

The *Contender*

"CONTEND FOR THE FAITH WHICH WAS ONCE DELIVERED UNTO THE SAINTS" JUDE 3

Vol 11 No. 1

Printed Voice of Faith Assembly

January 1979

Hell Is Not Eternal



Rev. Raymond M. Jackson

WE ARE NOT GOING TO USE ANY PARTICULAR TEXT FOR THIS MESSAGE, BUT RATHER USE MANY OF THE SCRIPTURES THAT PEOPLE HAVE A TENDENCY TO USE BY THEMSELVES IN ORDER TO BUILD THEIR CERTAIN DOCTRINE. WE WILL ENDEAVOR, BY BRINGING TOGETHER ENOUGH SCRIPTURES

1

TO ESTABLISH OUR POINT, TO SHOW YOU THAT MOST OF THE TRADITIONAL IDEAS ABOUT HELL ARE JUST NOT SCRIPTURAL. THEY ARE TAUGHT WITHOUT TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION, ALL THAT JESUS AND HIS APOSTLES TAUGHT ON THE SUBJECT. I REALIZE THAT MANY PEOPLE GET UPSET WHEN THEY HEAR YOU SAY THAT HELL IS NOT ETERNAL, BUT IT IS TIME THAT THE BRIDE OF CHRIST CAST OFF HER OLD TRADITIONAL OPINIONS ABOUT THESE CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES, AND BEGIN TO ALLOW REVELATION TO HAVE A PLACE IN WHAT THEY BELIEVE. READ THE ARTICLE PRAYERFULLY, AND I AM SURE YOU WILL HAVE NO TROUBLE RECONCILING THE VARIOUS STATEMENTS MADE BY THE SCRIPTURE WRITERS.

Copyright 2018 Faith Assembly Church

Contents

HELL IS NOT ETERNAL.....	3
EVERLASTING - ETERNAL - FOREVER	3
WHERE IS HELL?	4
SIN SEPARATES MAN FROM GOD.....	5
THE RICH MAN & LAZARUS	6
DAVID WAS IN HELL BEFORE CALVARY	7
JESUS PAID MAN'S SIN DEBT.....	8
GOD'S PROCESS OF REDEMPTION.....	8
PREACHING TO IMPRISONED RIGHTEOUS SPIRITS	10
CHRIST TOOK CAPTIVES.....	11
WHAT ABOUT OFFENDING MEMBERS?	12
WHAT DO THEY SEE?.....	13
THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS NOW	13
WHO WILL COME WITH JESUS?	14
FOR EVER - UNTIL THE END	15
RESURRECTION.....	17
EVERLASTING - How Long?	18
CREMATION	19
SPIRIT OF ETERNAL LIFE	20
LUCIFER - THE DEVIL	21
JUDGMENT OF MATTHEW 25	22
CATHOLICISM WILL RIDE COMMUNISM.....	24
PACIFICATION AND DECEPTION	25
COMMUNIST FIGHTING COMMUNISTS	26
DEGREES OF PUNISHMENT	27
REWARDS FOR THE RIGHTEOUS	28
EVERLASTING GOSPEL	29
COMMON MARKET CURRENCY	30
MINISTRY OF THE ANGELS	32
A LOOK AT MAN	33

HELL IS NOT ETERNAL

We are going to deal with a subject that has generated quite a bit of controversy, especially in the Pentecostal circles, ever since Bro. Branham made the statement that he did not believe that hell is eternal. He never did take it as a subject and deal with it by the scriptures that show why it cannot be an eternal place; he just made the statement. That is why we are going to take it as a subject. We want to bring in the scriptures that will enable every sincere believer to understand completely, just what hell is, and also, just exactly when there will be no more use for the place called hell.

EVERLASTING - ETERNAL - FOREVER

I want to say, right in the beginning of the message, that we are living in the closing hours of the grace age, and much of what we believe is a result of ideas that have come out of the years of reformation as the church began to emerge from the dark ages. There are three words in particular, commonly used in the Bible, that do not mean, every time they are used, what our English language has attributed to them: therefore they can only be properly understood by comparing scripture with scripture until we get everything in its proper place. The three words are EVERLASTING, ETERNAL, and FOREVER. Our English language causes us to look at each of them from the standpoint of being without an end. That is why people read the scriptures that speak of everlasting punishment, and think it means that people

will be punished forever, and ever, and ever, and ever, without an end. Without consecrated study, we just assume the Bible teaches that, but I will have to say, if we will just examine the whole scope of those verses, we will not miss the true interpretation. Just remember this, the apostles, Paul and John, had the last two revelations concerning the state of the lake of fire. You cannot use Isaiah nor Jeremiah, nor even the words of Jesus for the final analysis on the subject; you must look to Paul and John. Naturally, some will say, I would rather take the words of Jesus than anyone else, but let me show you where an attitude like that will lead you; that is what causes so many people to hold on to Matthew 28:19, and reject Acts 2:38. In this particular instance it takes the words of Jesus, as well as the words of Peter, for us to have proper instruction on water baptism. Jesus said that believers should be baptized in the NAME of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, (Matt. 28:19) but it was the apostle Peter who made that NAME known to those who inquired of them, on the day of Pentecost, Acts 2:38. Therefore it is very foolish for people to hold to one verse of scripture, while trying to reject another one. Take for instance St. John 5:28-29, where Jesus said, "The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." He put it all together, as though it would all take place at the same time, but Paul and John separated the two events, to let us see that the resurrection of the wicked dead does not take place until after the millennial reign of Christ on earth. The two resurrections are not even associated, even though Jesus referred to both of them in the same statement as though they were.

WHERE IS HELL?

I believe that as children of God, if we will sit with an open mind, we will be able to see just exactly what the scriptures teach on these various subjects that cause disputes and divisions. Let us establish first of all, just where the Bible teaches that hell is located. Some will argue about it saying, No one knows where hell is located, but that is not true; the Bible tells us, if we will just get the scriptures lined up properly. We will get our first glimpse from the 12th chapter of Matthew as we begin reading with the 38th verse. "Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee." In other words, they were wanting Him to do something extraordinary, to fit their ideas of what He should be doing if He was who He claimed to be. He had already done outstanding things, but they did not pay attention to that; they were wanting Him to do something strictly on their terms. They approached Him the same way the devil did when He had fasted forty days following His baptism by John. In other words, they wanted Him to do something special in an effort to convince them of who He was. Do a sign that we may believe; that was the same old story that He had heard before, Matt. 4:3, "And when the tempter came to Him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread." Jesus did not submit to that temptation, and neither did He submit to theirs. Verse 39, "But he answered and said unto them, an evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: (Verse 40 tells us where hell is, notice now) 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." Now if you are one of those who would say, Bro. Jackson, that

doesn't say that hell is in the heart of the earth, just bear with me. We only use that verse to establish the fact that the Son of man (who is Jesus Christ) was going into the heart of the earth. We will show you what He was going there to do, by another scripture. Turn in your Bibles to 1 Peter 3:18-19, and we will see what He did while He was in the heart of the earth. 18, "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened (made alive) by the Spirit: 19, By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison." When did He do that? It took place in the time between the crucifixion and the resurrection, while His body was lying in the tomb. He was not preaching in some earthly jail house or natural place of confinement where men are placed for a time. While His body lay in that tomb, His spirit went right down into the regions of hell itself; that is the prison that Peter was referring to. Peter said He went and preached to the spirits in prison, and Jesus had already said that HE would go into the heart of the earth during that time. Do we have a contradiction? Of course not; the simple truth is that He went right into hell, which is in the heart of the earth, and preached to those who had been confined there from every age since mankind had his first taste of death. It would be very foolish for us to think that hell was one place, and the heart of the earth is someplace else, and that Jesus was going from place to place while His body was lying in a tomb on the surface of the earth. I realize this paper may be picked up by some of the Jehovah Witness people who believe in soul sleeping, and such like, but there is no such thing as soul sleeping. The body sleeps in death, but the soul does not sleep. The soul and the spirit are inseparable; therefore, for the benefit of you who may think that is unimportant, let me say, the very life of every person is the spirit of that person, and within that spirit, God has placed wisdom, knowledge, emotions, the

five senses of see, hear, taste, smell and feel, causing him to have a personality and an intellect. In other words for the sake of clarifying our understanding, we can say, the soul is the intellect and emotions of the spirit, but since the life is in the spirit, when the spirit goes out of a person, so goes the intellect and emotions. Keep in mind that God is the source of all life, whether it be human life, animal life or whatever; therefore when the spirit of life goes out of the body, that body returns to dust. God is a spirit and in the case of man, (who is created in the very image of God) it was a matter of God separating from Himself the very life that dwells in every one of His offspring. That is the sense in which God became Father: He produced offspring that were in His own image. It is not the flesh of man that is in the image of God. Man's flesh is just a shell, or dwelling place for the purpose of identifying Him with matter, but the man himself is that spirit being, within that shell. Let me say also, that, even though we are begotten of God in the essence of life, there is within that spirit, something that gives us an identity apart from God, otherwise we would be identified in the same greatness of God, who is life everywhere. That is the something that gives each of us our individuality, and keeps us from being like molded copies of each other. That is why some of us like one thing, and others, something else. For instance, if a person is an inventor: that person was born to be an inventor; there is no amount of studying that could make an inventor of an individual. A person might study certain techniques of other inventors, and incorporate that knowledge in his own invention, but that is not what makes him an inventor. He is an inventor because of an endowment from the Creator. That is why every prophet could speak of future things, record them, and later generations watch them come to pass. They were born to be prophets by that special endowment of the Creator. God puts these things within the spirit that man is, and that is

what makes up his soul. That is why we have to say that they are part of his spirit; not his body, and that is why we say that the soul and spirit of man are inseparable. Now you may say, Bro. Jackson, I differ with you. That is your privilege, but it will not get you any place, for when the spirit of life goes out of this old body, it no longer hears, sees, or has any feelings. That is why you can cremate it, and it does not howl and scream, and make a big fuss. Is that clear? Can you see why there cannot be any such thing as soul sleeping? I believe that is why we read in the book of Ecclesiastes that there is no wisdom nor device, or anything in the grave. What that really means is that the body lying in the grave has no more life in it, and therefore it is apart from all of the things that speak of life. The question then, is, Where would that life be? That is what this message is being published for: to answer that question, along with some others.

SIN SEPARATES MAN FROM GOD

Before there was an atonement, before God came in the form and likeness of man, and took the sins of man upon Himself bearing them on that old cross at Calvary, every man, regardless of whether he was good or bad, had to be confined to this planet. Death could not put his spirit back in the presence of God, for sin had separated man from God. Therefore, until the sin debt was paid, all men, both good and bad, had to be confined to a prison place somewhere in the heart of the earth. It was on this planet that sin originated, and this planet is God's workshop, so He kept man here until the redemptive work was completed. We are still establishing the fact that hell is in the heart of

the earth, before going on to show that it is not eternal. Remember now, Jesus said, as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so would He be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth, and Peter said that when Christ had suffered for the sins of man, He went and preached to the SPIRITS IN PRISON. With that in mind, open your Bibles to the 16th Psalm, and let us hear what David had to say about this place called hell, this prison place in the heart of the earth. Apart from Job, David was one of the first that began to speak of this place in the heart of the earth called hell.

reunite it with his fleshly body. That is what gave him hope for the flesh, and it has nothing to do with soul sleeping. I just do not see how these people get such an idea from scriptures such as these. David saw that the Redeeming One, the Holy One, would not see corruption. That meant that His body would not be left in that tomb beyond the point where it would begin to rot. According to Peter's revelation, it just laid in the tomb while the life from it, went and preached to the spirits which were in hell.

THE RICH MAN & LAZARUS

Let us begin reading in verse 7. "I will bless the Lord, who hath given me counsel: my reins also instruct me in the night seasons. I have set the Lord always before me: because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved." In other words, he put the Lord first and sought His will in everything. That is why he could say, "He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. 9, Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope. 10, For thou wilt not leave my soul in HELL: neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." David was anointed to speak this prophetic Psalm which carried a revelation of the hope for man, beyond the grave. As we look back to verse 9, notice that he said, "Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: My flesh also shall rest in hope." He is speaking of his body; it will rest in the grave with a certain hope. What is that hope? Notice verse 10, "For thou wilt not leave MY soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One (that is Christ) to see corruption." This was a prophetic utterance, pointing to the first advent of Christ in His sacrificial role, and when David saw that, it caused him to say, My flesh also shall rest in hope. Why? He could see the resurrection. He could see that, if his soul was not going to be left in hell, then to take it out of hell, was to

Brothers and sisters: I believe we see that hell, in the sense that we think of hell, is a place in the heart of the planet earth. Now we want to see from the scriptures, just when this place had its beginning. We know that, according to the scientists, the heart of this earth is nothing but just a great big mass of hot molten gases. That is what THEY say. I am not telling you that the Bible teaches that; I only mention the fact that scientists teach that. We are not going to dwell on the various Greek and Hebrew words that deal with hell, for in the sense that we are dealing with it, we know that it is a place for imprisonment. Jesus spoke of it in Luke 16: 19-31, when He gave the illustration using Lazarus and the rich man. Those who believe in soul sleeping, call this a parable, but if you will check closely, you will find that Jesus did not use names in His parables. He would say, a certain man, a certain place, and so forth, but in this illustration, even though He did say, a certain rich man, there was also a man by the name of Lazarus in the story. This was a living illustration, given before His crucifixion, and he knew the characters in the story. We will just read two verses of the account, strictly for the purposes of

establishing the point we are making; that will be verses 22 & 23. "And it came to pass, that the beggar (Lazarus) died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom; the rich man also died, and was buried; And in HELL he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom." From those two verses we establish where both men were after their death; the rich man was in hell and tormented, (do not jump to conclusions; it does not say he was in the lake of fire, burning; he was in hell, tormented.) And Lazarus was in Abraham's bosom, and that was hell too, but you must realize that the righteous and the wicked were not both imprisoned together; they were separated according to the words of Jesus. Lazarus was in Abraham's bosom, and that was hell too, but you must realize that the righteous and the wicked were not both imprisoned together; they were separated according to the words of Jesus. Lazarus was in the portion of hell called paradise. Certainly I realize that when you begin to preach on a subject such as this, you have to expect the doctors of divinity, those who know all the Hebrew and Greek words, to find fault with your terminology. They think it is all wrapped up in their education, but I assure you it is not. It is wrapped up in the way the Holy Ghost led the various scripture writers to lay it out; one takes it so far, then another one adds a little more and so on, until the picture is complete, but you still must get it together properly or your picture will be distorted. That is why we want to add Paul and John's revelation to the words of Jesus; it takes all of it together to open our understanding properly. When we just read of hell, in one, of the many places it is spoken of in the scriptures, without searching the scriptures to see what the word actually pertains to, it is possible to come up with all sorts of ideas about the place. I am afraid that is what most Christians are guilty of.

DAVID WAS IN HELL BEFORE CALVARY

In the story Jesus told concerning the rich man and Lazarus; the rich man was in hell, suffering, for he said, I am tormented in this flame, but he was able to look over in to the place where Lazarus was, the place called paradise, referred to as Abraham's bosom, and remember former days. These souls were not sleeping; the one was comforted, and the other was tormented. Some have even said, I thought that meant that Lazarus was in hell also, and the reason a statement like this bothers you, is because you have not yet seen what the place called hell, actually is: A place where the souls of those who departed from this life were held. David was in hell before Calvary, but when you say that, people say, Do you mean to tell me that David was in hell? Yes, David was in hell. When David spoke the 16th Psalm into existence while he was still very much alive, he knew that his soul would go to hell when he died, the place of imprisonment where the souls of departed persons was kept, but he also had a revelation, or at least an insight of the fact that the Redeeming One was coming, and that He would not leave his soul in hell. He knew he would go to hell when he died, but he said his flesh would rest in hope, and that hope was the resurrection of the dead, and the fact that his soul would not be left in hell. When Cain slew Abel, his soul went to hell: not to be tormented, but to be kept there in the paradise part of it, waiting for the day when someone would conquer the very thing that caused him to be there, (death). When Cain died, his soul went to hell also, but he went into the tormenting section of it, where Jesus said the rich man was, in His illustration. From the time of Cain and Abel, right on

down through the centuries to the cross of Calvary; every righteous person, as well as every wicked person who passed from this life was kept in a place of confinement in the heart of the earth, called hell. The flesh of those persons went into the CRUST of the earth, but the spirit, which is the life, the soul of those persons, went in the HEART of the earth. The righteous were comforted, but the wicked had to go through all kinds of torment and anguish, weeping and wailing, with no hope, nothing to look forward to. David knew his soul would not be left in hell, but the wicked have no such hope.

JESUS PAID MAN'S SIN DEBT

Brothers and sisters, as we establish the fact that hell is in the heart of the earth, we want to keep in mind, the fact, that it is the purpose of God to deal with sin, the thing that caused man to be in hell in the first place. Now, sin took place on the CRUST of the earth. The garden of Eden was on the crust of the earth, the outer surface of it. I am sure you all realize that, therefore, let us continue on. The body is laid in the crust of the earth to return back unto the elements from which it is made up, but the spirit which is not subject to tangible things was kept locked up in the heart of the earth where Jesus went to preach to them while His body was lying in the tomb. The very process of redemption began at Calvary, where Jesus willingly offered up His sinless life to pay the price for fallen mankind's redemption. Once that price was paid He went right straight to the prison place to make the announcement. His preaching to the spirits in prison was not for the purpose of redeeming the wicked and giving them eternal life. We are not teaching anything like that. Brother, if you do not find your place in Jesus Christ in this life, and you go on in your

sin and rebellion against God until the cold, clammy hand of death settles upon you: the lake of fire where you will suffer for awhile, and then be destroyed completely, is your promised reward. You may say, I just cannot see that. I say, God's word is true and it declares that to be your end. I do not rejoice in your destiny; I only rejoice in the accuracy of the word of God. I have learned that if God said a thing: I can stake my life on it without fear.

GOD'S PROCESS OF REDEMPTION

When the time came for God's process of redemption to be set in motion, and Jesus Christ (who was God in the flesh of man) walked on earth, being tempted and tested in every are of life that any other man was ever tempted: He actually set an example before all mankind showing us how to face the tempter without being overcome by the temptation. The Bible says that He, being made perfect, became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him, and that, though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered, (Heb. 5:8-9) The last thing that He suffered was death itself. As we look at this man, Jesus, He was every bit man, in the essence of flesh, yet He was not a sinner; He did not have the attributes of death, dwelling in His flesh; His flesh was perfect. His blood was perfect also, for He did not have the blood of Adam's race in Him. Yet He was foreordained to die, that is, to taste of death for the sins of every man; therefore we will say that death was the final affliction that was heaped upon Him. He was crucified, and He

submitted to it willingly. It was not cancer, nor tuberculosis, nor heart trouble, nor any of the other diseases that mankind is plagued with, that took His life; He was nailed to an old cross, and pierced with a spear, and those who stood by, watched until His head went limp and fell upon His chest. What was it all about? Simply this, mankind was hopelessly separated from God, and helpless to do anything about it, requiring God Himself, to take the initiative, if man was ever to be reconciled to His Creator. Now for the benefit of you who still do not have the trinity question straight in your minds, let me say this, it was not a question of God being three persons, (as some believe Him to be) and one of them having to go down to earth to take man's place in the penalty for sin. Absolutely not! God is one. There never has been three persons in the godhead, and there never will be. This was purely a situation where God Himself, (being Spirit, and having no tangible form) spoke the creative word, to plant the seed of life in the virgin Mary's womb, actually creating Himself a flesh body, for the purpose of walking among men on earth, but allowing it to be manifested through the natural process of human birth, so that He, coming to be man's redeemer, and the Messiah that the Jews looked for, would have the prophesied identity with those whom He came to first. When I said His flesh was perfect; you must understand, there was no sickness, nor disease, nor any attribute of sin in His makeup. There was no hereditary death sentence hanging over Him. He was a perfect man from the standpoint of the flesh, and He was the very God of all creation from the standpoint of the Spirit. Hanging there on that old cross, He had all the sin of the whole human race piled upon Him, past, present, and future. He paid the sin debt for every man, woman, boy and girl of the entire human race. We read in Romans 5:19, "For as by one man's disobedience (Adam) many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one (Christ) shall many be made righteous,"

(those who believe and obey the gospel). Through the disobedience of one, the death sentence was passed upon the whole human race, but, Praise God, through the obedience of one, all shall be made alive. Bro. Jackson, did you really mean to say, All shall be made alive. Yes, that is what I meant to say; not that all who are made alive will receive eternal life, for the wicked dead will be resurrected for only one purpose, that is to stand before the great white throne judgement where their final sentence will be pronounced upon them, Rev. 20:10-15, but that is another part of the message. What I am trying to show you now; is what took place at Calvary. In other words, His death on the cross was the beginning of a process of redemption. That body that hung there on that old cross that day; though it had walked on the water, and done many other things that went beyond natural man's limitations, when the life went out of it, there was nothing else for it to do until He, who is life, came back to it. In the meantime they hurriedly wrapped it, and stuck it in a tomb. It was just as dead as any other man's body that the spirit of life had gone out of, but, Thank God, the life that went out of that body, was life that had no beginning, and shall have no end. That is the life that Peter said, went and preached to the spirits in prison, 1st Pet. 3:19. No, He did not preach a salvation message, to give the wicked another chance; He rather, reminded them that when they walked on earth, there was a chance given to every one of them to do right and they rejected it. He reminded them of all the times that when they were planning to do certain wrong things, there was a feeling, or an urging, not to do it, and they ignored that urgency. He is awakening their conscience to the fact that God gave them their chance to do right, and they chose to do wrong; therefore they must be judged, and they will be judged upon the basis of what they are hearing, especially those who lived in the days of Noah. I am sure that every one of you can remember times when you were planning

to do a certain thing, and just about the time you would have done it, something go hold of you, and stopped you from doing it. You were just not able to go through with it. Is that not right? That is exactly what we are talking about. That was the spirit of God. That is what Christ is testifying to the imprisoned spirits about. Now once more, Why did He do it? It was to put their conscience alive to what God had offered them, and they rejected it. This was to give them a feeling of guilt. Now let us go to the next chapter, 1st Peter 4, and read a few verses which will clarify what we are saying. We will begin with the 3rd verse, but it is verses 5 & 6 that we are getting to. "For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revelings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries: Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you: 5, Who shall give account to Him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead. 6, For this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit." Keep in mind that He (Jesus) preached to the righteous as well as the wicked spirits, who were in hell. In the days before the flood there was no law written; therefore men lived under the law of the conscience. That is why something had to be said to them to activate their conscience. You cannot hold a person guilty for doing something wrong, if he knows nothing about any wrong, but once Christ came and preached to them, reminding them of the times in their lives on earth when the spirit of God dealt with them, and they refused to take heed: that put them under guilt. Now when they stand, in the flesh, to be judged; they will be judged according to men in the flesh, for it was those things that they did in the flesh, that will determine the degree of their punishment. God keeps a perfect record.

PREACHING TO IMPRISONED RIGHTEOUS SPIRITS

Now, when Christ steps over into the realms of hell where the righteous have been kept, and begins to preach to them: it will have an opposite effect. Many of these also lived in the days when there was no written law to abide by, but they were sensitive to the spirit of God as He moved upon their conscience. They were righteous in their day because they were sensitive to something that gave them convictions, and standards, not knowing exactly that it was God dealing with them. That is why they are in the place of hell, called paradise. I can just hear David, as he saw Christ walking down the corridors of hell, saying, There is the One I sang about. He is the One I have been looking for. Think also how old Job must have felt. He is the one who said, (at a time when all outward appearances seemed that God had forsaken him) "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," (Job 19:25-27) In other words, his very own eyes, in an immortal body, of course, would see his redeemer stand upon earth in the latter day. Job spoke those words more than 1500 years before the advent of Christ, when he was in the darkest hours of his sufferings at the hands of the devil. Now, here he is in hell with David and all the rest of the righteous ones who had died before that hour. Suddenly that Redeeming One appeared, having come to conquer death, hell, and the grave, He is ready to lead these captive souls out of hell, and the grave, He is ready to lead these captive souls out of hell, and restore them

back to their bodies. He had paid the penalty for the death sentence that hung over mankind, and now He was ready to take those righteous souls out of hell with Him when He went out. There will be no further need for the part of hell that held those righteous souls captive, for every one of them was going out. Why do I say that? Brothers and sisters, we are not to preach redemption, just from the standpoint of keeping people from going to hell; we are to preach it to cover the whole scope and objective of God. Now the objective of God is that, eventually He will erase from this planet, all traces of the original sin. It was on this planet that death had its beginning, and death has separated the life from the bodies; therefore, on this planet, God is working His plan of redemption to abolish death.

CHRIST TOOK CAPTIVES

In Ephesians 4:8-10, Paul wrote, "Wherefore he saith, When He ascended upon high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. 9, Now that He ascended, what is it but that He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens that He might fill all things." (check what David wrote in Psalms 68:18-19) We find that when Jesus went down into the lower parts of the earth, (hell, in the heart of the earth) He led captivity captive. Those who had been held captive by the devil in the paradise section of hell, were now taken captive by Christ, who had earned the right to do so. Praise God! I would rather be a captive to Christ than the devil anytime, wouldn't you? That was Paul's terminology, but we are grateful to God because He has led us to know what it means. There are no righteous souls in hell today; only the wicked were left

in hell, to be tormented for their evil ways when they were alive upon the crust of the earth. Abel went up with Christ, but Cain stayed, and he will remain there until after the millennial reign of Christ on earth. Many times, people have asked, Was there really a resurrection of all the righteous dead when Jesus came up? They ask that question, mainly, because the account of it in Matthew 27:50-53, states that MANY of those saints which slept, arose from their graves after His resurrection, and went into the holy city, (Jerusalem) and appeared unto many. Think of it like this, What would have been the purpose of any Gentile going into Jerusalem after he was resurrected? Who would have recognized any of them? What purpose would have been accomplished, by anyone other than Jews (who could be recognized by some who would be in the streets of Jerusalem) going into the streets of the holy city after their resurrection? Do you see what I mean? That does not mean that only part of those righteous souls were resurrected. If that had been the case; which one's would He have taken out, and how could it be said that hell was conquered, if it still held righteous dead, after the price of their redemption was paid? Now, as to how many arose, (number-wise) that is intruding into God's business. We have no need to know that. Paul said, Foolish questions, and genealogies gender (that is, lead to) strife, or arguments. It does not matter whether there were 10 thousand, or 10 million, or what; that has nothing to do with what we need to see and understand, namely, that hell is in the heart of the earth, that Christ went to hell, that He took out all the righteous souls, and that the souls of the wicked are still tormented there.

WHAT ABOUT OFFENDING MEMBERS?

While we are thinking of questions that people ask, let us turn to St. Mark 9:43-48, where Jesus used certain terminology to make a point, and carnal minds have taken that scripture literally, and done exactly what the words in these verses say to do. Brothers and sisters, that has been a trick of the devil, to blind their eyes to the true meaning of that passage of scripture. I am going to read the whole thing; then I am going to explain something to you. 43, "And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands, to go into hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched; 44, Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. 45, And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: 46, Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." Let me say first of all: this is figurative language. Jesus is not teaching that we should actually cut off our physical members, hands, feet, and so forth, and He is not talking about entering into eternal life, maimed. Brothers and sisters, we will not enter into eternal life with our immortal bodies maimed. Now I want to say this so it will be perfectly clear to you when I am finished. In figurative language, Jesus is saying, If it were a case where we would place more value upon having two hands, two feet, and two eyes, than we would upon having eternal life, or in serving God with all our heart, then we would be better off, entering into this present life maimed, than to value these members to the point where it would cause us to miss God, and wind up in hell. "IT IS BETTER FOR THEE TO ENTER INTO LIFE (this present life)

MAIMED, THAN HAVING TWO HANDS TO GO INTO HELL." In other words, put God first, instead of giving in to the lust of the flesh. You can live for God in this life with only one hand, eye, and so forth, or even without either one, but if we have all our members, and neglect God in this life we will go to hell when we die. It is not having two hands that will put you in hell, but if you have a healthy, whole body, and use it in the fulfilling of the lusts of the flesh, leaving God out of the picture, you will go to hell when you die. The actual physical body will not go to hell. It will lie in a grave or tomb of some kind until the maggots destroy it. Now, in hell, the worm that dieth not, is not these maggots that destroy the physical body, for remember, the physical body will not be in the heart of the earth, (hell) it will be left in the crust of the earth. Only the spirit goes to hell in this present realm of death; therefore if the body is not in hell, then there is no worm. Let that soak in real good, then listen to me. Jesus said, where the worm dieth not. Now what kind of a worm was He speaking of? When you have done something that is really wrong, and you can look back to see where you could have made a change, (in other words, to see where you had opportunity to do right, and you rejected it) your conscience begins to gnaw at you. You realize that it is too late to change circumstances, and you are carrying that guilt, with no relief to look forward to: it is just like a worm gnawing away at something. That is how it will be in hell, when a person suddenly realizes that his eternal destiny has already been sealed by what he did while he was still alive. That is what the rich man was experiencing in the illustration Jesus gave. Lazarus was comforted in Abraham's bosom, while the rich man's conscience gnawed at him, just like a worm gnawing. It just keeps gnawing, you are guilty, you are guilty, you are guilty, until it seems unbearable, but there is no let up, no way out, and the worst thing about it is realizing that you could have done

differently, but now there is no way to change it. WHERE THE WORM NEVER DIES, does that give you an understanding of what Jesus was trying to get across to those who heard Him? This is what happens, many times, to prisoners who are facing capital punishment. They may not have had much to say in the courtroom, when they were being tried, but as the weeks, and months roll by, and they begin to move them from cell to cell, moving them into death row: it has been observed that when their final week arrives, they become very nervous and lose their appetite. What is it? In their mind there is something gnawing, I had a chance to do right; I did not have to be here, but I missed my chance. Many times they are drugged, while screaming, I don't want to die, I don't want to die, I don't want to die. The gas chamber, or electric chair, or firing squad, etc., will separate life from the body, but in hell that same conscience just keeps gnawing at them. The worm dieth not, and the fire of their torment, in their conscience, is not quenched. This same condition will be present for a period of time, in the lake of fire, after their final judgement at the great white throne, but for now, we are dealing with scriptures that pertain to hell, the prison in the heart of the earth. There is no one in the lake of fire yet, and please do not ask me where the lake of fire is located; I do not know, but I do know this: it will not be on this planet. It will have to be somewhere, apart from this planet. Some will say, Now Bro. Jackson, you are speculating when you say a thing like that. No, I am not speculating. It is very clear in the scriptures, that the final resurrection, which takes place in Revelation, chapter 20, will take out of the ground, and out of the sea, even out of hell itself, all traces of sin. Every wicked spirit, and everything that in any way identifies with sin, will be cast into the lake of fire. That is God's final act in His plan of restoration for this old planet that has suffered the penalty of Adam's sin every since the day he disobeyed God in the garden

of Eden. When that final judgement is finished, and everything that defiles has been cast into the lake of fire, this old planet will be clean again. That is why we know that the lake of fire is not on this planet: if it was, there would still be those traces of sin, so that redemption and restoration would not be complete.

WHAT DO THEY SEE?

Within the past few years scientists have discovered something far out in space that they cannot distinguish for sure. It is so far away that no earthly instrument can measure its distance. They do not know whether it is another galaxy, or whether it is just an ocean of, or masses of gas, but I will never forget, when I read that article, it came to me that it very well could be the lake of fire, that God is moving into place for that day of final cleansing of this old planet. I will just leave this for you to think about. There is really no more to be said about it at this time, but we do know that there will be a lake of fire, and we are sure that it will have to be apart from the planet earth.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS NOW

We must drop back now and finish our remarks on this scripture in St. Mark 9, for there is yet one verse that troubles people, which we have not covered. Verse 47, "And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the KINGDOM OF GOD with one eye, than having two eyes

to be cast into hell fire.” Listen to me, and be sure you catch this. Entering into the kingdom of God is now. That is our opportunity to receive eternal life. Remember Jesus said, “The kingdom of God is within you.” (Luke 17:21). How can we believe in the resurrection and the glorification of immortality, and still believe that we will come up in the resurrection with only one eye, one foot, and so on? We enter into the kingdom of God, in this life, regardless of our physical handicaps, by believing and obeying the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, then if we die before the Lord comes again, we will enter into that heavenly paradise, to await our change. On the other hand, if we have all our physical members, and find ourselves in good health, so that we can do anything we please, and we fail to surrender our lives to God; when we die, hell is waiting, and there, is that worm of our conscience activated, which gives us no rest, day nor night. While we are on the subject of the loss of physical organs, I will relate to you a little story, told to me by another pastor. It seems that he was in a camp meeting somewhere, and a certain man walked up to him and said, You know, the Lord has just given me a revelation concerning those who suffer the loss of a part of their body for the gospel’s sake. In the new life, when they receive their immortal bodies, they will be without that arm, leg, eye, or whatever member they lost for the sake of the gospel. (I suppose for a testimony, or a reminder of what they had sacrificed.) What do you think of that, he asked. This other brother, (being a very witty man) thought for just a minute, then said, Poor old John, He is going to look mighty odd, running around without his head. Some, like John, were beheaded for the gospel’s sake, but the kingdom of God is within you, now, and when we walk in the millennium, in our resurrected bodies, we will have a perfect body. It is ridiculous to think otherwise. When you consider the fact that those bodies that were buried years ago, have already

decomposed, and the immortal bodies of all those dead saints will have to be called from the elements anyhow; it just doesn’t matter if parts of your body were buried in another place, or even burned. It is a very small thing for God who created all elements, to call them together from wherever they may be scattered to. Yes, we will all have perfect bodies when we walk in the millennium.

WHO WILL COME WITH JESUS?

Let us just carry our thought, concerning our resurrection bodies, right on over to 1st Thessalonians 4:13-17, where we will try to clear up another question in the minds of some. The question is this, What does it mean, where it says that God will bring those which sleep in Jesus, with Him when He comes to call the dead from their graves? We will read the scripture first, then I will explain it. 13, “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. 14, For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus (SAINTS FROM THE AGE OF GRACE) will God bring with Him. 15, 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. 16, 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: 17, 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.” Now to the question? Who will come with Jesus when He comes for the resurrection of

the bride saints? Remember, we have already showed you that Christ went down into the paradise section of hell, and took all of those righteous spirits with Him when He left. Furthermore, He took them to glory with Him when He ascended. That left only the wicked spirits in hell, in the heart of the earth. Ever since that day, when a righteous person dies, (one that has found their place in God's plan of redemption) his spirit goes right into the presence of God, into the heavenly paradise, to await the day of resurrection, which Paul was speaking of in this scripture we just read. Try to get the picture now, the spirits of those righteous ones are in heaven, and their bodies have been buried in the crust of the earth, or buried in the sea, or cremated. At any rate, they are all earthbound. But it was revealed to the apostle Paul that, when Jesus comes for the resurrection, He will bring those righteous spirits with Him, and that brings us to verse 16, "For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, (all the grace age righteous spirits will be with Him) with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first." That will be the bodies of those spirits that are coming with Jesus. That is when their bodies, and spirits are joined back together. When that is accomplished, 17, "Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, (actually, it is a simultaneous occurrence) to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." Those bodies will come out of the ground in immortality, and those who are alive on earth at that time will be changed, taking on immortality, and together, all will ascend, to meet the Lord in the air. Then we see the words, "And so shall we ever be with the Lord." There is where some others miss it; they think Jesus will take His bride to heaven, and there, spend the rest of eternity. That is the farthest thing from the truth. They go to the marriage supper with Jesus, but at the end of the week of Daniel, when the great tribulation has run its course,

We find all those saints coming back to earth with Jesus, to rule and reign with Him (on earth) for a thousand years. You will find all the scripture you need for that, in Revelation, chapters 19-20, especially 19:7-14 & 20:1-6. Before we move on in the message, let us turn in our Bibles, over to 1 Corinthians 15:51-55, and read what Paul had to say to the Corinthian saints about the resurrection of the dead. 51, "Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, (die) but we shall all be changed." That word, WE, applies to the believers who are still alive when the grace age runs out. These will be changed; let us read verse 52. "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: (that is what we read in Thessalonians) for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we (living saints, believers) shall be changed." Now, notice the process. 53, "For this corruptible (that is the dead bodies that have rotted) must put on incorruption, (that is, to be free from physical decay) and this mortal (those who are still alive) must put on immortality. 54, So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then (after the resurrection) shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. 55, O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" Of course, we understand that the bodies of the wicked dead will lie in the ground until after the millennium, and their spirits will remain in hell until then, but there surely is coming a day when every person that has ever died, will be resurrected. After that, there will never be any need for another grave.

FOR EVER - UNTIL THE END

Having just made mention of the millennium; this seems like a good time to bring in some scriptures that use the term, for ever, and call your attention to its actual application. Like we said in the beginning of the message: our English language understands the term for ever, to be time without an end, but in the scriptures, that is not necessarily so. Turn to Isaiah 9:7 for the first example we will use. Actually we will read the 6th verse first, to establish the thought. This is speaking of Jesus. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: (in the millennium) and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth **EVEN FOR EVER.**" Right here, we find the term, **FOR EVER**, used in a setting that we know, applies to the millennium, which is a period of one thousand years of time, not time without end. When we go right over to the 43rd chapter of Ezekiel, and read verse 7, which pertains to the same period of time as that which we have just read, we find the term, **FOR EVER**, used again. 7, "And he said unto me, Son of man, the place of my throne, and the place of the soles of my feet where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel **FOR EVER**, and my holy name, shall the house of Israel no more defile, neither they, nor their kings, by their whoredom, nor by the carcasses of their kings in their high places." Now to show you that this period of time, is exactly that: a period of time, let us go to 1st Corinthians, chapter 15, where Paul is speaking to them of the resurrection of the dead, and when we get down to the 24th verse, we find these words. "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 authority and power. For he must reign,

till he hath put all enemies under his feet." That will be for a period of one thousand years. Then at the end of that period of time, verse 26 has its fulfillment, the verse which reads, "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." Let us go over to Revelation, chapter 20, and pick up the apostle John's revelation of that. We will just go ahead and read these verses in connection with the others. This is pertaining to the great white throne judgment which takes place at the end of the millennial reign of Christ. Verse 11, "And I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, (Christ, as the judge of all ages) from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. 12, And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, (the books of the deeds of men) according to their works. 13, And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. 14, And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death." This is where death will be destroyed. There will never be another body put back in the crust of the earth. Now, that should help you to catch Paul's revelation, which we have read from 1 Corinthians 15:24-26, and enable you to see that, for ever, does not always mean what most of us take it to mean. Keep in mind also, that even though the millennium is a time of peace and restoration, it still is not the perfect age; that comes later. In the millennium, Jesus will be ruling the nations with a rod of iron. That is because of the mortal realm of people that is repopulating the earth, and even though the devil is bound, all those mortal people still have that inherited nature, that just naturally rebels against God. That is why the devil must be loosed for a little season at the end of the one thousand years; all those who are

born while he is bound up, will have to be tested before the final judgment. Those who do not submit to Christ will follow the devil, and will have to be destroyed, along with all the rest of the wicked people, from every age of time. Jesus Christ will grant life to all who submit to Him for He has the authority to do so. You will remember that He said in John 11:25, "I am the resurrection, and the life." That means He can grant life to whomsoever He will. It also means that He can, and will, raise from the crust of the earth, both the righteous and the wicked; He is the resurrection. He is redemption, and resurrection is a part of redemption. Saints: I realize that maybe this message just sounds like so much going around and around, but we are just endeavoring to follow the process of events that are to transpire, and in so doing, cause you to see that hell is not an eternal place. As we said before: these are not salvation truths that you would expect to hear in an evangelistic message, but the bride of Christ will be straight on all these controversial issues before she leaves the ground in immortality. Furthermore, let it be clearly understood that Faith Assembly is not a church that only teaches the salvation side of the word of God. We believe Christians ought to know what is in the Bible, and who it applies to. If you disagree with what we teach, I ask, only, that you study the scriptures we call to your attention, and keep an open mind, so that God may have opportunity to reveal His word to you. We could never list all of the scriptures that could be used to establish what we are teaching, and we are trusting God to bear witness of this fact to every believer who reads our paper.

RESURRECTION

Before we bring in the scriptures that deal with the word, EVERLASTING, let us go to Revelation, chapter 20, and establish the 3rd phase of the first resurrection. Matthew tells of the 1st phase. That was when the Old Testament righteous one's were raised at the time of Jesus' resurrection. Then Paul tells of the 2nd phase in Thessalonians. That is when the bride of Christ is raised, but now we want to see what the apostle John had to say about the 3rd phase of the first resurrection. Verse 1, "And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. (Notice what he does, and remember, this is symbolic language.) 2, And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, (or for a thousand years.) 3, And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: (This verse tells us where the Devil is, during the millennium) and after that he must be loosed a little season." Pay attention to verse 4, for it holds the key to our understanding the 3rd phase of the resurrection of believers. 4, "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them." This is the bride saints that came back with Jesus after the marriage supper is finished. Rev. 19:14. John is seeing all this in a vision, and the remainder of verse 4, identifies a group of people who were martyred for their faith, and lets us see that they are resurrected before the millennium starts, for they LIVE and REIGN with Christ for a thousand years. Let us read it. "And I saw the souls of them that were BEHEADED for the WITNESS OF JESUS, (FOOLISH VIRGINS) and for the WORD OF GOD, (JEWS THAT DO NOT KNOW WHO JESUS IS) and which had NOT WORSHIPED THE BEAST, neither HIS IMAGE, neither had received his MARK UPON THEIR FOREHEADS, or in their HANDS." This lets us know that they were

beheaded during the great tribulation period, for that is the only time in history when mankind will be required to receive a mark for identity, and also, to worship the image of the beast. "And they (those who had been beheaded) LIVED (that is resurrection) and reigned with Christ a thousand years." There is only one place for the resurrection of this group, if they are going to live and reign with Christ for a thousand years: That is between the great tribulation and the beginning of the one thousand year reign. John says these people were beheaded, and it was because of their faith in God, but when he sees them, they have already been resurrected, and I assure you, every one of them had their head when John saw them. This very scripture should settle the question about whether those who have lost members of their body in this life will be without those members in the life to come. If these had their heads back on, then those who have lost hands, arms, legs, eyes, and so forth, will have all their members back when they come up in the resurrection. Some may say, Why did you bring that up again? We are printing this message in an effort to help those who want to be set free from their traditional teaching by knowing the truth, and there are still a lot of people who disagree with the idea of a resurrection between the tribulation, and the millennium. This gives us a chance to emphasize the fact that there is going to be, literally, thousands, killed during that tribulation hour which is just ahead. They will refuse to worship the beast and his image, and they will refuse to take his damning mark in their hands and upon their foreheads. This will cause them to be beheaded, but it will seal their testimony of their faith in God. When John first saw this great multitude, (recorded in chapter 7:9-17) the angel which spoke with him, identified them saying, "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night

in his temple." Verse 9 speaks of them as being a great multitude which no man could number, yet, in the churches of our day, people are being taught that all who believe in God will be raptured when Jesus comes to take his bride. Can you now begin to see why we need to present the word of God (in its revealed form) to people who have been taught in such ways? We may as well face up to it: there is a great multitude of people (living on earth right today) who believe in God, but will not go in the rapture when Jesus comes, for the simple reason, that they will not settle down to be taught the revealed word of God. They will not be dressed properly when the rapture takes place, so they will have to stay here to be killed by the beast. Where will their souls go? Their souls go to glory, but their bodies must go into the ground until the time for their resurrection, just before the millennium begins. We can see that they are not bride people, but they do live and reign in eternal life, with Christ. Therefore, when their bodies are raised from the ground, that will leave only the bodies of the wicked dead to remain in the ground until after the millennium reign of Christ. This is what verse 5, in the 20th chapter of Revelation shows us. "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection." This also lets us see that the first resurrection is in phases, for according to this, all who will be resurrected before the millennium, are in the first resurrection: "on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."

EVERLASTING - How Long?

We will have more to say on some of what we have talked about already, but now I want

Copyright 2018 Faith Assembly Church

to dwell for a little while on the word, or term, EVERLASTING. We find this word used throughout the Bible, and in most instances where it is used it is speaking of time without an end, or of God who is eternal, without beginning, or end, but there are a few instances where it is used, and cannot possibly be taken to mean time without an end. These are the ones we want to concentrate on for just a little while hoping to clear up some other areas where tradition has had the preeminence over the scriptures. Just for a few examples, Matt. 18:8 speaks of everlasting fire, and Matt. 25:46, of everlasting punishment, while 2 Thessalonians 1:9, speaks of everlasting destruction, all in connection with the wicked and ungodly who do not obey the word of God. Just looking at these scriptures we have mentioned ought to open your eyes somewhat, for how can you have everlasting punishment, and everlasting destruction, at the same time, still holding to our English understand of the word? In other words, take Matt. 25:46: If everlasting, in that verse is to be thought of as time without end, then those who were sentenced to everlasting punishment, could never be destroyed. But we know that the scriptures teach that the wicked will be destroyed in the lake of fire. Their destruction will be in the same sense that a stick of wood is destroyed when you cast it into the fire. It is not annihilated immediately, therefore if it had feelings like we do, Would it not be expressing itself as it burned? Of course it would, but there would come a time when it would be completely consumed; then there would be no more expression. The difference between burning a stick of wood in your stove, and God burning these souls in the lake of fire is this, The atoms that make up the piece of wood will not be destroyed, but it is the purpose of God to rid the earth of every trace of sin and wickedness, so, after a period of time, in which they will suffer, they will be completely annihilated. Every trace of them

will cease to be. In Revelation 20:14, John called this the second death. Why? Not only will life be separated from the body, but the individuality of that life itself will be completely destroyed in the lake of fire. Do not ask me how long those souls will be left to suffer before they are finally disintegrated; I do not know. That is God's business, and His alone. In verse 12, John says, "And I saw the dead, small (that is servant type people) and great, (these would be the kingly type, or upper class) stand before God; and the books were opened." This is a time when mankind will be judged according to their deeds in life, and that judgment will reach all the way back to the first family on earth. In other words, it will cover the whole scope of time between Adam and the end of the millennium. Only those who have already been resurrected, and dwell in immortality, will be exempted from the last resurrection, and God's final judgment. Remember, this judgment takes place after the one thousand year reign of Christ with his resurrected saints from all former ages, after Satan has been loose for a little season, and after he has had opportunity to gather up a great host of people from all nations through his deception. Verse 8 allows us to see that the number of those he deceives, is as the sand of the sea, but their lives are cut short when they join forces with Satan, for the first thing he does is gather his great army against the people of God, and God causes fire to come down from out of heaven and devour every one of them.

CREMATION

From the standpoint of the resurrection, people have asked many questions, and one of them is, What about the people that are cremated? Are they not approximately 87 percent water? Where does the water go? The

water does not go down into the fire. In the process of cremation, the extreme heat causes all the liquid of the body to vaporize and go off in a gaseous form. Every element that was used in the makeup of that body returns to its original form. Every atom remains, and only the carbon itself is left to make up the ashes, but when it comes time for that body to be resurrected, God will not have any trouble reforming that body. For Him, it will be just as easy to resurrect a body that has been burned, as it will be to resurrect one that has completely decomposed over a period of time. Let me say this, When the wicked are cast into the lake of fire, it will be for the purpose of destroying every trace of body, soul, and spirit. Every atom used in the makeup of those individuals will be completely destroyed.

SPIRIT OF ETERNAL LIFE

Jesus spoke to Nicodemus about being born again, and Nicodemus did not understand how that could be possible, thinking only from the standpoint of the natural, for he did not understand that Jesus spoke of a spiritual condition. That still remains to be a great mystery to the man of the world, for it is only understood properly, by those who have experienced it. God gives every person a chance to do right, just like He did with Cain in the beginning, but if we, as individuals, do not surrender our lives to God, and allow Him to place that seal of eternal life (His Spirit) within us, we are destined to be utterly and completely destroyed in the lake of fire. When we are born again, we receive the Spirit of God, (the Holy Ghost) which places us in a state of eternal, or everlasting existence. Keep in mind the fact that the word eternal, means, without beginning, and without end. Only God is eternal; therefore

when we read in the scriptures, (John 3:15-16) "That whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life." That means, He will place His spirit (which is eternal) within us, and that gives us, as individuals, everlasting life. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." In this particular use of the word, EVERLASTING, it truly does mean time without end, for when we receive the Spirit of God, it makes us so that we will never die. Now what did we say? When one receives eternal life, that means he has received the life of God, (God is spirit) and even though that man had a beginning, with the life of the eternal God in him, he will have no end. I hope this is clear to you, for we are dealing with the various uses of certain words, in an attempt to show you that hell is not eternal, as some refer to it, and neither is it everlasting, in the sense of having no end, for I believe we have sufficient scripture to establish the fact that hell will have an end. You say, Bro. Jackson, why is mankind so long in finding this out? It is because of the way this Gentile society has treated the Gospel. They have built their seminaries and great institutions of learning, (please understand that I am not speaking against education, nor intellectualism) but there is not one of those places upon the face of this earth, that has been instrumental in bringing forth a true revelation to mankind. They are institutions that have been built around the teaching of some man that had an inspiration from God. Somewhere in his dedicated life with God, he received an understanding that stood apart from tradition. Naturally, he acquired some followers as he began to teach from his new understanding, and eventually, that lead to a denomination, an organizing of those who believe that teaching, and today we have hundreds of different religious denominations in the world, and most of them have their schools, but not one of those schools has produced a

genuine revelation. They are built around theory and supposition, and their very approach to God, (intellectualism) limits them to just that.

LUCIFER - THE DEVIL

Now we have some more scriptures we want to get cleared up in this message, so turn with me to Isaiah 14:12-15. What we are looking at here, is the word hell, but let us read the whole thing. 12, "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How art thou cut down to the ground, which did weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to HELL to the sides of the pit." Somewhere in the ages past Lucifer was a righteous angel, but his attempt to make himself equal with God, caused God to cast him down to the earth. His domain became the heart of the earth, Hell became his place of confinement, his headquarters. Then later, God made the man, Adam, then Eve, to be with Adam, and placed them in the garden to have dominion over this planet. If they had obeyed God, they would have remained in complete control of the earth, and everything on earth would have been under their rulership, but when they sinned, they forfeited their right to have supreme authority over spiritual forces, as well as natural forces. In other words they sold their right of authority, and who do you suppose fell heir to that authority when they had to give it up? Old Lucifer of course, and he has continued to exercise his evil will on this old earth ever since. Since he was the one that introduced sin, and the penalty of that sin

is death, we will have to say that he is the author of death itself. Now, as we said earlier, before Calvary, every soul went to hell when death came, regardless of whether they were righteous, or wicked. I know how some people will look at you when you say that, but it is true anyway. That is why David said, Thou will not leave my soul in hell. He was looking forward to Calvary, knowing that God would do something to deliver him from imprisonment in hell. David's soul was truly delivered from hell by that which was accomplished at Calvary, but Lucifer, that old devil, is still the great prince of all evil in the world, and he is exercising his will on natural mankind in our day at a very much escalated pace. He knows his time is short. God is a spiritual power for good, and Satan is a spiritual power for evil.

That is why the apostle Paul wrote to the Ephesians, chapter 6, verses 11-12, "Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil, 12, For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world,

against spiritual wickedness in high places.” Our greatest battles in this life as we try to live for God are not with flesh and blood people; they are with the spiritual forces of darkness. It is true, Satan does use people to come against us, but the real battle is with spiritual forces that cannot be seen.

JUDGMENT OF MATTHEW 25

Let us go now, to the gospel of Matthew for another of the scriptures that trouble many people. This will be in connection with the judgment that takes place in the last part of chapter 25. Many have asked, Where is this judgment going to take place? Others ask, When will it take place? Then others want to know who will be judged. To answer the first question, (WHERE) let it be clearly understood that it is to take place right here on earth. Then the second question (WHEN) is one that many have trouble keeping straight on. It will take place after Christ and His bride saints have returned to the earth, after the marriage supper, and after the great tribulation has run its course. Christ and His bride will be back on earth in their immortal bodies, and the answer to (WHO) will be judged, is this, All the nations of the world will be judged, that is, all the living, (mortal people) who are still on earth after the tribulation, will be gathered together and judged to see who is worthy to live in the millennium age. I know you will not find the word, millennium, mentioned in the Bible, but, as we have said, it is a word that means one thousand, and the scriptures do mention one thousand years, as the number of years that Christ and His immortal saints will rule and reign on earth. Therefore, we are to see this judgment in Matthew 25:31-46, as taking place between the great tribulation, and the start of the millennium. This is not the great

white throne judgment; there are no books opened here in this chapter. It is strictly limited to selecting a number of mortal people from each nation who will be left alive to repopulate the earth in the millennium. Let us read some of it now. Verse 31, “When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory.” Now, to sit on the throne of His glory, is to sit on the throne of King David, fulfilling the promise God gave to David concerning David and his seed. The exact location where Christ will sit, is in Jerusalem, naturally. 32, “And before Him shall be gathered all nations: and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats.” They will be judged, exclusively on their social and moral principles. After separating them into two groups, (verse 34) “Then shall the King (Jesus) say unto them on His right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you FROM THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD: For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. 37, Then shall the righteous answer Him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? Or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?” Notice now, everyone of these things that were mentioned are just basic things that a good moral person, or persons, would do in their natural every day life. These are traits of good social and moral character, and have nothing at all to do with the people being Christians. Christianity does not even enter into this judgment; it is based solely upon the character and actions of these people, especially at a time when certain people were really being persecuted. I am talking about all those people that the Antichrist and his beast

system will have tried to kill and abuse, during the great tribulation hour that they will have just come through. Notice how Jesus answers them. 40, "And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." All of man's words, and deeds, are open before the Lord. There is nothing hid from Him. He sees the good and the bad, and He does not have to write it down in a book to remember it. The books that are opened at the great white throne judgment, will not be books as you and I think of books. This is figurative language to enable us to realize that God keeps a perfectly accurate record. Before moving on to the fate of the wicked, let us notice how perfectly the words of Paul to the saints at Thessalonica match verse 31, here in Matthew 25. What Paul describes in 2nd Thessalonians 1:7-9, are the events that take place just prior to the judgment we are talking about. 7, "And to you who are trouble rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, (That is what Matt. 25:31 states) In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with EVERLASTING DESTRUCTION from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power." The first thing He does is lay hold on the spirit of Antichrist, who is the false prophet, and the spirit of the beast system, and cast those two spirits into the lake of fire. You will find that in Rev. 19:20, if you care to read it. When those two spirits (fallen angels) are cast into the lake of fire, the darkest hour of man's history will be brought to a close. Jesus will take His throne and begin setting up His righteous kingdom. As the nations of mortal people pass before Him, He will be selecting a number of people from among them, who are fit to be His subject people in the millennium. Please do not misunderstand this judgment, for there are those who believe it

will include people from the complete grace age. That is not true; there will be no resurrected people judged in this judgment. I want to state emphatically, that only mortal people will be judged here, and it is based upon how they reacted to the desperate need of the brethren of the Lord Jesus during that dark tribulation hour. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." After that He turns to those on His left hand and says, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into EVERLASTING FIRE, prepared for the devil and his angels." It sounds like they are immediately cast into the lake of fire, but that is not the case at all. That will not happen until the thousand years are completed. The only thing that is cast into the lake of fire before the millennium, is the two spirits we just mentioned. This is their potential, (those on the left hand) for if they are not found fit to live through the millennium, they will not be fit to live after the millennium, so we may as well look at it as though they have been judged already. Can you see that? Even though they will be raised to stand before the great white throne judgment one thousand years later, they will already know what their fate is to be. Now, even though verse 41, declares that the lake of fire was prepared for the devil and his angels, remember, they are not in the lake of fire when this judgment is taking place. You can see why one must bring in other related scriptures on a study like this, or they might get something done a thousand years too soon. The two spirits that are immediately cast into the lake of fire when Jesus returns to earth are two of the chiefest fallen angels, of the great host that was cast down from heaven with Lucifer, but even though they were powerful, Satan still remains to be the ruler over all of them. We will just say that they are two spirits of the devil, one of them allowed to be characterized in the form of so called Christianity. The other one in that combined world system, called the beast. Brothers and

sisters, the unifying of Europe, (the rapid rate in which they are coming together) lets me know that the beast of Revelation 13 is rising fast.

CATHOLICISM WILL RIDE **COMMUNISM**

One sister in the congregation spoke recently of something written to her in a letter from a sister down in Florida. It seems that during the time when the whole world was speculating on who was likely to be the next pope, she heard a statement made by one of the great leaders within the Catholic church. The statement went something like this, The church (meaning Catholicism) will ride communism to gain world attention. That is exactly what we read in Revelation, chapter 17, and remember, that did not come from the lips of a Protestant. That came from a Catholic dignitary. Saints, I do not know what your religious background has been, nor what your political affiliation may be. That is of no interest to me, but I want you to know that this old world is fast moving toward the end of this Gentile era. There is a little nation across the water that is just like a time bomb, and they have a leader, named Menachem Begin, that is very determined to do everything the Bible way. The rest of the world exerts pressure in an effort to gain a compromise, but to this date, Israel is still holding her ground. Not only is she continuing to build settlements on the West Bank, but she has also determined not to allow any more foreign troops to be used as a buffer between them and their enemy. We do not have the space to go into that, but, saints, I beg you: shake yourselves, and realize that this book (the Bible) is being fulfilled in current events right before our eyes. We have

preached, and published messages, trying to show you that, even though communism and Christianity have always been bitter enemies of each other, in the end, Catholicism, (which is the great whore of Revelation, chapter 17) will ride Communism until she (Catholicism, the whore) shall be made desolate, stripped and burned, by the horns of the very beast that she is riding upon. The world beast system, as it runs its course, will become so politically, communist oriented, that Catholicism will be swallowed up by it. That is why we see the 10 major countries of Europe having such upheaval, and such drastic changes in their form of government. Communist power, and influence, is rising in those governments, and stands a threat to the now existing power of Catholicism within those governments. That is why the Christian Democratic party in those countries has been taking such a beating: we are getting close to the end.

I have said, many times, When the hour arrives for that false prophet (religious prince, Antichrist) to move on the scene, he will update Catholicism to make it more acceptable to the world at large, but in doing so, he will become so politically oriented that he will be the very cause of Catholicism meeting her doom, when that beast system has run its course. When we speak of the beast system, please understand that we are referring to the world order, the ruling power as Gentile time runs out, made up of Catholicism and united Protestantism, which is combined to rule the world, and the Pope of Roman Catholicism will be in command. That is the time when he will fulfill his identified role as the Antichrist, but the sad part of it all is, that his teachings have been Antichrist all down through the ages, and in these last days organized Protestantism is too blind to recognize it, therefore they join forces with him. It will be a dark hour for

mankind, but after it has run its prophesied course, Jesus will return with His great army and destroy all of man's works, casting those two spirits, immediately, into the lake of fire. This brings us (in time) back to the judgment we are speaking on, in Matthew 25. We are just trying to pull into this message, related events that will help to establish the chain of events that are just ahead, as well as a time factor for them to take place.

PACIFICATION AND DECEPTION

Saints, do you realize that if Jesus was to come back to earth in the same way He did 2000 years ago, preach the same as He did then, teach and live the same, this Gentile religious system would be the ones to say, Crucify him? Do you know why? It is because their teaching is Antichrist. They will hold their creeds and dogmas, above the revelation of God's word every time. Religion is a cruel thing; there is no life in it. Gentile organized religion is nothing more than the devil's pacification program, designed to deceive people into believing they have eternal life. That is what we read in Revelation: that the devil which deceiveth the whole world, was cast out into the earth. Ever since God placed Adam and Eve in the garden, the devil has carried on a program of deception among mankind. Let us read three verses from the 19th chapter of Revelation that will help clarify the chain of events of Christ's return to earth. Verse 19, "And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him that sat on the horse, and against His army. 20, And the BEAST (the spirit of the beast) was taken, and with him the FALSE PROPHET that wrought miracles

before him, with which he DECEIVED them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshiped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. 21 and the remnant were SLAIN with the SWORD of Him (JESUS) that sat upon the horse, which SWORD proceeded out of His mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh." Now, we have been talking about a judgment where Jesus will select an element of living people to rule over in the millennium, as they repopulate the earth. The verses we have just read, enable us to see what happens to all those who are not fit to live during that time. The King (Jesus Christ) will smite them to death with the sword of His mouth. All the wicked are physically slain, before the millennium starts, but they are not cast into the lake of fire until after the millennium, when the great white throne is set. How does He kill them? With the sword of His mouth. Does that make Him a sword swallower? Absolutely not! This is symbolic language. Think of how Paul spoke to the Hebrew Christians, (Heb. 4:12) "FOR THE WORD OF GOD IS QUICK, AND POWERFUL, AND SHARPER THAN ANY TWO-EDGED SWORD, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." The sharp two-edged sword that Jesus slays the wicked with, is the word of judgment that proceeds out of His mouth. He speaks them to death. You can get a little preview of that kind of judgment, from the account of the deception of Ananias and his wife Sapphira, recorded in Acts 5:1-11. No one laid a hand on either one of them until after they were already dead. That is how it will be when Jesus speaks to the wicked at His return to earth. To slay the remnant, as it says in 19:21, is to slay the wicked, those that are left after the righteous selection has been made. I realize that it is very difficult to get these events laid out in a way that makes it easy to see, but we are depending upon the Holy

Ghost to clarify these things for you. Some of the scriptures we read would lead a person to believe that Jesus comes riding out of the sky on a literal, white horse, and slays every wicked person with one great sweep of His great sword. John saw these things in the spirit, but he did not record them detail for detail in chronological order. That is why we must depend upon the Holy Ghost to lead us, as we collect the various verses together to complete the picture. John just saw all the wicked slain, but let me remind you that it does not all happen at once.

COMMUNIST FIGHTING COMMUNISTS

During the last half of that week of Daniel, when that beastly world order is in full swing, persecuting and killing those who refuse to take the mark of the beast, the kings of the East (Oriental Communists) will begin to make their way to the Middle East, their armies numbering about two million. As they gather there (their purpose being to take a spoil and conquer) the stage will be set for the battle of Armageddon. When that battle gets under way, you will have the Oriental Communist forces fighting against the communist armies of Western Europe. Russia will no longer be a great world power as she is now. She will already have had her whipping from the Almighty, when she came against Israel before the week of Daniel, to fulfill Ezekiel, chapters 38 & 39, and God kills all but one-sixth part of her invading armies. Now as that week of Daniel runs out, and the battle of Armageddon is raging: This is when Jesus and His great army from heaven, returns to earth. At that time, the scripture we read from 2 Thes. 1:7-9, speaking of Jesus being revealed from

heaven, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, will be fulfilled. Those wicked armies will be destroyed, and the means of their destruction will give occasion for the fulfillment of the scriptures in Isaiah and Malachi, which scriptures caused Brother Branham to make the statement about the righteous walking out into the Millennium upon the ashes of the wicked. That is because they will be burned to death. But please do not think all of the unrighteous will be killed at that time. They will not. There has to be people left alive to fulfill this scripture we are dealing with in Matthew 25, and then, in Rev. 19:21. If Jesus kills all but the ones who will live in the millennium, when He is climaxing the battle of Armageddon; there would be no one left to fulfill this scripture. By this very scripture, we establish the setting on earth just prior to the millennial reign of Christ, on earth. We read down through verse 41, where the King said to those on His left hand, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into EVERLASTING FIRE, prepared for the devil and his angels," and you will notice from the verses following that, the very reason they were placed on His left hand in the first place, was because they had failed to do the humanly moral deeds that the group on His right hand were rewarded for doing. This group is heard asking a similar question to the one the righteous group asked: Lord, When was it like you say it was? He answers them (verse 45) saying, "Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me." This lets me know that these people are separated and judged strictly by the deeds they did or failed to do. Those on His right hand are not to be thought of as though they believed and accepted Christ, and that was the reason they were rewarded for He plainly tells them that it is because of the way they had showed compassion and ministered to His brethren in their desperate needs, that they, themselves, received mercy. He also makes it clear to the other group that it is

because of their lack of compassion, and their failure to do what seems like very humanly deeds that sealed their doom. 46, "And these shall go away into EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT: but the righteous into life eternal." As I said earlier, their fate, (the lake of fire) is actually pronounced upon them right there but they are not going into the lake of fire until after the one thousand years has run its course. At this particular time, He speaks death to them, (by the sword of His mouth) their soul goes into HELL, (the prison place in the heart of the earth) where they will be punished, until they are resurrected one thousand years later, and cast into the lake of fire to be destroyed completely. During that time their bodies will be confined to the crust of the earth where all the other bodies of the wicked are held. By the time the millennium starts, all three phases of the first resurrection will be completed. Only the bodies of the wicked will be left in the ground, and the souls of all the wicked will remain in hell.

DEGREES OF PUNISHMENT

Most of you have heard me teach that, just as there are degrees, or different levels of reward for those who live in eternal life, so also will there be different degrees of punishment for the wicked before they are finally destroyed completely. When final destruction comes, punishment and suffering will be over with. For this group in Matthew 25:41, I have looked at it like this, These are people that, even though you could not consider them to be mean people, they somehow just never did have any time for God. We have all known people like that. They would not cheat you for anything in the world. They believe in paying their bills, and they are just as honest as the day is long, but when you start talking to them about God,

they are no more interested than a jack rabbit. In fact, they will become offended if you talk too much about God in their presence. Some of these intellectual, business dignitaries, which you could never class as being mean people, are exactly like the ones we are talking about. They do not go around trying to make life miserable for other people, but they are quick to say, I have never done anything wrong; Why would I need to repent? The fact of the matter is, God's word says, All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God, (Romans 3:23). We are born with an inherited nature to sin. The attributes of sin are passed on to us in birth, so that we are born a sinner. The very fact that a person does not want to repent, does not want to live for God, or even to talk about Him, proves that they are a sinner. The Bible says that God created man in His own image and likeness, and our own natural lives prove that we like to talk about our daddy once in a while. Is that not right? You show me a boy that does not like to talk about his daddy, and I will show you a rascal. To go a step further, you show me a man who feels that he has no need to repent, and regardless of how honest he may be, or how high he may be on the social ladder, and regardless of how many degrees he may have listed on his achievement record, I will still show you a rascal, for that is a man who feels that he is so good already, that he has no need for God. You may say, Bro. Jackson: That is a little strong, isn't it? No! I repeat: I will show you a rascal. The Bible clearly teaches that all our righteousness are as filthy rags before God. As you read the first three chapters of Romans: you find the apostle Paul speaking explicitly about such people who have no time for God. I realize Paul covers the whole scope of man's unrighteous ways in those chapters, and we are not calling such people as these in Matthew 25, murderers, gamblers, nor anything like that, but the self righteous man who trusts in his own goodness, is just as far from God as any murderer will ever be.

Consider for instance, Sodom and Gomorrah: The people in those cities were not all abominable perverts, but because they had no time for God, they were all in the same boat; they all perished together. Therefore when we consider the lake of fire, and maybe feel that we know some who ought not be judged so severely even though they will not serve God: let us remember: there is no middle ground. A person will either be blessed with the righteous, or that person will be condemned with the wicked. You may say, Where is the justice of God then? I will try to show you. First, let me say this, God grants mercy to every soul that genuinely repents, regardless of how bad that person may have been, but where there is no repentance, that person must be judged with the wicked. Now I will try to show you something. We will use for an example, the man who went into the Chicago apartments some years ago, with a gun and a knife, and killed those nurses. I am sure many of you remember the case. He went in there, killed them, and then he cut them to pieces. I can see a man like that, as he goes into the lake of fire, lie there just like an old wet blanket. If you can catch what I am getting at: you will see that there are degrees of punishment, even in the lake of fire. This man's spirit being so evil, if he never found any place of repentance before God, when he is cast into the lake of fire he would be just like a wet blanket, or a soggy piece of wood. He will lie there in the flames and smolder, and all the time he is lying there: that worm of remorse will be gnawing at his conscience. He may lie there smoldering in torment for a thousand years, or even a million years, I have no idea how long God will see fit to punish such a person. I am sure of this, though, He will hear the screams of those nurses over and over again as that worm of remorse gnaws at his conscience day and night. On the other hand, these people who were never so evil in their ways, those who morally, were real decent people: I believe God will allow them to burn up rapidly when

they are cast into the fire, not having much to be punished for. That is little consolation, and a very thin thread for a person without God in his life, to hang on to, when you stop to think that such people are eternally separated from God, or for the sake of proper terminology, we will say they are everlastingly separated from God. In this instance the word, everlasting, truly means for ever, and for ever without an end. Their separation from God is without an end, for when their punishment is completed, every trace of them will be completely obliterated. That is why we say, HELL IS NOT ETERNAL, and that is why we say also, that even the lake of fire will serve its purpose and be needed no more. As for the degrees of punishment: God would be very unjust as a judge, if he gave every person the same degree of punishment. He is just, in destroying every one of them, but he would be very unjust, if He punished everyone the same.

REWARDS FOR THE RIGHTEOUS

Let me back up my statement about degrees of punishment, by showing you that God rewards the righteous by degrees, according to their works and faithfulness in life, and you should realize that God's principles remain the same. He is not affected by emotions in His rewards, and His judgment. Let us first read 2nd Cor. 5:9-10, "Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of Him. 10, For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." This is strictly a judgment of the righteous, to determine the degree of their rewards in the life beyond this life, and it is

determined by the measure of obedience and submission to the will of God in this present life. There are some who work hard trying to do something for God, but much of their labor is through fleshly zeal, and not a result of the leading of the Lord; therefore their reward will not necessarily be the greatest. Let us look at a few verses in 1st Corinthians, chapter 15, now. In this chapter Paul is presenting revealed facts about the resurrection of the dead, and of the different resurrection glories. We will pick up the reading in verse 40, and read through verse 42. "There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the GLORY of the celestial is one, and the Glory of the terrestrial is another. 41, There is one GLORY of the Sun, and another GLORY of the moon, and another GLORY of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in GLORY, 42, So also is the resurrection of the dead, It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption." Now, if you can see it there; the apostle is saying that, just as the sun, moon, and stars all have a different degree of glory, so will it be also, with those who are resurrected from the dead to dwell with Christ in the realm of eternal life. The bride will have the highest level of reward, for she will have become one with Him, (Christ) and will reign with Him as His queen. Certainly there are other scriptures that we could read from the standpoint of various levels of reward for the righteous, but I believe this is sufficient to get our thinking pointed in the right direction. Revelation 20:12 shows books being opened at the great white throne judgment after the millennium, and the dead are judged out of those things which are written in the books, according to their works; therefore if there were no degrees of punishment; the books would be unnecessary, since they are all to be cast into the lake of fire after their sentence is pronounced upon them. Then the 13th verse which we used earlier to show you that hell is to be emptied of all its captives at this

judgment, also states that every one of them were judged according to their works, and the 14th verse shows that everything that comes up from the graves, the sea, and hell itself, is cast into the lake of fire. Matthew 25:41 calls this EVERLASTING FIRE, and 25:46 refers to this punishment as EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT, and the apostle Paul in 2nd Thess. 1:9, refers to this last state of wicked mankind as EVERLASTING DESTRUCTION FROM THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD, and from the glory of His power. Since God is life, and that life is omnipresent, these people who are cast into the lake of fire will have to be completely annihilated, after their allotted time of punishment, in order to be EVERLASTINGLY DESTROYED from the presence of the Lord. Therefore there will eventually come a time when the lake of fire has no further use. We must reconcile these various uses of certain words and terms, for we are fully persuaded that there is no contradiction in the revelatory teaching in the word of God.

EVERLASTING GOSPEL

For another use of the word, EVERLASTING, let us go to the 14th chapter of Revelation, verse 6, where we read, "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the EVERLASTING GOSPEL to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." We have recently published an article showing what the everlasting gospel is, who preaches it, and what affect it will have on the inhabitants of the earth at that time, but right now, I am only referring to it in order to pull out the terminology that pertains to our present subject. Understanding the setting here lets us know

what this everlasting gospel pertains to, and how much time to allot to it. I suppose there are some who read that verse and say, When that angel flies in the heavens, he will preach a gospel that will last for ever. That is a wrong understanding of this verse. If you will read the next four verses, and find out what the message of that gospel is, you will know that it is for a certain period of time. If it was to be preached continuously, throughout the endless ages, then there would never be a millennium. This is the last gospel that will ever be preached to the inhabitants of the earth, and its message is for a short period of time: giving mankind one last chance to recognize the source of eternal life. It is because of this gospel that Jesus is fully justified when He comes from heaven in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God. There will not be one individual engaged in the battle of Armageddon that can say he had no chance to obey God, for, listen, as I reread a part of verse 6, that tells who this last gospel was preached to. "Having the EVERLASTING GOSPEL to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, AND TO EVERY NATION, AND KINDRED, AND TONGUE, AND PEOPLE," (that includes them all). Let us read on down through here now, and hear the message of these angels, and you will know why I said men had one last chance before judgment fell. This is no longer a gospel of grace for the purpose of sealing a Gentile bride for the Lord Jesus Christ, she will already be at the marriage supper when this everlasting gospel begins to be proclaimed in the middle of the week of Daniel. Here is what is being declared with a loud voice, verse 7, "Fear God, and give Glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters. 8, And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen (they are pronouncing judgment upon spiritual Babylon) that great city, because she made all

nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. 9, And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man WORSHIP THE BEAST and his IMAGE, and RECEIVE HIS MARK IN HIS FOREHEAD, OR IN HIS HAND, 10, The same (those who are guilty) shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone (notice this now) in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb." We know this message will not be proclaimed after the millennium starts, for it will no longer be needed. The beast and the false prophet will already be in the lake of fire, and the devil himself will already be chained up, for he is chained before the millennium starts. Therefore the term, EVERLASTING GOSPEL, only applies in the sense that it is the last message of good news that will ever give man a chance to turn to God. You will notice also, that the message contained a warning against being identified with the beast in any way. That message would be of no benefit after the tribulation is over.

COMMON MARKET CURRENCY

In connection with the beast, let me say to you, That beast system is rapidly forming for its end time role in the history of mankind. We have read in the newspaper that the nations of Europe already have printed up, and ready to use, a Common Market currency. The article stated that, because of the decline in the value of the American dollar, it is believed that the hour is approaching when it will be necessary for the Common Market nations to begin using a

common currency, one that would replace the German marc, the French franc, the Italian lira, the British pound, and all other individual currencies, so that one common currency would be acceptable to all. Saints: the world is getting close to the hour of that beast system. The ten horns are taking their place, and with Israel where she is, along with what we see in the realm of religion, and especially in the Catholic church, we know that the living element of the people of God are on the verge of being shook hard enough to get all their old Babylonian ideas shook loose from them, and allow them to get hold of the word of God. In Canada, many of the stores have already converted to a cashless system, and many more will soon follow. This is not the mark of the beast, just because it required those to participate to have an identifying number, but it is a forerunner, preparing the world for the mark, when it is time for it to be introduced. We will not dwell on this, for we are dealing with another message, and there are a few more things that I would like to point out to you from the scriptures we have read. In verse 10 of chapter 14, we read something that seems contradictory to a verse we read from 2nd Thessalonians 1:9, and I want to be sure that there is no misunderstanding about it. Paul said the wicked would be punished with EVERLASTING DESTRUCTION FROM THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD. Then John says they will be tormented with fire and brimstone IN THE PRESENCE OF THE HOLY ANGELS, AND IN THE PRESENCE OF THE LAMB. Do we have a contradiction between two verses? No, there is no contradiction. Here is the beauty of it. God is Spirit; He is invisible, but He is the source of all life, and He is the supreme ruler of the whole universe. Everything rests in Him. If He ever rejects you; you do not have life; therefore when He rejects you from His presence, figuratively, it means that you are destined to perish, for you are without the source of life. On the other hand, to look at

what John said about the wicked being tormented in the presence of the angels, and in the presence of the Lamb, we have to realize that God has always dealt with man through the ministry of angels, and the shed blood of the Lamb was the price of our redemption. The redemption that God offers to mankind, was purchased by the shedding of the blood of the Lamb which is Jesus Christ. In order for us to be reconciled to God, there is a process which we must pass through, and that process is brought about by the ministration of angels. When we carry that thought to Hebrews 1:7, where it is speaking of these angelic spirits, we read, "And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire." Then in verse 14, we read, "Are they not all ministering spirits, (still speaking of the angels) sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" You do not see those angels, but they are ever present with us. Our lives are constantly affected by these angelic beings. You may say, Bro. Jackson: I thought it was the Lord that is ever present with us. It is; but please do not overlook the fact that God has delegated the responsibility of ministering to His children, to His angels. Now I will tell you how all this fits in with what we are considering. If a person constantly turns his back on the wooing feelings that would lead him to God: there will come a day when it is everlastingly too late for him to find a place of repentance. He will die in his sins, be tormented in hell, and then when he is finally resurrected and cast into the lake of fire; he will suffer day and night in that fire of destruction, with gnawing consciousness that he had a chance to be reconciled to God and he spurned it. He will be constantly reminded; there are those angels, there is the Lamb; in other words, he will be constantly conscious of the fact that he rejected, one time too many, the very avenue back into the presence of the Lord. That is how the angels and the Lamb are present while the wicked soul is being

tormented. It is in his conscience, that gnawing worm that dieth not. Some will say, But if he was not foreknown of God; he could not have been saved anyway. Well, that is right, if you keep foreknowledge in its proper place. A person is not condemned because of God's foreknowledge. He is condemned because he was offered a chance to receive eternal life, and he rejected it, and the foreknowledge of God is what let Him (God) know that the man would reject his chance, even before the world was created. In other words, foreknowledge does not deny the man his chance, but foreknowledge does let God know ahead of time what that man will do with his chance.

MINISTRY OF THE ANGELS

I want to make it perfectly clear that we don't make a practice of preaching on angels, but if we are to have a proper revelation of the scriptures; we must recognize the place that God has given to his angelic creation. As I said in another message; anywhere you find God doing anything, you can be assured that angels are present. We need to recognize what place they have in God's dealing with man, and by so doing, we will rid ourselves of a lot of our old traditional ideas. The church seems to have forgotten what they read in the Bible. Even the Lord Jesus Himself, who was God incarnate, with power to lay His life down and take it back up again, when He came forth from the tomb, who rolled the stone away from the door? Matthew 28:2, says the angel of the Lord rolled it back. We are not saying that Jesus could not have gotten out of the tomb without the help of an angel; He could come out with the door closed just like He did later, in the room where His disciples were waiting, but the fact remains that God's word says an

angel came and rolled back the stone. How did he do it? By causing an earthquake to shake the mortar loose, and roll that old stone back down the track. Why did he do it, if Jesus could have gotten out without it? That empty tomb had to be revealed. That empty tomb, and the presence of the Lord among His disciples later, produced some eye witnesses who could testify to His resurrection. But the point we are making is, that, God works through His angels, in His process of redeeming His creation back to Himself, and fallen man, as he burns in the lake of fire, will be tormented day and night with the thoughts of how he had a chance, but rejected the wooing presence of the angels, and the blood of the Lamb.

We have already talked about the millennium, how that Jesus will reign as King for one thousand years over the whole earth, with His literal throne being in Jerusalem, the throne of David. When that thousand year reign of righteousness and restoration is completed: Jesus will never be King any more. After Satan has been loosed for a little season to deceive as many as he can; he collects those whom he has deceived together, and surrounds the camp of the saints, and the beloved city: and fire comes down out of heaven to devour them. From there, the great white throne judgment is set, and Jesus then becomes the Supreme Judge. He grants eternal life to those whose names are in the book of life, and all the rest are cast into the lake of fire. They are everlastingly destroyed from the presence of the Lord, but during the time of their punishment in the fire, the memory of the holy angels that would have wooed them to accept the provision of the Lamb, is ever present with them, gnawing at their conscience. Since the lake of fire is not on this planet, when all the wicked are finally cast into it: this old planet will be clean again, completely redeemed

back to God in every aspect. We will go back to 1st Corinthians 15 now, and read verses 24-28, for this is where these scriptures are fulfilled. 24, "Then cometh the end, (the end of God's complete process of redemption) when He (Christ Jesus) shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, (ELOHIM, ETERNAL SPIRIT) even the Father; when He (Christ) shall have put down all rule and authority and power. 25, For He (Christ) must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet. 26, The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. 27, For He (ELOHIM) hath put all things under His (CHRIST JESUS') feet. But when he (DAVID Psa. 8:6) saith all things are put under Him, (CHRIST JESUS) it is manifest that He (ELOHIM) is excepted, which did put all things under Him, (CHRIST JESUS). 28, And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, (CHRIST JESUS) then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him (ELOHIM) that put all things under Him, that God (WHICH IS SPIRIT) may be all in all." This puts all of God's redeemed family into the eternal age, and Jesus Christ, who has been, on our behalf, PROPHET, PRIEST, LAMB, (SIN OFFERING) INTERCESSOR, BRIDEGROOM, KING and then SUPREME JUDGE OF THE WICKED, now becomes our elder brother, and the scriptures declare that we are joint heirs with Him. Can you fully appreciate that? Let me explain what I mean by that question. In ancient times the eldest son was the sole heir of all his Father's wealth. All that the other children in the family could expect to receive, was some lesser gift which the father would specify, but the bulk of the inheritance always went to the first born son. It was his to do with as he pleased. Now Romans 8:29, tells us that Jesus was the firstborn among many brethren. In other words He is the legal heir of the whole family of God. To Him is given glory, honor, power and authority by the great eternal Spirit, (God) but He did not want it just for Himself, therefore, we who were paupers,

condemned, and doomed to destruction by the eternal God, with no hope for eternal life, have become joint heirs with Him by a voluntary act on His part. Did not He say that He had power to give life to whomsoever He would? Did not He say also, while speaking to the Father in prayer, "And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one?" This is one elder brother that divides His inheritance among all of His brethren, making us joint heirs with Him, of all that the Father hath bestowed upon Him. In that great eternal age we will sit with Him, and share with Him, in immortality, and the glory that is with Him will be with us also. Brothers and sisters, this is a rich inheritance we have come into; let us be grateful in our hearts, and live for God with all our strength as these last days of this present age fulfill themselves.

A LOOK AT MAN

Before closing I would like to share with you a little illustration I used in talking to some of the brethren on this subject. Maybe this will help some of you to better understand the makeup of man, and enable you to understand the final estate of mankind without God. Alright now, God is Spirit, and that Spirit is life. In Him is love, wisdom, compassion, longsuffering, and all the attributes that we have ever heard attributed to God. He knows all things, and He is unlimited in ability. When God made man: the very spirit life that we are, came from Him. He did not go out somewhere with a bucket and stir up a bunch of chemicals to make the spirit of man. No! He took of Himself, for He is life, and made man, but the process by which you and I came into the world causes us, in our physical makeup, to be a sinner. Therefore because we bear the

trait of sin in our makeup, unless we find our place in God's redemptive process, and allow Him to place His seal of eternal life upon us, we are destined to partake of the lake of fire burning with brimstone, in our last state of being. Our rejection of God's way is what brings about the necessity for our destruction. Anyone who refuses to be joined to God, must be everlastingly separated from God for His redemption process to be complete. Now I will illustrate something for you. Suppose I take a glass and fill it full of water: I can hold it up and say, Here is water, but in that state, that is all I have in that glass. If it is pure water; it is aroma-less, practically tasteless, and without color; it's clear. I am using this as a comparison to spirit, for I want to show you something. Water is the very essence of life to all vegetative life. If you cut off its source of water, you know what happens; it dies; it ceases to exist. Now, let us suppose that I decide to take that water and make some kind of drink out of it. I put a spoonful of cherry Kool-Aid in and stir it up, and I have not only added color; I have also added flavor. The color can be seen, the flavor can be tasted. Now I will add some sugar, and that sugar contains carbohydrates. That means I have added nutrients. In this I have added certain chemicals that have a certain amount of carbon of the earth in it; water itself has no carbon. Now I have taken water, added certain substances to it, and made a tasty drink, but basically, it is water. On the other side of this illustration is man. The life of that man is spirit, and basically, that spirit life, is life that came from God. That is why, from the standpoint of creation, we can call God, our heavenly Father. God took of Himself, (SPIRIT) and to that life He added the five senses, SEE, HEAR, TASTE, SMELL AND TOUCH. This is not in your flesh; it is in your spirit. Next He added INTELLECT, WISDOM, KNOWLEDGE, the ability to think, make decisions, and determinations. This is the sense in which we are like Him, for God is all of that. Then He added

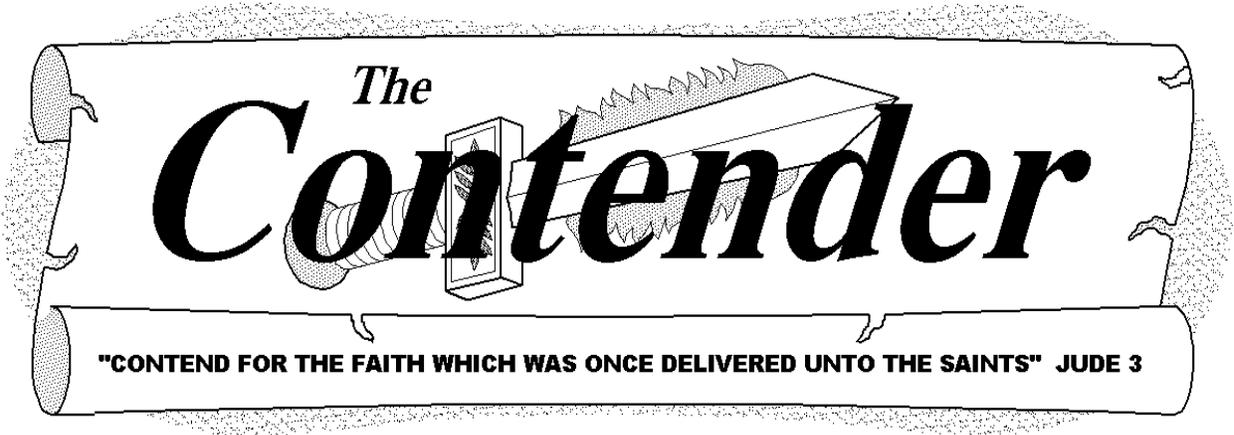
affections. Our likes, dislikes, and so forth, come from that, and this furnishes our motivation. All of this makes up the soul, the intellect of that spirit that we are. That is why from time to time we hear people say, What you see is not the real me, for the real me, is inside of this shell of flesh. The real me is what was made in the image of God, and in His likeness.

Alright now, when the body dies: what has actually happened? The spirit has left it, and the soul has left it also, for the spirit and soul are inseparable. When the spirit leaves; the soul is in it. That is why, before Calvary, every soul that departed from the body had to go to hell; there had not been a way made before then to blot out the taint of sin, so that the spirit could go back to God from whence it came. Therefore it was held in a place of confinement until the sin debt was paid, and from that time until the end, when a righteous person dies; his spirit returns to God, and his body goes into the grave. David somehow knew this, and it caused him to say, Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell.

We come back to the glass of cherry Kool-Aid now. I am using this just for an illustration. If that cherry drink is ever going to have an eternal existence, somehow, I am going to have to come up with a chemical that I can add to it to seal what I have. Once that is done it will remain the same throughout time and eternity, regardless of where it is. But let us see what will happen if I purpose to destroy it, since it does not have the seal to preserve and keep it. Suppose I just pour it out on the ground. You know what will happen; the earth will absorb the water, but there will be a colored spot left on the ground. The water that was the main carrier of all the added substance, will separate from all the

molecules, and fiber, and substance, and will eventually be filtering through the earth, and be completely free from all the added chemicals, and it will return to the main stream from whence it came. After a period of time that water will be free from every trace of anything that was added to it, and also, those additives will eventually break up, and go right back into creation; like I have said before; an atom is never destroyed; it just changes its cycle and function in creation. When God destroys those bodies, and the souls of all the unredeemed that have ever lived by casting them into the lake of fire, even all those wicked spirits of demons, it will be for the purpose of destroying every trace of individuality that has ever been attributed to them. Conscience, intellect, the five senses, and everything that God added to make up the individuals, will be eventually destroyed in the process of their punishment. When each one has finally suffered the punishment that was allotted to them, and they reach the end of their destruction, then the spirit that was the life of that individual, that spirit that came from God, being indestructible and being completely free from all traces of what it was the life of, will return to God. That spirit came from God, for God is the only source of life that there is; therefore, in the end, it will return to God.

I will close this message by saying this: The lake of fire is God's incinerator where He burns up everything that is not redeemed back to Him. Therefore, in the eternal age there will be no more graveyards, no more dead carcasses, and nothing that is impure; all will be dwelling in eternal life. This old planet will be completely redeemed, and Satan, with all of his evil, will be remembered no more. AMEN



The Contender is published 8 times a year (excluding the months of March, June, September and December) by Faith Assembly Church, P.O. 2368, Clarksville, Indiana 47131-2368, a non-profit corporation, and is mailed free to all who request it. Published at Corydon, Indiana.

© 2018 Faith Assembly Church. Only by special permission from the author, may any part of this paper be reproduced.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to:
The Contender, P.O. 2368, Clarksville, IN 47131-2368.
This edition was put in this format in January 2018

OFFICERS

- James AllenAuthor, Pastor
- Raymond M. Jackson.....Author, Founder, Pastor
- Louis B. Turner.....Editor, Retired
- Charles Paisley.....Editor
- David Jackson.....Copy Layout
- Ramona Barber.....Contender Secretary
- Naomi Elliss.....Secretary – Treasurer