

# Heaven and Hell – Part 1 Which one you going to? Are you Sure?

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## **News Letter 5845-027**

**30th day of the Fifth month 5845 years after creation**

**The Fifth Month in the Sabbatical Year**

**The Second Sabbatical Year of the 119th Jubilee Cycle**

**This Sabbath is the End of the 21st course of Jachin [he (or it) will establish] and the**

**Beginning of the 22nd course of Gamul [rewarded] for those who are to serve in the Temple starting on the first day of the week, Sunday.**

**It is also the end of the course of Hothir [he has caused to remain] and the beginning of 22nd course of Giddalti [I have made great] for those who are to serve in Music in the Temple**

**August 22, 2009**

**Shalom Brethren,**

This week, I have begun to include the different courses or divisions of priests that served in the Temple as set up by King David. Each group served for one week twice per year and then they all served together during the week of the High Holy Days. I have not included the service of those 24,000 in the military who came once a month to protect Jerusalem. The mighty Men of King David.

I believe we will all learn something as we get closer to the 1st year in the next Sabbatical cycle. It is at this time that I will begin to do the Septennial cycle (two triennial cycles of three and a half years) of Torah readings used during Temple times beginning at Aviv 1 in the new year of 5846. The difference being we will also include the Prophets and Psalms and the New Testament writings. I suspect when we do these things according to how Yahweh set them up, we will get new understandings. I am really looking forward to this next 7 years.

This week we have a large study that many of you need to read. Many of you continue to bring the baggage of the former denominations that you once belonged to, with you and have tried to adapt it to the new things you have learned. It is time to get rid of former wrong teachings and to think and prove what is true and what is a lie.

How many believe they are going to Heaven when they die? How many think that Hitler and other bad people are now in Hell? It is now time to learn the truth on where you go when you die. You will be surprised at what scriptures really do say and what they do not say.

Again this week Holger Grimme has another article on the Essential Oils and is covering LESSON 3: WILDERNESS TROUBLE AND SOLUTIONS WITH ESSENTIAL OILS which can be accessed at [https://sightedmoon.com/sightedmoon\\_2015/?page\\_id=529](https://sightedmoon.com/sightedmoon_2015/?page_id=529) . I have to tell you that this series is one of the most popular ones and is exciting many of you to write and many for the first time. I am thrilled to be able to host this series and to have Holger contribute his knowledge and understanding of this crucial subject as we enter into the third curse of the Sabbatical cycles of pestilence and famines and earthquakes. It just amazes me how Yahweh is providing this information just before the curses are to come. I had not planned this, but would have like to.

One person wrote in to say that they could just imagine the Priest walking across the temple grounds on the leaves that produced the oils and the smells given off by them as they went. Then on top of it he was listening to the music on the web site. He was impressed. So crank up the volume and read this week's lesson.

I wanted to announce some extremely exciting news but have decided to put it off for one more week. As I write we have had tornadoes touch down all around our area. It has been a whirl wind of a week as we have been working on a number of things.

But first there is a letter from Israel and you all need to pray about these things. The things we have been working on may place some of us in danger of extremist. So please pray. I am only going to include the last line of this email as I do not want to place any one in danger by giving away who they are.

Please pray for protection for us, our houses, and the work. The last terrorist bombing in this town was by the Orthodox.

This is not meant to be anti-Jewish. I will explain more next week.

Also I have an email from Sri Lanka and it also talks about those in a Muslim country; this sister is asking for your prayers as they are dealing with Dengue Fever and some of the members in Muslim countries are dealing with demonic spirits in their families. They ask that you pray for them at this time.

This matter I do not take lightly and I am inexperienced in this matter but not totally. These people do need your prayers as well as I do in how to deal with it. Please pray for all involved.

I want to also include the opening paragraph from this week's Trumpet.com. When many are watching every move that happens in Israel, few are watching where the real danger is coming from. You all need to look and watch this super power as it is evolving and taking each methodical step towards the worlds next Super Power. The Beast is waking up and when it does all those prophecies we have been talking about will quickly come to pass.

The recent ruling by the German Constitutional Court arguing whether the German-created Lisbon Treaty is constitutional has more far reaching effects than most have realized. At its roots, the ruling has more to do with empowering Germany's military force than anything else!

The Lisbon Treaty, which is really the European Constitution in new clothes, opens the way for the European Union to exhibit vastly more military clout than is apparent at present.

Should the treaty be finally ratified, the next-to-last element cementing the EU's global superpower status would be in place: the opportunity to become a united global military power, with an initial combined force of 2 million men at arms and a unified military equipment industrial output spanning the whole continent.

## **Heaven and Hell; What does the Bible really Teach**

<http://www.ucg.org/booklets/HL/index.htm>

### **Introduction**

Most religions and religious organizations, including most Christian denominations, teach that good people go to some sort of paradise, usually heaven, after they die. Heaven is typically characterized as a place of unsurpassable happiness—the ultimate paradise. It is commonly taught and believed that all who go there will live joyfully forever.

Yet despite what a wonderful place it's supposed to be, it seems no one is in a hurry to go there.

Widespread belief in death as the gateway to heaven does not change the fact that most people view death as something to be avoided at all costs. Through medical science we usually do everything we can to prevent death as long as possible.

If people could journey right away to eternal life in heaven by means of some heavenly express, wouldn't we find that almost no one would want to buy a ticket? Wouldn't we find that most people would prefer to continue their present life here on earth? The possibility of immediate residence in heaven doesn't seem to be that appealing. Our actions indicate this is the way most of us think.

An eternity doing what?

Perhaps the reason for the reluctance to enter the hereafter through death is that no one has ever provided us with a truly compelling explanation as to what the righteous would do after arriving in heaven. If we are to spend all eternity there, you would think God would tell us in the Bible what we should expect once we arrive. Will we spend our time plucking harps? Will we sit and simply gaze upon God forever and ever? These are both popular conceptions of heaven, but most people can't imagine doing either for eternity. Eternity is, after all, a long

time! Maybe we should ask ourselves a straightforward question: Do these common concepts even come from the Bible?

Many people who expect to go to heaven admit they can find little in the Scriptures about what they have to look forward to once they get there. British historian and author Paul Johnson put it this way: "Heaven... lacks genuine incentive. Indeed, it lacks definition of any kind. It is the great hole in theology" (The Quest for God, 1996, p. 173). If heaven is the goal God has set for His servants, why has He revealed so little about it in His Word?

There is a simple reason we encounter a vacuum when we look in the Bible for what the "saved"—those who are spared some sort of eternal punishment—will do in heaven. The Bible does not say the righteous will dwell in heaven as their reward. As we will see, the Bible reveals that God has something else in mind—something far different and far superior to most people's concepts about heaven!

Troubling questions about hell

But confusion about heaven isn't the only problem we run into when we consider popular views of life after death. What about the unrighteous, those who don't measure up? What happens to them?

Many who profess Christianity believe the wicked will burn forever in hell. They sincerely believe this is what the Bible teaches.

But we need to ask a simple question: Would a merciful and loving God inflict excruciating torment on human beings for trillions upon trillions of years—throughout all eternity without end? Could the great Creator God of the universe be so unfeeling and uncaring? The Bible indeed says that God "has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness" (Acts 17:31). At that time those who have repented and accepted Jesus Christ as their Savior will be given eternal life. "Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12, New International Version). But what will happen in that day to the hapless people who have never even heard or been exposed to that name? Will they be cast shrieking into hellfire along with those who knowingly hate and despise God?

Only a minority of the earth's population lays claim to being Christian. Those who profess Christianity total only about a third of the world's population. Vast numbers of the other two thirds have never had the opportunity to genuinely repent and accept Christ simply because of where they live. Millions more through the centuries likewise never had the opportunity because of when they lived. Would it be just and right for God to subject them to the same punishment He will give to those who willfully reject Him and choose to make themselves His enemies?

These questions are neither trivial nor hypothetical. They affect the overwhelming majority of all people who have ever lived. When carried to their conclusions, the traditional answers have sobering implications about the character, nature and judgment of the God Christians claim to worship. We need to face these questions squarely and honestly. Isn't it time we examined the truth of what the Bible teaches about heaven and hell?

## **The Biblical Truth About the Immortal Soul**

Traditional beliefs about heaven and hell are based on an under-lying teaching—that everyone has an immortal soul that must go somewhere when physical life ends.

This belief isn't unique to traditional Christianity. "All religions affirm that there is an aspect of the human person that lives on after the physical life has ended" (World Scripture: A Comparative Anthology of Sacred Texts, Andrew Wilson, editor, 1995, p. 225). In other words, in general, all religions believe in some kind of immortal essence, a spirit that lives on separately after the physical body dies. Most professing Christians call this the immortal soul. Failure to understand this subject correctly is a fundamental reason for the prevalent beliefs regarding heaven and hell. If an immortal quality exists in a human being, it must depart from the body when the body dies. The typical views of heaven and hell have as their foundation the belief in the immortal soul that leaves the body at death.

What does the Bible say about the existence of an immortal soul? Does this belief have a foundation in Scripture?

Not from the Bible but from Greek philosophy

Many are surprised to learn that the words "immortal" and "soul" appear together nowhere in the Bible. "Theologians frankly admit that the expression 'immortal soul' is not in the Bible but confidently state that Scripture assumes the immortality of every soul" (Edward Fudge, *The Fire That Consumes*, 1994, p. 22, emphasis added throughout).

Considering how confidently theologians hold to this doctrine, it's quite surprising that such an important assumption is not spelled out in the Bible. If it isn't found in the Bible, where did the idea originate?

The *New Bible Dictionary* offers this background on the nonbiblical nature of the immortal-soul doctrine: "The Greeks thought of the body as a hindrance to true life and they looked for the time when the soul would be free from its shackles. They conceived of life after death in terms of the immortality of the soul" (1996, p. 1010, "Resurrection").

According to this idea, the body goes to the grave at death and the soul continues to exist as a separate, conscious entity.

Belief in a separate soul and body was popular in ancient Greece and was taught by one of its most famous philosophers: “The immortality of the soul was a principal doctrine of the Greek philosopher, Plato ...In Plato’s thinking, the soul ...was self-moving and indivisible ...It existed before the body which it inhabited, and which it would survive” (Fudge, p. 32).

When and how did the concept of the immortality of the soul enter the world of Christianity? The Old Testament does not teach it. The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia explains: “We are influenced always more or less by the Greek, Platonic idea that the body dies, yet the soul is immortal. Such an idea is utterly contrary to the Israelite consciousness and is nowhere found in the Old Testament” (1960, Vol. 2, p. 812, “Death”).

The first-century Church did not hold to this belief either: “The doctrine is increasingly regarded as a post-apostolic innovation, not only unnecessary but positively harmful to proper biblical interpretation and understanding” (Fudge, p. 24).

If such an idea was not taught in the Church during the time of the apostles, how did it come to assume such an important place in Christian doctrine?

Several authorities recognize that the teachings of Plato and other Greek philosophers have profoundly influenced Christianity. History and religious studies professor Jeffrey Russell states, “The unbiblical idea of immortality did not die but even flourished, because theologians ...admired Greek philosophy [and] found support there for the notion of the immortal soul” (A History of Heaven, 1997, p. 79).

The Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible, in its article on death, states that “the ‘departure’ of the nephesh [soul] must be viewed as a figure of speech, for it does not continue to exist independently of the body, but dies with it...No biblical text authorizes the statement that the ‘soul’ is separated from the body at the moment of death” (1962, Vol. 1, p. 802, “Death”). Should we then accept a teaching that is not found in the Bible? Many people take it for granted that their beliefs are based on the life and teachings of Jesus Christ and God’s Word. Yet Jesus said in a prayer to His Father, “Your word is truth” (John 17:17). Does God give men the liberty to draw from the world’s philosophers and incorporate their beliefs into biblical teaching as though they were fact?

God inspired the apostle Peter to write, “Knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit” (2 Peter 1:20-21). We must look to the words of Christ, the prophets and the apostles in the Holy Scriptures if we are to understand the truth about the doctrine of the immortality of the soul or any other religious teaching. Let’s dig further to see exactly what the Bible tells us about the soul.

## Soul in the Hebrew Scriptures

The Hebrew word most often translated into English as “soul” in the Bible is nephesh. Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible succinctly defines this word as meaning “a breathing creature.” When used in the Bible, nephesh does not mean a spirit entity or the spirit within a person. Rather, it usually means a physical, living, breathing creature. Occasionally it conveys a related meaning such as breath, life or person.

Surprising to many, this term nephesh is used to refer not just to human beings, but also to animals. For example, notice the account of the creation of sea life: “And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that it was good” (Genesis 1:21, King James Version). The Hebrew word translated “creature” in this verse is nephesh. In the biblical account, these particular “souls,” creatures of the sea, were made before the first human beings were formed and given life.

The term is also applied to birds (verse 30) and land animals, including cattle and “creeping” creatures such as reptiles and insects (verse 24). It follows, then, if we make an argument for man possessing an immortal soul, animals must also have an immortal soul, since the same Hebrew word is used of man and animal alike. Yet no biblical scholars would seriously make such claims for animals. The truth is, the term soul refers to any living creature, whether man or beast—not to some separate, living essence temporarily inhabiting the body.

In the Old Testament, man is referred to as a “soul” (Hebrew nephesh) more than 130 times. The first place we find nephesh in reference to mankind is in the second chapter of Genesis: “And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul” (verse 7, KJV).

The word translated “soul” in this verse is again the Hebrew word nephesh. Other translations of the Bible state that man became a living “being” or “person.” This verse does not say that Adam had an immortal soul; rather it says that God breathed into Adam the “breath of life,” and Adam became a living soul. At the end of his days, when the breath of life left Adam, he died and returned to dust.

The Old Testament plainly teaches that the soul dies. God told Adam and Eve, two “living souls,” that they would “surely die” if they disobeyed Him (Genesis 2:17). God also told Adam that He had taken him from the dust of the earth and he would return to dust (Genesis 3:19). Among the plainer statements in the Bible about what happens to the soul at death are Ezekiel 18:4 and 18:20. Both passages clearly state that “the soul who sins shall die.” Again, the word for “soul” here is nephesh. In fact, this same word was even used of corpses—dead bodies (see Leviticus 22:4; Numbers 5:2; 6:11; 9:6-10).

Not only do all these scriptures show that the soul indeed can and does die, but the soul is identified as a physical being—not a separate spirit entity with existence independent of its physical host.

The Scriptures tell us that the dead have no consciousness: “For the living know that they will die; but the dead know nothing” (Ecclesiastes 9:5). They are not conscious in some other state or place (see “Jesus Christ and Biblical Writers Compare Death to Sleep”).

#### The New Testament teaching

The New Testament contains several statements confirming that the wicked who refuse to repent will die—permanently. In Matthew 7:13-14, in exhorting His disciples to choose the way that leads to life, Jesus states that the end of those who do not choose life is destruction. He contrasts that path with the way of righteousness, telling us, “Narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.”

Jesus, moreover, made it quite clear that utter destruction includes both “soul and body” (Matthew 10:28), the Greek word for “soul” (*psyche* or *psuche*) referring to physical, conscious existence (see “Do Some Bible Verses Teach We Have an Immortal Soul?” beginning on page 8).

The apostle Paul also stated that the wicked will die. In Romans 6:20-21 he talks about those who were slaves of sin and says that for them “the end of those things is death.” So those who are slaves of sin, who habitually commit sin, can perish completely. Yet many attempt to redefine death here and in other scriptural passages to mean merely separation from God. Romans 6:23 is one of the best-known verses of the Bible. It plainly states, “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Again, people will argue that death here means an eternal life of separation from God. Note, however, that death here is directly contrasted with eternal life. How, then, can death involve eternal existence through an immortal soul?

This verse plainly tells us two crucial truths. First, the punishment of the wicked is death, utter cessation of life, not a life of eternal suffering in another place (see also Philippians 3:18-19; 2 Thessalonians 1:9). Second, we do not already have eternal life through a supposed immortal soul. Eternal life is something God must give us through our Savior, Jesus the Messiah. In 1 Timothy 6:16 Paul also tells us that God alone has immortality.

Paul makes a similar statement in Galatians 6:8: “The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life” (NIV). This tells us what happens to unrepentant sinners. Eventually they will reap destruction, referring to wasting away and perishing, but those who repent and obey God will ultimately receive eternal life.

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