



Bible Student's Notebook™

The Herald of His Grace

Issue 68

Life, Death and Resurrection

What Is Life?

by – Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

"And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Genesis 2:7).

Man is the union of the dust of the ground (the body) and the breath of life (the spirit), creating a living soul. Thus, the two (the body and the spirit) joined together create a third (the soul). Body + spirit = soul. This principle can be seen in the example of water (H₂O).

"The teaching of Scripture is (as we see it) that man consists of two parts: body and spirit; and that the union of these two makes a third thing, which is called 'soul' or 'living soul.' Hence the word 'soul' is used of the *whole* personality; the living organism."¹

"SOUL" IS USED AS A REFERENCE FOR MAN

Young² defines both the hebrew word "nephesh" and the greek word "psuche," both translated as our english word "soul," as "animal soul." the idea being "animated, alive." that is why the word soul is used to speak of living man, as well as lower animal life (numbers 31:28).

Strong³ also defines "nephesh" in the same way as Young, as "a breathing creature, i.e., animal or vitality." This definition matches the way that "soul" is used in Genesis 2.

"And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul"

1. E.W. Bullinger, *The Rich Man and Lazarus*, page 9.
2. Robert Young, *Analytical Concordance to the Bible*.
3. James Strong, *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*.

(Genesis 2:7).

When God breathed "the breath of life" THEN man became a "living soul." But when that "breath of life" leaves he will no longer be a "soul" (i.e., a breathing creature)!

The Hebrew word "nephesh" and the Greek word "psuche" have the exact same meaning, which can be seen by comparing Psalm 16:10 and Peter's quotation of it in Acts 2:27.

"For thou wilt not leave my soul [nephesh] in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption" (Psalm 16:10).

"Because thou wilt not leave my soul [psuche] in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption" (Acts 2:27).

Here are a few simple examples from Scripture where we can see the usage of the word "soul" as a reference to living man.

"And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they

(continued on page 743)

| | |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| Life, Death and Resurrection: What | |
| Is Life | 741 |
| The Hope of Resurrection | 744 |
| That Blessed Hope | 746 |
| Is Man Immortal? | 747 |



Letters to the Editor

"Greetings in the name of our blessed Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. I wanted to let you know how much I appreciate you, your family and the saints back there for your willingness to make known the Word of God and to be a resource center for us to get materials that provide for godly edification. We sincerely thank you!" – **MT**

"My family and I have been so blessed by your BSN. You have encouraged me to hold fast the truths that I have been taught about the one true Church, the Body of Christ." – **NC**

"Please extend my subscription to your BSN. Always enjoy reading it and checking out the verses." – **CA**

"Received the latest issue of *Bible Student's Notebook* and wanted to say how much I enjoy reading them! I learn so much through them. Haven't finished reading all of it yet but just finished reading *The Basis for Fellowship* - I was so encouraged by it. Sometimes when someone asks me where I stand and I tell them what I've learned so far, they sometimes label things and I think it is so sad - talking about and learning God's Word is a lifelong process from what I understand and we're all in it together as believers and as we grow in the knowledge of the Word, we change our minds about things. There doesn't appear to be a lot of tolerance about 'changing' among some believers. Anyway, thank you, and all those who help you, for putting together such a nice booklet!" – **VA**

"The study *Jesus Loves Me This I Know!* [BSN #43] closed the issue for me on God loving the world. Please stay in touch. ... In Christ we only trust." – **OH**

"When we err from the faith, we pierce ourselves through with many sorrows (I Timothy 6:10). Most often the errors didn't originate in us, but are the religious sludge of many generations of traditional thought passed down to us." – **HI**

"Once again you have put together a very fine publication [BSN #60]. I especially liked *Victory Is A Man*. I have been teaching this for years, but few ever really understand it. O, what a waste. Chip Brogden did a really fine job in putting this subject into words. Isn't it wonderful to know that Christ is our rest. Yet all the religious organizations of the world would have you work, laboring to earn a reward rather than just resting in and adoring Him. Doing your service in this man[ne]r [resting in and adoring Him!] will get you a reward."

"'Why This Waste?' was also very good. I have heard this of you as well as of my self. Yet, I rest assured that what God is dispensing in this age of Grace is what I want to be learning and doing."

"My dear Brother your articles on our relationship to the government have been a real eye opener. They have caused me to go and search the Scriptures to see wither these things are so. I was pleased to concur with you." – **MI**

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This biweekly publication (24 times a year) is dedicated to:

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

This publication is a joint effort of a few members of the body of Christ. It is a product of our individual lives and ministries together. We do not claim infallibility for its contents. Our readers are asked to be as the Bereans and search the Scriptures (Acts 17:10-11; I Thessalonians 5:21).

This publication is not connected with any "Movement," "Organization," "Mission," or separate body of believers, but is sent forth to and for all "saints."

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PATRIARCHS

Remember that it is our responsibility as husbands and fathers to take the truths we learn from God's Word, the truths that we hold dear, and impart them to our families.

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(recompiled and edited)

had gathered, and **the souls** that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came” (Genesis 12:5).

In Genesis 36:6 the Hebrew word translated “soul” is also translated “persons.”

“And Esau took his wives, and his sons, and his daughters, and all the **persons [nephesh – souls]** of his house, and his cattle, and all his beasts, and all his substance, which he had got in the land of Canaan; and went into the country from the face of his brother Jacob” (Genesis 36:6).

“These be the sons of Leah, which she bare unto Jacob in Padanaram, with his daughter Dinah: all **the souls** of his sons and his daughters were thirty and three. ... All **the souls** that came with Jacob into Egypt, which came out of his loins, besides Jacob’s sons’ wives, all **the souls** were threescore and six” (Genesis 46:15, 26).

WHAT IS DEATH?

Death is opposite of life – it is the reversal of life. In death the spirit is removed from the body, and is it returned to God who gave it. Man is returned to the earth.

“Then shall the dust **return** to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall **return** unto God who gave it” (Ecclesiastes 12:7).

“All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all **turn** to dust again” (Ecclesiastes 3:20).

“In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou **return** unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou **return**” (Genesis 3:19).

“His breath goeth forth, he **returneth** to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish” (Psalm 146:4).

“... They die, and **return** to their dust.” (Psalm 104:29).

Death is the absence of life, not life in some other form or place.

“... Thou shalt die and **not live**” (II Kings 20:1).

“... The rest of the dead **lived not** again until” (Revelation 20:4-6).

THE SOUL [PERSON] WILL DIE

Unlike what many believe and teach, the soul can and will die.

“The soul that sinneth, it shall die” (Ezekiel 18:4).

“... He spared not their soul from death, but gave their life over to the pestilence” (Psalm 78:50).

“Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me” (Matthew 26:38).

“And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people” (Acts 3:23).

SATAN’S GREAT LIE

In the garden of Eden God told Adam,

“Thou shalt surely die” (Genesis 2:17).

It was Satan’s lie that,

“Ye shall **not** surely die” (Genesis 3:4).

“So effectually has Satan’s lie succeeded, and accomplished its purpose that, though the Lord Jesus said, ‘I will come again and receive you unto myself,’ Christendom says, with one voice, ‘No! Lord. Thou needest not come for me: I will die and come to thee.’ Thus the blessed hope of resurrection and the coming of the Lord have been well nigh blotted out from the belief of the churches; and the promise of the Lord has been made of none effect by the ravages of tradition.”⁴

Although death is sure for Adam and his descendants, so also is the hope of resurrection, as expressed by the Psalmist:

“But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me. Selah” (Psalm 49:15). ■

4. Bullinger, page 16.

The Hope of Resurrection

by – Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

THE HOPE OF THE AGES

Resurrection (not death) has always been the hope of God's people.

This hope was based upon the promise of God:

"I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes" (Hosea 13:14).

This hope is clearly expressed by Job:

"For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me" (Job 19:25-27).

Paul confirms that without the resurrection, there would be no hope:

"And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable" (I Corinthians 15:17-19).

In fact Paul, devotes his longest chapter to this vital subject of resurrection (I Corinthians 15).

THE NEED FOR RESURRECTION

The reason that the truth of resurrection is so important is that man is appointed to death.

"And as it is appointed unto men once to die ..." (Hebrews 9:27).

"For the wages of sin is death ..." (Romans 6:23).

This appointment of death came upon man through Adam.

"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Romans 5:12).

"For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (I Corinthians 15:21-22).

THE CONDITION OF DEATH

Death is simple – it is the end of life. In the Scripture the dead are dead, and are therefore always in contrast with the living.

In death there is no praise of the Lord.

"Praise ye the LORD. Praise the LORD, O my soul. While I live will I praise the LORD: I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being" (Psalm 146:1-2).

"The dead praise not the LORD, neither any that go down into silence" (Psalm 115:17).

In death man's breath leaves.

"...His breath goeth forth ..." (Psalm 146:4).

"...Thou takest away their breath, they die ..." (Psalm 104:29).

In death man returns to the earth.

"...He returneth to his earth ..." (Psalm 146:4).

“...They die, and return to their dust” (Psalm 104:29).

“Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was ...” (Ecclesiastes 12:7).

In death man’s thoughts perish.

“...In that very day his thoughts perish” (Psalm 146:4).

In death man doesn’t know anything.

“For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not anything ...” (Ecclesiastes 9:5).

“Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest” (Ecclesiastes 9:10).

In death man is silent.

“The dead praise not the LORD, neither any that go down into silence” (Psalm 115:17).

GOD’S REMEDY FOR DEATH

God’s remedy of death also simple – it is the resurrection of the dead!

Man speaks of death as a friend, but God speaks of it as an enemy!

“For He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death” (I Corinthians 15:25-26).

God will destroy death in resurrection!

“But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are

Christ’s at His coming. Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power” (I Corinthians 15:20-24).

DEATH LIKENED TO SLEEP

Death is likened unto sleep in the Scriptures.

“Lazarus sleepeth ... Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead” (John 11:11, 14).

“... Lest I sleep the sleep of death” (Psalm 13:3).

“... For now shall I sleep in the dust; and thou shalt seek me in the morning, but I shall not be” (Job 7:21).

“Why died I not ... for now should I have lain still and been quiet, I should have slept ...” (Job 3:11-13).

“... Them that sleep in the dust of the earth ...” (Daniel 12:2).

“And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep” (Acts 7:60).

“For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption” (Acts 13:36).

“... Them also which sleep in Jesus ...” (I Thessalonians 4:14).

RESURRECTION LIKENED TO AWAKING.

So, in contrast, resurrection is likened unto awaking from sleep in the Scriptures.

“As for me, I will behold Thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy likeness” (Psalm 17:15).

“And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake ...” (Daniel 12:2).

ARE THE DEAD DEAD, OR ALIVE?

The Scriptures speak of the dead as not being alive.

*“But the rest of the dead **lived not again** until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection” (Revelation 20:5).*

IS THERE LIFE AFTER DEATH?

Yes! In resurrection!

There is not life in death, but life after death! After Christ defeats our final enemy, death, we shall be raised. Christ’s own resurrection is our assurance of life after death.

“And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at His coming. Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death” (I Corinthians 15:17-26). ■

That Blessed Hope

by – Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

“Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ” (Titus 2:13).

We have seen from the Scriptures that the hope of man has been the resurrection. To Paul, the apostle, God revealed a mystery in relation to resurrection. He called this mystery hope the “blessed hope.” Some saints will bypass death and proceed straight to resurrection. This will be the blessed experience of those who are still alive at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

“I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory” (II

Corinthians 15:51-54).

“But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words” (I Thessalonians 4:13-18). ■

Is Man Immortal?

by – Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

Immortality – “The quality of never ceasing to live or exist” (Webster¹)

Immortality – “Deathlessness” (Strong²)

In the Scriptures immortality is something that belongs intrinsically to God alone.

*“Now unto the King eternal, **immortal**, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen” (I Timothy 1:17).*

*“**Who only hath immortality**, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; Whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to Whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen” (I Timothy 6:16).*

Resurrection brings immortality to man through the gospel of our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ!

*“But is now made manifest by the appearing of **our** Saviour Jesus Christ, Who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel” (II Timothy 1:10).*

Note that life and immortality are brought to light, after death has been abolished! Resurrection!

*“**For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on **immortality****” (I Corinthians 15:53).*

When will man take on immortality?

The context of this chapter (I Corinthians 15) is clear. It will take place in *RESURRECTION!* According to this verse, immortality is *not* something that man has, but something that must be “put on.” In the resurrection God will clothe man in immortality!

Most of Christendom’s theology teaches that man is already immortal. This is accomplished through the doctrine of the “immortality of the soul.” But as we have already seen, the soul is said to die. The teaching that man is immortal stands in contrast to the truth of Scripture and discounts the real need of resurrection. It is a pagan teaching espoused and made popular by Plato.

LUTHER ON IMMORTALITY

“I permit the Pope to make articles of faith for himself and his faithful, such as ... *the soul is immortal*, with all those monstrous opinions to be found in the Roman dung-hill of decretals”³ (Martin Luther, in his response to Pope Leo X).

DARBY ON IMMORTALITY

“We would express our conviction that the idea of *the immortality of the soul* has no source in the gospel; that it comes on the contrary from the Platonists and ... the doctrine of *the immortality of the soul* came in to replace that of resurrection. This was about the time of Origen. ... This view has taken the place of the doctrine of the resurrection of the church, as the epoch of its joy and glory”⁴ (J.N. Darby, *the Hopes of the Church*, 1841).

THE EFFECT OF THE THEORY OF IMMORTALITY ON THE DOCTRINE OF RESURRECTION

“The generally accepted view of death makes the grand experience of resurrection to be an anti-climax, and, of no essential value to the believer. If, as it is so confidently asserted,

1. Noah Webster, *An American Dictionary of the English Language*, 1828.

2. James Strong, *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*, Greek #110 “Athanasia.”

3. Cited by Otis Q. Sellers, *The Study of Human Destiny*, 1955, page 17.

4. Ibid.

death ushers the believer into the presence of Christ, then resurrection can add nothing to this, neither can it accomplish anything that will in any way compare with its grand experience. If the 'orthodox' conception of death is true, then the dead will be happy in heaven or miserable in hell whether they rise from the dead or not. But if scriptural conception is true, then resurrection is of the utmost importance, for without it then those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished (I Corinthians 15:18).⁵

"Since death is the result of the sin of one man (Adam), and resurrection is the result of the righteousness of one man (Christ), it cannot be right to make the result of Adam's sin to be the experience that will usher us into the blessings of Christ. We should be willing to reexamine any teaching that causes the hope of men in Christ to be in death rather than in resurrection. God's answer to death is resurrection. God's remedy for death is resurrection. We dishonor God's testimony when we make resurrection to be the reversal of a disembodied condition. Resurrection is the reversal of death.

"We preach the death of Christ. But what would our answer be if an honest inquirer came to us asking if He really died, and if He were truly dead for three days and three nights. What answer would we give if asked, 'If He had not risen from the dead, would He still be dead?' Would we still be able to say, 'We do not preach a dead Christ,' if He had not risen from the dead?

"When the Apostle Paul sought to comfort the sorrowing saints in Thessalonica, did he comfort them by assuring them that their loved ones were happy in heaven, or did he set before them the hope of resurrection (I Thessalonians 4:13-18)?

Did not the greatest Comforter Who ever spoke a word of consolation say to the one whose brother had recently died, '*Thy brother shall rise again*' (John 11:23)? If these questions are honestly considered they will increase the conviction that the whole matter of death and resurrection needs to be restudied."⁶

*"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life **through** Jesus Christ our Lord"* (Romans 6:23).

"I do not believe that the dead are either conscious or unconscious. These words can be applied only to the living. I believe that the dead are dead until the resurrection."⁷

Death being death, and not life, can be seen in Peter's description of the current condition of David.

*"Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his **sepulcher** is with us unto this day. ... For David is not ascended into the heavens"* (Acts 2:29, 34).

Conclusion

*"So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then **shall** be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory"* (I Corinthians 15:54).

"Death is swallowed up in victory when Jesus Christ returns and raises the dead and transforms the living. ... The teaching that man is inherently immortal robs Jesus Christ of glory that belongs to Him, for it is only through Him and His saving work that man receives immortality."⁸ ■

5. "And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished" (I Corinthians 15:17, 18).

6. Ibid., pages 19, 20.

7. Ibid., page 24

8. Tom Ballinger, *Heaven Dwellers*.