

Issue 39  
Sept 2008

# From Death To Life



**“Blessed is a man who**  
perseveres under trial; for  
once he has been approved,  
he will receive the crown of  
life which the Lord has  
promised to those who love  
**Him.” (James 1:12).**

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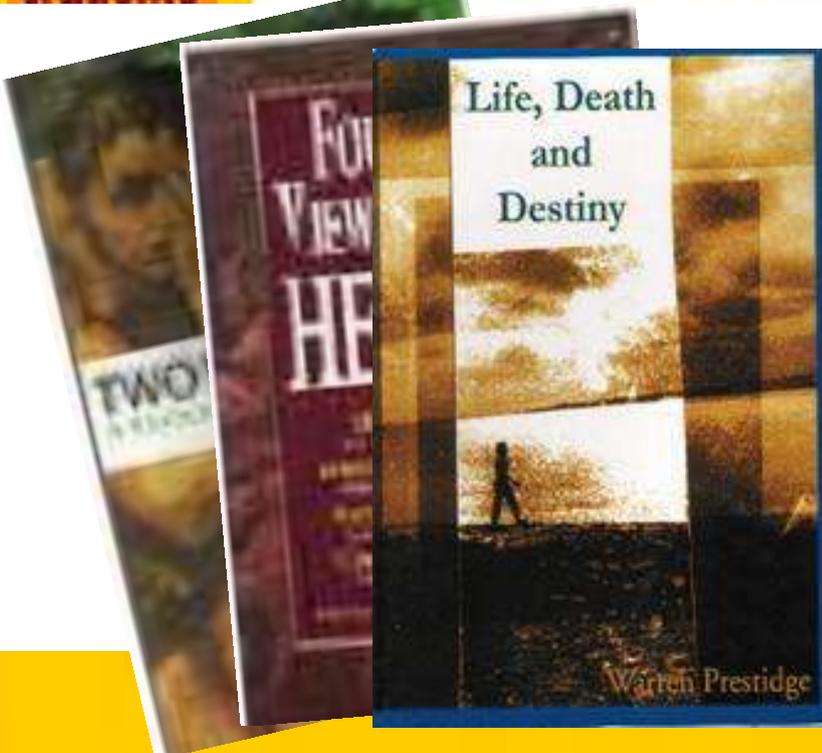
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September  
2008

Conditional Immortality Association Issue 39

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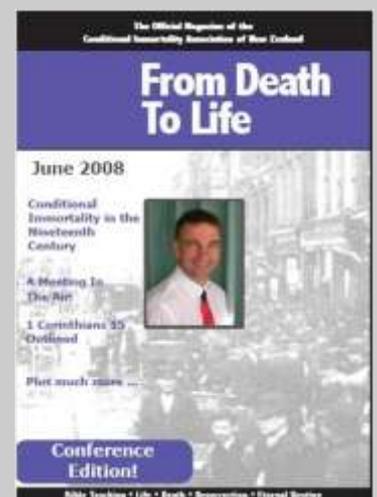
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## From Death To Life

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To join the Association see p. 28 or print out & send in the membership form from our website.



## Editorial

I talked with someone the other day who had had the misfortune of having a friend commit suicide. His religious background told him that the penalty for suicide was a one way ticket to eternal conscious torment, he looked to me, as a pastor, for consolation.

The Bible describes two famous suicides: King Saul and Judas. Doubtless Judas was lost. Peter speaks of "the reward he got for his wickedness" (Acts 1:16-18). He was lost however because he rejected the Lord, not because he committed suicide.

The story of King Saul's demise is different. He was fatally wounded in battle. To avoid capture, and probably torture before being killed, he killed himself. David's lament over Saul and Jonathan is kind: "Saul and Jonathan - in life they were loved and gracious, and in death they were not parted ..." (2Sam. 1:23). This is not to say that Saul and Jonathan are now in heaven. David simply means that having died together in battle, they now rest with each

other in death. David makes no judgment as to the eternal destiny of Saul.

One can only say, as Abraham did, "Will not the Judge of all the earth do right?" (Gen. 18:25). Suicide is **always a tragedy. I don't want to** condone it, let alone promote it. However I am sure God could extend mercy to one who like Saul thought themselves fatally wounded by life, and, not being in a healthy state of mind, decided to end it all before being degraded any further.

At any rate, conditional immortality means that like David we can affirm that our loved ones (even suicides) are at peace now. We may also affirm that God would never be so callous as to torment anyone for all eternity—no matter how great their sin. The judge of the whole earth will do what is right and eternal torment is not right.

- David Burge.



# The Crown of Life

One of my favourite songs has the line "Life is hard, people are strange, God is good". All of those things are true, and I'm glad to know that there is a reward to look forward to at the end of this hard life, which is a race overseen by a good God and run in the company of strange people.

**This reward is mentioned in James 1:12, "Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him" (NASB).**

A literal translation would be 'the crown which is life', and it refers to the wreath given to the winner of a race. That is what those who love God have to look forward to at the end of this race full of trials: eternal life with God. There is no better prize.

*Jachin Mandeno*



The Author

Jachin in no way intends to imply that the reader is **any "stranger"** than he. You can read Jachin's story in From Death To Life, Issue 31, September 2006, p6 (You can find it online at our web site).

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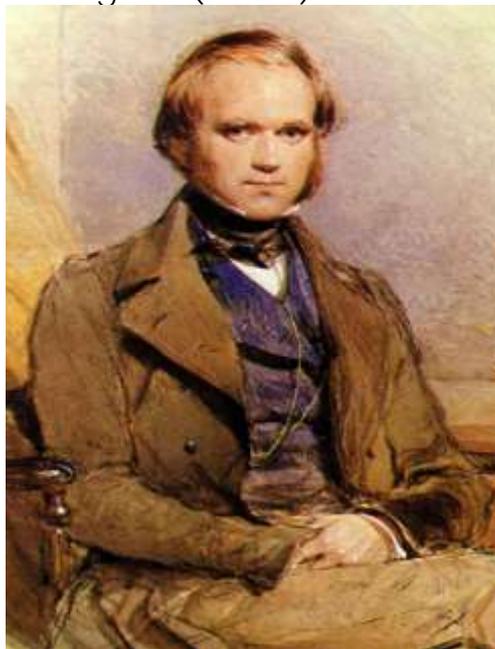
## Conditional Immortality in the 19th Century (Part Two)

*This is part two of an address given by Armand Newrick at our Conference 2008. The first part can be found in Issue 38.*

### ENGLAND

In nineteenth century Europe, changes emerging in society were beginning to loosen the bonds of tradition! People were being freed by the advances of science and philosophy to question long held beliefs such as the origin of the universe, the authority and inspiration of the scriptures, and even the existence of God. Debates on science and religion occupied the minds and the conversations of the people on the street in Victorian England. Yes, England was coming of age!

We could now capture images by photograph (1827), there was the invention of the telephone (1876), the light bulb (1879), the internal combustion engine (1807). Was



Charles Darwin there anything which humanity could not now control and achieve? Such radical **"modern" changes were** exciting for many but scary for those who valued tradition. This was an era out of which freedoms and powerful convictions provided, at

times, volatile moments between prominent Christian leaders of the day.

### DARWIN'S THEORY

It is somewhat ironic that at this time Charles Darwin was pursuing **"naturalism"** as his reaction against a God who would torment the unsaved in a conscious hell. It is ironic for at this very time a number of prominent preacher/theologians were coming to the conviction that hell was in fact a place where the wicked would be annihilated. Here is a quote from Darwin: ***"I can indeed hardly see how anyone ought to wish Christianity to be true; for if so the plain language of the text seems to show that men who do not believe, and this would***

*include my Father, Brother and almost all of my best friends, will be everlastingly punished. And this is a **damnable doctrine.***<sup>19</sup>

Darwin was not the only one for whom the doctrine of hell was a psychological barrier to belief. In 1859

**Darwin's**, *Origin of Species* was published, creating a serious threat to the very foundations of the Christian faith, a challenge that many Christians sort to synthesize with belief because, to not do so was deemed backward and ignorant of the advances of science.

### HIGHER CRITICISM

Another threat to the Christian faith which was buffeting the Church in England was a new form of biblical scholarship known as Higher Criticism which had emerged in the German Universities.

Higher criticism could best be described as an approach to the Bible text which treated the text as if created solely by human beings with all their human motives and biases written into it. The biblical scholar would treat the scriptures like any other



Charles Haddon Spurgeon

ancient text trying to determine why, and who wrote it in the first place, and for what reason with very little, if any, thought of divine inspiration.

American preachers would cross the Atlantic to gain their advanced theological education in

German universities that taught this approach.<sup>10</sup> Therefore, this type of scholarship was believed to have contributed to the demise of biblical authority in America **giving rise to "Christian Fundamentalism"**. It was also making its influence felt in England.

A number of staunch evangelicals, and none more prominent than Charles Haddon Spurgeon, would in time deal a blow to the advancement of conditional immortality by linking it to the spirit of the age which had produced both the theory of evolution and higher criticism.

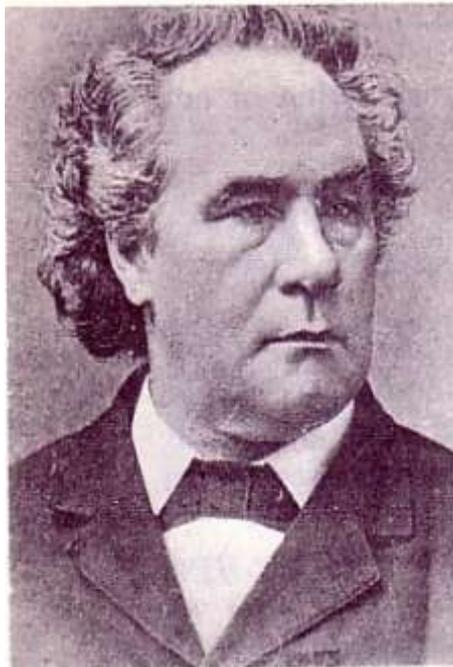
### THE GOLDEN AGE OF PREACHERS

Despite these threats going on beneath the surface of English Christianity, on the surface this era still produced some outstanding preachers! **These "golden"**

preachers could draw crowds of thousands to hear the Gospel preached with deep **conviction. I can't help** but wonder if such conviction in preaching was fueled by the threat of what was happening in the scientific philosophical strand of English life. Sadly, when speaking of the great preachers of the 19th century the only name that springs to most **people's minds is that** of Charles Haddon Spurgeon who gained **the title "prince of preachers", a title** which might suggest that he had no equal at the time.

To the contrary, there were a number of great preachers who gained just as much prominence as Spurgeon, but who have long since been forgotten. The most outstanding preacher of the era was Henry Ward Beecher from

the USA; Beecher pastored the huge Plymouth church in Brooklyn and would have been viewed by Spurgeon as a liberal. Second to Beecher was C. H. Spurgeon, pastor of the London Metropolitan Tabernacle and



Dr. Joseph Parker third in the rankings was Dr. Joseph Parker who pastored the London City Temple.<sup>11</sup> Parker in fact took the funeral eulogy of Beecher and was rumored to be set to take **over Beecher's pastorate** in the United States. All three men

knew each other well; Spurgeon & Parker had a unique friendship, both held pastorates in London, they would often swap pulpits in the earlier years.

Parker however was a staunch defender of the doctrine of conditional immortality. He no doubt had a measure of influence upon the late George Brown who founded the Churches of Christ (Life and Advent) here in New Zealand.

## DR JOSEPH PARKER

So who is this Dr. Joseph Parker, and what do we know about him? Dr. Joseph Parker was a man of enormous literary output whose work and ministry influenced many throughout the English speaking world.<sup>12</sup> The following is a quote from his 25 volume work known as *The People's Bible* Vol.1 p.160;

*"By destroying evil I do not mean locking it up by itself in a moral prison, which shall be enlarged through the ages and generations until it shall become the abode of countless millions of rebels, but its utter, final, everlasting extinction so that at last the universe shall be without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing the pure home of a pure creation."*

Edwin Froom describes Parker along with Spurgeon as:

**"... alike to symbols of pulpit oratorical power. Each had a worldwide following; both being regarded as master preacher and able Bible expositors."**<sup>13</sup>

Parker had a racy oratory style, spitting out the sermon with great speed and urgency. He was often quoted in the secular and religious press. Parker desired to bring the Bible alive to the

people of London and see them repent, turn from sin, and place their faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, just as Spurgeon did!

However, although Parker was a strong advocate of conditional



A younger Spurgeon immortality, he was not prepared to put his name and reputation toward a new interdenominational organization which was being formed for the promotion of the doctrine! This new organization was

birthed in September 1878 by many distinguished clergy men and laymen, including Rev. George Brown.

Although beginning in London it took on international dimensions, at one conference it claimed seventy speakers and twenty six countries represented! This new organization believed that they could give a more united and effective voice to the truth of **"Life only in Christ"**.

**So, why didn't Parker** join this conditionalist organization? If Parker had joined, conditional immortality may have gained far more ground in its efforts to address the erroneous doctrine of eternal conscious torment!

Perhaps Parker may have been playing a strategic game. Six years after the forming of the organization Parker preached a sermon that was

published in his work, *The Apostolic Life*, where he addresses the forming of groups and organizations, for doctrinal purposes, as divisive. Although no specifics were given in that sermon, it may very well have been aimed at this new organization. Parker, (although a proponent of conditional immortality) desired unity and this may be the reason for him not attaching his name to this new organization.

(Part 3 to follow).

### FOOTNOTES

9. Quoted in the magazine *The Good News* July-August 2007 p.12

10. Some theological colleges were founded in America as a response to this concern.

11. Unfortunately time seems to immortalize these characters and blind us to their faults

and peculiarities. All three had over inflated egos. Beecher, **described as a "sexy celebrity" was caught up in a scandal involving adultery.** He surrounded himself



Dr. Joseph Parker

with a number of lady friends leaving his wife and children unloved. He carried with him a pocket full of gems which he would look at if ever he was feeling down. Spurgeon was often blamed as a narrow egotist who considered everyone **wrong if they didn't** agree with him; many clergymen questioned

whether he had actually been converted. Parker when asked **why he didn't take up a small pastorate in his early years replied: "A great eagle doesn't make its home in a sparrows nest!"** These men didn't always exemplify the Bible's admonition to humility; never the less we love **a human hero don't** we.

12. Some of Dr. Joseph Parker's works include the following; *City Temple Sermons* 1869-1870, *The People's Bible in 25 Volumes* 1885-1895, *Springdale Abbey* 1869, *The Inner Life of Christ* 1881, *Apostolic Life* 1884, *Tyne Child: my Life and Teaching* 1883, *A Preachers Life* 1899.

13. Leroy Edwin Froom *The Conditionalist Faith of our Fathers Vol. 2* (Review and Herald publishing Assoc. Washington D.C. 1965) p.638.



### THE AUTHOR

Armand is a member of Manukau Central Baptist church and a recent graduate from Carey Baptist College with a degree in applied theology. He has had a keen interest in theology since his teenage conversion (See Issue 30) and came to the conditionalist position about eight years into his walk with the Lord. He is married to Suzanne and they have two children Daniel and Emma.

# Resurrection Revealed (Part 7)

## RESURRECTION IN THE PROPHETICAL BOOKS (Cont'd)

### General Resurrection

In Hosea 13:14 we read, **"I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death...". We know** that that ransom was paid by the death of the Lord Jesus when he gave up his life (Mat. 20:28). The verse goes on with words which are quoted in 1 Corinthians 15:55 in a general way. In Hosea it reads, **"O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction:", which with** a little change in the order of the consonants, says the New Commentary, becomes

the rendering of the LXX, and of 1 Corinthians 15:55, **"O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" G.** Campbell Morgan exclaims, **"We do not wonder that Paul ... knowing what that resurrection meant to men, would recall these words of Hosea, and ... make them the prelude to his final note of victory and praise; 'Thanks be to God, Who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ' (1 Cor. 15. 57)."**<sup>50</sup>

Zechariah 14:4, in a prophecy about the return of Christ, when His feet shall stand upon the Mount of Olives, says that He will **come, and "all the saints with thee".**

Unless one takes the **"saints" to mean "angels" (as J. F. B. Commentary does),**<sup>51</sup> here is a pointed reference to the resurrection.

### Resurrection of Christ

Many prophecies of the Messiah in the Old Testament necessitate, as J. Stafford Wright **says, that "He must either be undying or be raised from the dead."**<sup>52</sup> Among these are **Isaiah 9:7 "of his government and peace there shall be no end",** and verses which speak of His reign. (E.g., Isaiah 11:1-5, 10; Jer. 23:5). Though not clear even to the prophets themselves (1 Pet. 1:10, 11) with the knowledge that the New Testament gives us, we know that after the prophesied sufferings, there must be a resurrection

in order for Him to be able to reign.

Isaiah 53 is a chapter detailing the sufferings and death of Christ, which many Christians have memorised. In v.8 we see the Messiah



**"cut off out of the land of the living ", and in v. 10, He is an "offering for sin" yet His resurrection is predicted for "he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days". The Living Bible paraphrases it in plain English, "He shall live**

**again". Though cut off** He saw His offspring. This could only happen if He rose from the dead. V. 11 goes on to say, He shall see of the **travail ("labour" N.K.J.V) of his soul,** and shall be satisfied", and **v.12,"Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong" - all meaningless promises if he was not to rise from the dead. J.F.B. Commentary says of v. 11, "Messiah shall, after death, rise again to an endless life", and The New Bible Commentary, "At verse 10 the note changes...beyond the darkness of the sorrow and the shadow of death is shown the radiance of resurrection. He will live to see a spiritual offspring and come to the throne of the conqueror renowned."**

We have already commented in the Introduction that Paul, in his sermon in Acts 13, saw Isaiah 55:3 as referring to the resurrection of Christ, though **to us, "the sure mercies of David"**

might seem a very vague, indefinite promise, not having anything to do with resurrection. However, when we look into this promise, we must turn to 2 Sam. 7:16 to see that David was promised a house, a kingdom and a throne which would be established for ever. This presupposed the resurrection of the Messiah, who is to be the eternal ruler of that kingdom.

Hosea 6:1,2 speak of Israel as being torn and smitten, but bound up and healed. **Verse 2 says, "After two days he will revive**

us: in the third day he will raise us up and we **shall live in his sight."**

Though this has a reference to it being but a short time before Israel is restored, it also appears to be a refer-



ence to the resurrection of Christ, "a figure of Christ's rising the third day"<sup>53</sup> Jonah's experiences are taken by the Lord Jesus Himself as a type of His death, burial, and resurrection. Jonah was swal-

lowed by a great fish and was three days and three nights in its belly in the depths of the sea. (Jonah 1:17). When certain Jews asked Jesus for a sign, Jesus answered that they would not be given any sign except that of the prophet **Jonas. "For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."** (Matt. 12:40). The Lord is obviously referring to His time in the tomb and subsequent resurrection on the third day. Matthew Henry expands the type by pointing out that **Jonah's tomb was a new** kind of tomb, and Christ was laid in a new tomb in which no man had previously ever been laid; also that in both the case of Jonah and of the Lord, their rising from

their "tomb" brought the gospel of repentance to the Gentile world - in **Jonah's** case, to the Gentiles of Nineveh, of course, and in **Christ's** case it meant the gospel was carried away beyond the Jews to the Gentile world.<sup>54</sup>

Footnotes

50. Searchlights from the Word

51. The J. F. B. Bible Commentary

52. Bible Characters and Doctrines. Scripture Union. Vol. 3. Study 77.

53. Matthew Henry. Commentary in One Volume.

54. Matthew Henry. See above.

The Author  
Beryl Joy Ching, spent over 40 years on the mission field in India. Returning to New Zealand to "retire",



Beryl was for a long time secretary of this Association. RESURRECTION AS REVEALED IN THE OLD TESTAMENT AND CONFIRMED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT is the full title of her Thesis presented to the Faculty of the Freelandia Institute Biblical Theological College in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree Master of Biblical Studies.

THE DEAD KNOW NOTHING

A TV Review (Who reads TV Reviews?) said: "Save for the quirky Pushing Daisies, in which a man brings the dead back to life, television has suffered from a rash - pestilence, even - of drama programmes which take as an absolute given that there is an afterlife, and that those in it are prepared to go to a lot of trouble to communicate with the still-living.

Medium, Ghost Whisperer, Sea of Souls and the recently finished Afterlife all demand that we accept that the dead have a bristling array of agendas, which they are intent on pursuing beyond the **grave."** (Source: <http://www.stuff.co.nz/4513103a20879.html>).

Who stands for the Word of God in this area may feel they stand alone. They will have to stand against our culture. The Bible says the dead have no agenda (Eccl. 9:4-10), no hope apart from Christ (1Cor. 15:18-19).

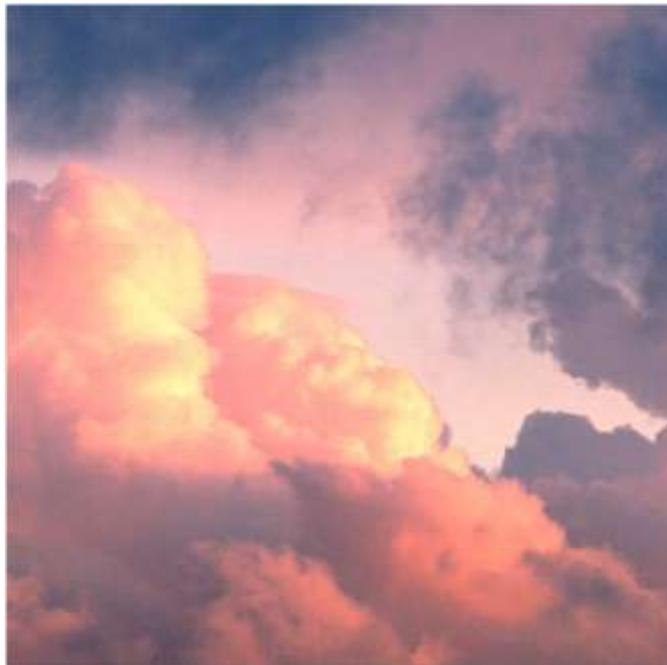
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# A Meeting in the Air Part 2 (1Thess. 4:13-18) By Al Maxey

"For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with the Lord" (1Thess. 4:16-17, *NASB*).

In this passage we behold those "dead in Christ" raised from the dust of the ground, and they are gathered up, along with those believers still living at the *Parousia*, unto an "*apantesis*" (meeting,

encounter) with the Lord in the air. This will be the *first* encounter or "meeting" of the redeemed (both living and dead) with the Lord. "And *THUS* we



shall always be with the Lord." The word translated "thus" is "*houtos*" which signifies "thusly, under such circumstances or conditions." The conditions or circumstances

by which we shall ALWAYS be with our Lord are: (1) His coming, (2) our resurrection, and (3) our gathering up. Nothing is said about the dead already

being with Him for hundreds and thousands of years. Rather, it is under THESE CONDITIONS (coming, resurrection, gathering up) that this meeting with

the Lord occurs, an encounter which leads to us being with Him *always*.

Several of our beloved gospel hymns speak of this blessed promise to the re-

deemed. Perhaps we should pay greater attention to the words of some of our songs of praise and anticipation.

- Hallelujah, We Shall Rise

In the resurrection morning,  
We shall meet Him in the air,  
We shall rise, Hallelujah, We shall rise! And be carried up to glory, to our home so bright and fair, We shall rise, Hallelujah, in that morning we shall rise!

- In The Morning Of Joy

When the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall arise, And the splendours immortal shall envelope the skies, When the angel of death shall no longer destroy, And the dead shall awaken in the morn-

ing of joy  
When the King shall appear, in His beauty on high, And shall summon His children

the Lord shall sound and time shall be no more, And the morning breaks eternal, bright and fair; When the



to the courts of the sky, Shall the cause of the Lord have been all your employ, That your soul may be spotless in the morning of joy?

- When The Roll Is Called Up Yonder  
When the trumpet of

saved of earth shall gather over on the other shore, And the roll is called up yonder, I'll be there.

- When He Comes In Glory By And By  
Oh, how sweet 'twill be to meet the Lord, When He comes in

glory, by and by;  
 What a song of praise  
 will be outpoured,  
 When He comes in  
 glory, by and by.

I am longing for that  
 happy day, When He  
 comes in glory, by and  
 by; For with Him I  
 hope to soar away,  
 When He comes in  
 glory, by and by.

The word translated "caught up" (vs. 17) is the Greek word *harpazo* which means to "snatch away by force, convey away suddenly, seize (as a wild beast grabs its prey)." It appears as a *Future Passive* which signifies this has *not yet occurred*, but lies in the future (at the *Parousia*), and it is something that happens *to us* (we ourselves are not the active agent). We are awakened and called forth from the grave, and then we are "snatched away with

great power" unto an encounter with our Lord. He seizes us and lifts us mightily from the earth which is about to experience the full outpouring of the fury of God's consuming fire. The wicked are not snatched away, but



rather will be consumed along with the old heavens and earth (2 Peter 3:7). When this is accomplished, we will all be *brought with Him* to our dwelling in the new heavens and earth, and the wicked, now destroyed forevermore, will be as

"ashes under the soles of your feet on the day which I am preparing" says the Lord of hosts (Malachi 4:3).

Kittel, in his classic *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, states that this word means "to take something forcefully --

- firmly, quickly ... forcefully snatch ... with the thought of **speed**" (Vol. 1, p. 472). He further states that it "always expresses the mighty operation of God" (*ibid*). This whole event will happen suddenly, quickly, in the "twinkling of an eye." Thus, our

gathering up to this encounter with the Lord will be a sudden "snatching away" from the earth, for the judgment of God will delay no longer. We are being taken out of the way so as not to be destroyed in the outpouring of His wrath.

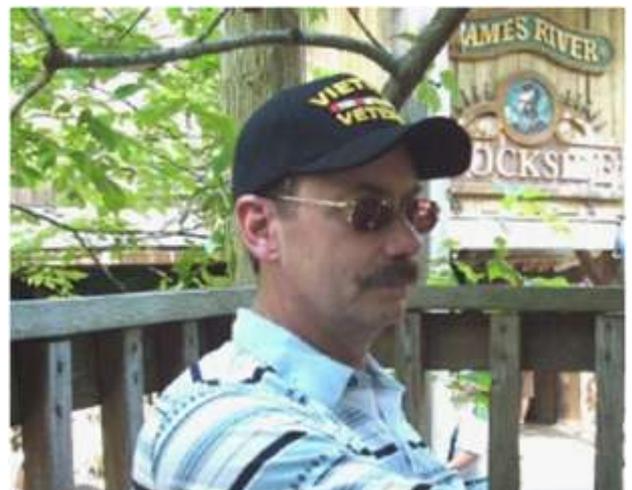
The wicked will experience no such gathering up out of harm's way, but will flee to caves to seek protection against the consuming fire. There will be none, however, and they shall be destroyed along with the old heavens and earth (from which the righteous will have been safely *snatched away*).

"But according to His promise *we* are looking for a new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells" (2 Peter 3:13). "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away" (Revelation 21:1). "And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, 'Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He shall dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be among

them, and He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there shall no longer be any death; there shall no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.' And he who sits on the throne said, 'Behold, I am making all things new'" (Revelation 21:3-5).

To sum up, the passage in 1 Thess. 4:13-18 does not even begin to teach what the traditionalists claim it does. It merely declares that our Lord will return, raise those who sleep in the dust of the ground, snatch those to be saved away

from the earth (along with those believers still living at the time) unto an encounter with Him in the air, and then *with Him*, following the destruction, we shall be brought unto the new heavens and earth where only righteousness will dwell, and we shall thus forever be with our Father and His Son. "*Therefore comfort one another with these words*" (1 Thess.



Al Maxey is an elder and preacher at the Cuba Avenue Church of Christ, Alamogordo, NM. He has graciously given us permission to publish this article from his web site. Many other interesting articles on biblical topics can be found at <http://www.zianet.com/maxey/>

# Choose Life (Part 1)

## By Immanuel Koks



There are times when we do theology that it is useful to stand back and look at the trajectory of scripture. That is, instead of studying the detail, asking what does the overall picture of scripture, indicate on the topic. This type of work often comes under the title of Biblical Theology. This is especially important when considering things to do with the future plans of God; for which we

have some detail, but not complete clarity. In this paper I will examine a brief biblical theology of Life and Death asking: what does this tell us about the future fate of the righteous and the wicked?

### Our First Parents

Starting at Eden, we find that God offers Adam and Eve the chance to choose life or to choose death. To choose life was the freedom to eat of

every tree in the garden, - including the tree of life. (Gen 2:16) While they exercised that freedom there remained the possibility of life. However God did give them one very **clear instruction:** "Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of **it you shall die."** (Gen 2:17) We know the story, they chose to disobey and ate the forbidden fruit. (Gen 3:1-6) Death of humanity entered the world. Instead of the produce of the earth being a thing of freedom it became a source of toil and burden. (Gen 3:17-19).

Humanity was not snuffed out at the moment of their sin. God, in his love, sent them

out of the Garden and set Cherubim to guard the entrance. Why was it, **"In his love?" Was this not God's wrath?**

The tree of Life represented the source of life, and God did not want his people eating from that source. If they did they would live forever while being in a state of Sin.

Humanity was cut off from the source of life from that time. So, as

**Paul says "In Adam we all die." Paul also**

holds out hope for **Christians "in Christ we**

shall all be made **alive" (1 Cor. 15:22.)**

But I am getting ahead of the story.

Two things are important to note in this episode: from the beginning, obedience to God meant abundant

life in total freedom. Disobedience led to bondage, death, and being cut off from the source of life.

Israel

Picture this: Israel had journeyed with Moses for 40 long years. While they had seen the cloud

Moses could not go in with them, he would have to die on this side of the Jordan. What would he tell them? He told them the Message of God. He told them their story. He told them of the exodus. **He told of God's ever-**



and fire, leading them, he was the voice piece of God for them. Now, at the end of all that time, they were about to go into the land which Moses had led them to. However

lasting love for them, his people. He told them of the Covenant God made with them, and how they could remain part of that covenant. A covenant with its foundations firmly **planted on God's**

grace, not on what they did. He told them what is recorded in the book of Deuteronomy. In summing up **Moses relayed God's** message to his people "See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, death and

and ordinances, then you shall live and become numerous, and the Lord your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to possess. But if your heart turns away and you do not hear, but are led astray to bow

to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live, loving the Lord your God, obeying him, and holding fast to him; for



adversity. If you obey the commandments of the Lord your God that I am commanding you today, by loving the Lord your God, walking in his ways, and observing his commandments, decrees,

down to other gods and serve them, I declare to you today that you shall perish; you shall not live long in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess. I call heaven and earth

that means life to you and length of days, so that you may live in the land that the Lord swore to give to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob." (Deuteronomy 30:15-20, NRSV)

They were to live in obedience to their gracious God; who because of his everlasting love he set them free from the slavery of Egypt, who because of his enduring faithfulness, desired to bless them in the land that he gave to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The result of that obedience would be enduring freedom in the land. But like Adam and Eve there would be real, harsh consequences if they chose not to obey. They would perish, they would die. Instead of freedom, their children would once again know captivity. (Deut 28:41)

Once again the message is clear, when one lives in righteous relationship with God there is life and freedom, outside that relationship there is destruction and ultimately death. The story of the Israelites, indeed the whole of

humanity, is that we are marred by sin. We all fall far, far short of righteousness.

*-Immanuel Koks*

### The Author

Immanuel's parents immigrated to New Zealand from the Netherlands in 1968, six years before Immanuel was born with moderate Cerebral Palsy. He grew up in the Worldwide Church of God which he left, with his mother and brother at the end of 1995. Now, after attending the

Bible College of New Zealand (BCNZ) Immanuel considers himself an "orthodox evan-

gelical" who still believes in Conditional Immortality. Immanuel's passion is to combine his understanding of disability and his theology. While many Christian organizations are doing good work for people with disabilities and those who are suffering, there is a need for a stronger theological foundation. Immanuel feels called to this. To further this goal he plans to study at Regent College in Canada. If you would like to know more about Immanuel's dreams and aspirations visit his web page at [www.immanuelkoks.com](http://www.immanuelkoks.com)



# Western Wall



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## Statement of Faith

1. We believe in God and His one and only Son, Jesus the Christ. Heb. 11:6; John 14:1; 3:16; 20:31; Mat. 16:16.
2. We believe in the Holy Spirit. 2Pet. 1:21; 1Cor. 6:19; Jude 20; Eph. 3:5.
3. We believe that Jesus died for us and gave himself a ransom for all. Rom. 5:8; 1Cor. 15:3; 1Tim. 2:6.
4. We believe that God raised Jesus from the dead; that by resurrection He became Lord of both the dead and the living, and the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep; and that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. Rom. 10:9; 14:9; 1Cor. 15:20; John 3:16.
5. We believe that baptism is commanded by Christ, was practiced by His Apostles, and is taught in the New Testament. Mat. 28:18,19; Acts 8:12,38.
6. We believe that all Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the people of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. 2Tim. 3:16,17.
7. We believe that human beings are by nature mortal. Gen. 2:7; 3:19; 1Tim. 6:16; 2Tim. 1:10; Rom. 2:6-7.
8. We believe that human beings in death are unconscious. Psa. 6:5; 115:17; Ecc. 9:5,10. This is likened to "sleep". Job 14:12; Psa. 13:3; Jer. 51:39; Dan. 12:2; John 11:11-14; 1Cor. 15:51.
9. We believe that immortality is obtained only through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. 1Cor. 15:21-23; 2Tim. 4:7-8; 1John 5:9-12.
10. We believe that there will be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked, to be followed by the Judgment. Acts 24:15; John 5:25,28,29; Rev. 20:12,13.
11. We believe that evil and evil-doers shall be finally destroyed. Psa. 145:20; Mat. 10:28 Rom. 6:21; Phil. 3:19; Heb. 2:14; 1John 3:8; Rev. 22:3.
12. We believe in the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. Acts 1:11; John 14:3; 1Thes. 4:16.

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