



Bible Student's Notebook™

The Herald of His Grace

Issue 69

Hell

by – Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

Eternal conscious torment was a part of the sadistic teaching of Augustine. Hell was a profitable institution for Rome.

Our English word “hell” is the translation of one Hebrew and two Greek words.

Hebrew: sheol

Sheol is translated:

“grave” 32 times
“hell” 31 times
“pit” 3 times

“As to the rendering ‘hell,’ it does not represent *sheol*, because both by Dictionary definition and by colloquial usage ‘hell’ means the place of future *punishment*. *Sheol* has no such meaning, but denotes the *present state of death*. ‘The grave’ is, therefore, a far more suitable translation, because it visibly suggests to us what is invisible to the mind, *viz.*, the state of death. It must, necessarily, be misleading to the English reader to see the former put to represent the latter.

“The student will find that ‘THE grave,’ taken literally as well as figuratively, will meet all the requirements of the Hebrew *sheol*: not that *sheol* means so much specifically ‘A grave,’ as generically, ‘THE grave...’

“*Sheol* therefore means *the state of death*; or the state of the dead, of which the grave is a tangible evidence. ... It may be represented by a coined word, *Grave-dom*, as meaning the

dominion or power of *the grave*.¹

Greek: hades

This Greek word is defined by the Holy Spirit.

In the Old Testament, He wrote:

“*For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell [sheol]; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption*” (Psalms 16:10).

Then in the New Testament, quoting the Psalms He writes:

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

Therefore, the Holy Spirit defines the Greek word “*hades*” as the Hebrew word “*sheol*.”

1. E.W. Bullinger, A Critical Lexicon and Concordance to the English and Greek New Testament, 367p.

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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 Brodgen 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 whether 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)

Greek: *gehenna*

Gehenna is the dump where Jerusalem burnt its trash. It is used metaphorically of the “removal of your trash.”

Peter warned,

“But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction” (II Peter 2:1).

Damnable heresies are “heresies of destruction or perdition.”

“The teaching that the punishment of the unrighteous begin at the moment of death is a very serious blot on the justice of God. If this is the truth, then Cain, who died about six thousand years ago has already endured six millenniums of punishment, while another murderer who dies today begins to suffer today. Therefore Cain will have to suffer six thousand years more for the same crime than the murderer who dies today.

“If two men charged with identical crimes and equally guilty were sentenced, one for five years and the other for ten years, all men who love justice would cry out against such a miscarriage of justice. Shall we not also cry out against any teaching that insists that one man suffer six thousand years more than another for the identical crime? It is indeed a fearful travesty of truth to teach that men are tortured for their sins before they

ever have their day in court, and that later they do have their day in court merely to receive a sentence that is determined beforehand. Would not this make the justice of the great white throne to be of the same character as the justice ordered by a Mexican general who said, ‘Give the man a fair trial, then shoot him.’ Can this be the justice of God? Can this be the teaching of the Word of God? Do you know that it is? Are you sure that it is? Or can it be that you just do not care?

“The contention that God’s holiness is of such nature that His justice can never be satisfied by anything save eternal conscious suffering as the penalty for sins needs to be carefully examined. If this dogma is true, then this is the penalty Christ should have paid when He died for our sins. He paid the debt that we owed to God, but He did not suffer eternally. If the debt we owed was ‘eternal suffering’ then that debt has never been paid. Jesus Christ suffered just six hours on the Cross. He did not suffer eternally.

“If we would know of God’s wrath against sin, we need to look at the Cross. We will learn from this that our God does punish sin, but we will also learn that the wages of sin is death and not eternal conscious torment.”²

Speaking of the roots of “hell,” Bullinger writes, “This is a heathen word and comes down to us surrounded with heathen traditions, which had their origin in Babel, and not in the Bible, and have reached us through Judaism and Romanism.”³ ■

2. Ibid. pages 21, 22. (? Otis Q. Sellers)

3. Bullinger’s Lexicon

Getting to Know the Real You

by – Bob George

Christ knows us, He understands us, He loves us, He accepts us, and He is the only true wisdom available to us. He is the solution to all our problems, and our peace in the storms of life. . . .

Paul said, “*For to me to live is Christ . . .*” (Philippians 1:21). In Galatians 2:20, he said, “*I am crucified . . . but Christ liveth in me.*” Since it is true that we no longer live, but Christ lives in us, let me ask you this question: If you want to get to know who you are, who are you going to have to get to know? *Him!* In other words, to discover your true identity, you will have to discover Him who alone is your life.

This eliminates the need for analysis, self-actualization, and going back into memories of past experiences to “understand yourself.” When Paul said in Romans 7:15, “*For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that I do*” he didn’t go on to say, “I therefore need to go for counseling.” He merely recognized his condition of sin and death as revealed by God’s law and claimed God’s solution: “*I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord*” (Romans 7:25). ■

Growing in Grace

The Grave

by – Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

All men go to the same place.

“For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast: for all is vanity. All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again” (Ecclesiastes 3:19, 20).

The dead are not in heaven.

“And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven” (John 3:13).

“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).

Death does not take one to be with the Lord. Death is an enemy (“the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death” I Corinthians 15:26). The only way believers can go to heaven and be with the Lord is for Him to come and get them at His coming.

“For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven ... So shall we ever be with the Lord” (I Thessalonians 4:17).

The dead are in their graves.

“... All who are in their graves shall hear His voice” (John 5:28).

“... Them that sleep in the dust shall awake...” (Daniel 12:2).

“... Ye that dwell in the dust...” (Isaiah 26:19).

The dead are always said to be where their bodies are.

“... Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah ...” (Genesis 23:19).

“... There was Abraham buried, and Sarah his wife” (Genesis 25:10).

“So David slept with his fathers, and was buried ...” (I Kings 2:10).

“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” (Acts 2:29).

“And Solomon slept with his fathers, and he was buried in the city of David his father...” (II Chronicles 9:31).

“And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him” (Acts 8:2).

“Death of the body” and “resurrection of the body” are not Biblical expressions. Death is the death of the person. Resurrection is the resurrection of the person. In the Bible it is the person that is said to die. ■

Wife Washing

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE DOCTRINE OF THE HOME

Part XXIX

by – Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself" (Ephesians 5:25-28).

One of the blessed duties a husband lovingly owes his wife is what we might term as "wife washing." He is responsible for washing his wife in the Scriptures. This is the Divine design for the wife's spiritual growth. Husbands are the Divine agents accountable for teaching their wives the Bible.

"And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home" (I Corinthians 14:35a).

The reason for this is clearly rooted in the husband's headship. Paul had laid this foundation only a few chapters earlier.

"But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man ..." (I Corinthians 11:3).

The reason the husband has the responsibility to teach his wife the Scriptures is that it is the man who falls under the *direct* headship of Christ. Likewise, the wife falls under the *direct* headship of her husband. This is plainly the Divine design.

This refreshing washing of the wife in the word of God is paramount to the life shared between a husband and his wife. It enriches their bond as they grow together in the Lord.

Our religious customs, which always run contrary to the order of God, actually encourage the husband to abdicate his God-given role. We somehow imagine that in taking our wives to "church," "Sunday School," and "Bible study," we have fulfilled our responsibilities. But the fact is, God never intended any of these to be the means of husbands carrying out their duties. None of them are God's design. They are purely human inventions used as substitutes for the Divine plan.

By shirking our solemn responsibilities, we have abandoned our wives, who are left to attempt meeting their own spiritual needs themselves.

Husbands have the example of Christ's love for the church as a model of how to love their wives.

*"Husbands, love your wives, **even as** Christ also loved the church ..."*

The extent of that love can be seen in self-sacrifice.

*"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, **and gave Himself for it** ..."*

The husband's ultimate service to God, is to love and give himself for his wife. This is truly Divine ministry, and a part of that ministry is the supply of her spiritual needs.

*"... That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the **washing of water by the word**, ..."*

Such a ministry will take some time and purposeful effort. The reward will be toward *marital bliss*, and *eternal value*.

Let us escape the inattention that cripples us from being the real husbands our wives so desperately need. By faith let us follow God our head to live through us for our wives. Let us bring honor to Him, through our corresponding headship of our wives. Let's not allow neglect and busyness, nor religious and social standards to annul what is *really* important in our lives. We and our wives will be eternally grateful. ■

Some Basics of What I Have Learned

by – Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

Iwould like to sum up, as briefly as I can, some of the basics of the more recent things that I have come to understand. These scriptural principles have had a profound effect upon everything that I understand about God and the life that He has given to us.

God is far more merciful, gracious and loving than His “spokesmen” have made Him out to be.

“God is love” (I John 4:8,16).

“But God, Who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us” (Ephesians 2:4).

“But Thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth” (Psalms 86:15).

Our Father is active in His universe and “worketh ALL THINGS after the counsel of HIS OWN WILL” (Ephesians 1:11).

We are but clay in the hand of the divine Potter.

“Hath not the potter POWER OVER THE CLAY” (Romans 9:21).

“We are HIS WORKMANSHIP” (Ephesians 2:10).

We are therefore “confident of this very thing, that HE WHICH HATH BEGUN A GOOD WORK in you WILL PERFORM it until the day of Jesus Christ” (Philippians 1:6).

“And we know that ALL THINGS WORK TOGETHER for good to them that love God, to them who are THE CALLED according to HIS PURPOSE” (Romans 8:28).

Ultimately I have come to see and understand that it is all about Him! God has never lost control of His universe. He is the All in all.

We can see this in the Garden of Eden. Nothing there took Him by surprise. It all worked together for His purpose. God did NOT start playing “catch-up” with

man’s rebellion. Christ was “the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” (Revelation 13:8).

God is not struggling to gain control of His universe. He has ALWAYS been in the lead. After all, it was GOD HIMSELF who planted a garden with two trees. One tree of LIFE, and the other tree of GOOD and EVIL. Good and evil come from the SAME EXACT TREE! They BOTH are of DIVINE ORIGIN!

“I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and CREATE EVIL: I the LORD do ALL THESE THINGS” (Isaiah 45:7).

Religion focuses upon good or evil. It divides everything into these two categories. Such a focus results in legalism and misses what is real – LIFE, DIVINE LIFE. And Divine LIFE stands APART from good and evil. It is from an ENTIRELY DIFFERENT TREE!

God created evil as a part of His divine plan. It did not sneak into His creation, He put it there – right in the “midst.” It is at the root of His plan to be All in all. As with Pharaoh, “for this cause have I raised thee up.”

The “Christian Life” has nothing to do with the human performance of good or evil; it is rather about LIFE. It is about a different tree. It is about simply learning to LIVE.

“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I LIVE; yet not I, but Christ LIVETH IN ME: and the LIFE which I now LIVE IN THE FLESH I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me” (Galatians 2:20).

Don’t settle for the religious system’s “good and evil” deadness of “touch not; taste not; handle not” (Colossians 2:21). Believe God, that “your life is hid with Christ in God” (Colossians 3:3), “Who is our life” (Colossians 3:4). Enjoy the life that God has given you!

“... Trust ... in the living God, Who giveth us richly all things to enjoy” (I Timothy 6:17). ■

Denominations: *Identity Preservation*

by – Marvin L. Fieldhouse

The striking feature of a religious denomination is this: it has a unique identity which it labors to preserve by getting up around itself a certain doctrinal screen and a patented fine mesh. This mesh is woven with the express purpose of keeping out everything that cannot come through it. The denomination is a system of *preservation*. You cannot be in one for a week and not feel that it is in existence only to keep away everything which might disturb the standards it holds. It is from these doctrinal standards that just enough religious liquid is squeezed to satisfy the “Christian’s” thirst for Christ and reality. They are Christian by *religion*, but they only feel safe as they preserve their “Christian” identity with some all-meaning, all-important, all-powerful tag. Somehow they must receive some kind of circumcision to feel safe (Galatians 5:2-4).

Now because preservation is the major concern of any denomination (maintaining its own unique religious identity) ... it can only hold its own narrow ground, protecting its own interests ... Those who are not of a similar doctrinal persuasion are simply excluded. And in this ministry the denomination succeeds – famously! ...

The basic ill in a denomination is seen in the purpose, therefore, for which it functions and to which it owes its existence: controlling “error.” And having firmly established their own code of doctrines as *truth*, every other foreign element is error (on their scale). Now watch the inner workings of a denomination. All Protestantism holds the strong ground that error must be controlled, and to this big flywheel everything else is geared and all the smaller wheels move ...

They are at one and the same time preserved from error, and preserved in error! They are unable to make fresh advances with God because their doctrinal screens are all they can believe is of God! “Error” cannot get in at them, and they cannot get out so that God can get at them. They must hold their tight-handed doctrinal identity, even if it means losing their pure-hearted identity as Christians. And so there they sit, fighting off cults and cultists. That which is different from their standards – all or any of their standards – is error to be resisted ... ■

The Modern Menace of Protestantism
Vantage Press, 1964, pp 35-37

Not One Left Out

by – W.H. Griffith Thomas

Adam’s one offense brought judgment to all men to their condemnation. None escape this condemnation to death. “All die” (I Corinthians 15:22). EVEN SO, Christ’s one act of righteousness brings the free gift

unto all men to their justification of life. Not one will be left out. “Shall all be made alive” (I Corinthians 15:22).

Notes from Romans Five
“The Presbyterian” June 1932

The Wages of Sin

by – Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

The Scripture is very plain as to the penalty of sin:

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

Contemporary Christianity has still not shaken off the Roman, Dark-age superstition that the penalty of sin is eternal conscious torment of the wicked in hell.

Tradition would have us to believe that Romans 6:23 really means “the wages of sin is eternal conscience torment in fiery hell.” Nonetheless, the Scriptures say that the penalty is death.

In fact, if the penalty of sin is eternal conscious torment of the wicked in hell, then Christ cannot be the Saviour of the world, for He has not made such a payment for sin.

But Christ IS the Saviour of the world. And He did make the full and complete payment for sin. He did so by dying for the sins of the world.

“Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures” (I Corinthians 15:3).

“Who His own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree” (I Peter 2:24). ■

The Resurrection and the Gospel

by – Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

“Many a gospel message has been spoiled and robbed of its power by omitting the great truth of the resurrection.”¹

“Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification” (Romans 4:25).

“For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures” (I Corinthians 15:3-4).

“Failure to grasp the truth concerning death strikes at the very heart of the gospel. Whatever the wages of sin is, Jesus Christ endured it to the full, in order to become man’s Saviour. If the wages of sin is eternal punishment, Jesus Christ could not be the Saviour of anyone, for He did not endure that. ‘The wages of sin is death’ (Romans 6:23). **‘Christ died for our sins, was buried and was raised the third day’** (I Corinthians 15:1-5).”²

1. Stuart Allen, *Resurrection and the Purpose of the Ages*, Berean Publishing Trust, 1957.

2. Tom Ballinger, *Heaven Dwellers*.