah 4:4 talks about the forgiveness of the sins of Jerusalem at the end of the Tribulation. Micah 7:8 is a spiritual truth that even when the believer is forced into a place of *darkness*, God will be *light* unto him. This passage is not saying that that person is in Purgatory. Zechariah 9:11 is speaking of a future resurrection and not Purgatory. Malachi 3:2 speaks of the judgments of the Great Tribulation and not Purgatory. First Corinthians 3:13-17 speaks about the Judgment Seat of the Messiah after the Rapture in Heaven, not Purgatory. As for I Corinthians 15:29, whatever the baptism for the dead may actually mean, it does not even hint of a place of refining in Purgatory. So none of the Scriptures cited actually teach that there is any such place as Purgatory.

Second: the apocryphal citation which was quoted above actually proves far too much for the Catholic Church, because the specific sin in that passage was the sin of idolatry. And yet idolatry is one of the "seven deadly sins" in Catholicism for which there can only be Hell, not Purgatory. So even when they use the citation from the book of the Maccabees, it proves too much because the sin was idolatry, and even in Catholicism that is not solved by Purgatory, but by Hell.

Third: the concept of Purgatory is a very clear denial of the finished work of the Messiah. The teaching of the New Testament is that when Jesus died on the cross it was a finished work and the finished work of the Messiah means that the sins of the believer have once and for all been purified. The believer does not need to go through a period of purging and purifying in Purgatory (Titus 2:14; Heb. 1:3). The work of the Messiah is finished, and that includes the total forgive-

ness of sins, so that the believer need not go through a temporary period of purging in Purgatory before he can enter into Heaven.