

Excerpts from the book

Life and Immortality

An Examination of the Nature and Meaning of Life and Death as They Are
Revealed in the Scriptures

by **Basil Atkinson, M.A., PhD.**

Born in 1895, Basil Atkinson gained a PhD in 1926 at Magdalene College, Cambridge. From 1925 to 1960 he served as Under-Librarian in the University Library there. He became well-known in evangelical circles as a leader of devotional Bible readings. An eccentric bachelor academic, [he] was the main adviser of the Cambridge Inter-Collegiate Christian Union during the years when the Inter-Varsity Fellowship was being built up and conservative Evangelicals were trying to extricate themselves from liberalism. He was the great pillar of orthodoxy.

INTRODUCTION

In the sections that follow I have sought to use positive arguments drawn from Scripture only and to examine as far as possible all relevant scriptural material...We will ask ourselves the following questions. If Man's consciousness is carried by an invisible part of him which survives, how is it that unconsciousness can supervene from a physical accident such as a blow on the head? Should we not reasonably have supposed it to continue unaffected by sleep, accident, or any physical cause? If the godly are in a conscious disembodied state of bliss after death but before resurrection, how is it that there is no hint of recollection of it by the half dozen or so persons whose resurrection to life on earth is described for us in the Bible? If the godly dead are now in a state of perfect satisfaction and bliss, what is the object of their resurrection? If the ungodly are in conscious misery for eternity and above all if they continue in increasing sin for eternity, how can we believe the apostle's supreme declaration in 1 Corinthians 15:28 that God will be all in all without narrowing its scope and distorting its meaning?...Finally I would ask all who are interested and especially any who remain unconvinced by the arguments of the sections that follow or feel doubts over them to look up carefully the references given and earnestly and honestly to search the Scriptures to see whether these things are so....at the same time to remember that God speaks of Himself as the One "who only hath immortality" (1 Tim:6:16), words which language forbids us to interpret as the ONE Who only has no beginning, but as the One Who alone has natural immortality in Himself..."

THE NATURE OF MAN

As we cannot understand what the Bible reveals about immortality and a future life until we discover the nature of death, so we cannot understand what it teaches about the meaning of death until we first obtain a clear idea of the nature of man...We must go to the Scriptures and seek to read them without the intrusion, as far as possible, of any preconceived ideas, in the light of the Holy Spirit's guidance. If we are given grace to do this we can be assured of finding the truth.

No one who believes that the Scriptures are God's Word written can believe that they can be inconsistent with themselves. Thus humble study and research must reveal a clear and consistent teaching on any subject...into which we are led to search. It is evident that the Scriptures must be clear and not confusing.

The Creation of Man

It seems clear that our starting point should be the account of the creation of man at the beginning of the Bible...for this enquiry the best starting point will be Genesis 2:7, where we read, "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." A frequent interpretation of this verse is that it describes how man was made in the image of God by being given an immortal soul in contradistinction from the animals...In a moment we will examine the verse closely and show, we hope, that taken by itself it cannot bear such a meaning. Meanwhile let us look at the word translated "soul", the great Hebrew word NEPHESH....We find it in Genesis 1:20, 21, 24, and 30. In all four verses the word refers to animals...These verses show us that the fish and sea-monsters (v:20,21) are souls, as are the cattle, reptiles and other beasts (v:24). In verse 30 the land animals and birds are spoken of as each having within them a living soul...The same expressions are used of men...Both men and animals ARE souls. They are not bipartite creatures consisting of a soul and a body which can be separate and go on subsisting. Their soul is the whole of them and comprises their body as well as their mental powers. They are spoken of as HAVING a soul, that is, conscious being, to distinguish them from inanimate objects that have no life. In the same way we can say in English that a man or an animal IS a conscious being and HAS conscious being.

Animals and Souls

In addition to the four passages that we have looked at in Genesis 1 there are NINETEEN passages in the OT (Old Testament) and ONE in the NT (New Testament) which use the word NEPHESH or its Greek equivalent in connexion with animals...Of these nineteen passages FOURTEEN describe animals as souls (Heb. Nephesh), and FIVE are of peculiar interest. Thus we have in Lev. 17:11, "For the life of the flesh is in the blood." "Life" is the translation of the Hebrew NEPHESH, so that the passage reads, "the SOUL of the flesh is in the blood." In the same chapter and the fourteenth verse we read, "For it (that is, the blood) is the life of all flesh; the blood of it is for the life thereof...for the life of all flesh is the blood thereof." In each case the word "life" is the translation of the Hebrew NEPHESH, so the passage reads, "For the blood is the SOUL of all flesh; the blood of it is the SOUL...the SOUL of all flesh is the blood." The expression "all flesh" leads us to conclude that these references to blood comprise both man and animals...Soul and blood are identical...Fifth and lastly we find in Job 41:21, where Leviathan is being described...the words, "His breath kindleth coals." The word "breath" is the translation of the Hebrew NEPHESH...

The Image of God

We have thus seen that the animals are spoken of in Scripture as being SOULS and as HAVING a soul, but few will suppose that this fact in the case of the animals carries with it IMMORTALITY...the psalmist tell us that, though man was in a position of honour at the time of his creation, he has become like the PERISHING beast (Ps. 49:12, 20). There is therefore a natural deduction that the possession of a soul or conscious being, by man, which resides in his blood, cannot carry immortality with it either, unless we have some direct word to the contrary. No such word is forthcoming in the Scripture. But is not man made in the image of God? Indeed he is (Gen. 1:26, 27) and in this respect differs supremely from the animals. But there is NO MENTION of IMMORTALITY in connection with the image...There is nothing in the fact that man is made in the image of God that should lead us to suppose that he is possessed of a NATURAL immortality. On the contrary there is MUCH in Scripture to DENY it, as we shall see.

Man a Living Soul

Man is described as a soul by the Hebrew word NEPHESH and the corresponding Greek word about a HUNDRED AND FIFTY-TWO times in the OT and about SIXTEEN times in the New. This and other uses of the word have so confused our translators that it is translated in FIFTY-FIVE DIFFERENT ways in the OT alone. It would be a waste of space to give a list of all the passages where a person is referred to by the word nephesh as they can be found in any Concordance which gives the original words, but a few are as follows: Gen. 17:14; four times in Ex. 12; Lev. 7:27 (twice); Num. 19:18; Deut. 27:25 (where it is important to notice that Moses speaks of “slaying an innocent soul” (Hebrew nephesh, translated “person”). To continue the list we find the same reference and meaning seven times in Joshua 10 (all translated “souls”); in 1 Sam. 22:22; 2 Kings 12:4; Isa. 58:10 (the second occurrence of the word “soul”); Jer. 38:16 (a pointed and meaningful use); Ezek. 22:27 (where shedding blood is the same thing as “destroying “souls”); Prov. 19:15; 1 Chron. 5:21.

In connection with this use of the word nephesh the following passages, all but one in the Pentateuch, are of great importance and significance. About thirteen times a DEAD person is referred to as a dead soul, translated “dead” or “dead body.” We shall be treating these passages in our second section, but it seems desirable to list them here. They are Lev. 19:28, 21:1, 11, 22:4; Num. 5:2, 6:6, 11, 9:6, 7, 10, 19:11, 13; Haggai 2:3. Thus the Bible speaks of human death, which is so common in the experience of us all, as the DEATH of the SOUL.

The Soul of Man

We have now found that the Scripture conclusively teaches that a human being IS a soul in the same sense in which an animal, a bird, or even a fish, is a soul...At this point we have to remember that we too in English may refer to a person as a soul. If anyone arouses our pity we may say, “Poor soul!” We may talk of a person of beautiful character as a lovely soul...Now this use in English of the word “soul” to mean a person does not in any way interfere with the more normal and what we might call the THEOLOGICAL USE of the word to mean an immaterial

part of a human being that can subsist apart from his body, and the question may well have arisen in the minds of some of our readers whether this cannot be true of the Hebrew word nephesh also. There are other uses of nephesh which we will proceed to examine, but nowhere in the Bible is there a passage in which this word or its Greek equivalent is used in the accepted theological sense of the word “soul” today.

Frequent Weak Sense of Nephesh

The next use of nephesh that we shall look at is the most FREQUENT of all. It is what we might call the weak use. Thus “my (thy, his) nephesh,” as the case may be, is equivalent to “I,” “thou,” or “he.” It may be used with a proper name such as “David’s nephesh” meaning David or David himself. Examples are very numerous. The word is used in this sense about TWO HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-ONE times in the OT. Examples are to be found in Gen. 27:19, “sit and eat of my venison, that thy soul may bless me” ; Ex. 15:9, “my lust (Heb. Nephesh, that is, I) shall be satisfied upon them”; Lev. 16:29, “ye shall afflict your souls (that is yourselves)” ; “these sinners against their own souls (that is, themselves)” (Num. 16:38); Deut. 14:26, “whatsoever thy soul lusteth after” ; we notice here that what the soul (that is, the person himself) desires is oxen, sheep, wine, or strong drink; Josh. 2:13, “deliver our lives (Heb. Nephesh, meaning us) from death” ; Judges 16:16, “his soul (that is, he) was vexed unto death”

This usage of nephesh, “my (thy) soul,” etc., for “myself,” etc., has so engrained itself into the Hebrew language that it is used when speaking of the LORD GOD HIMSELF....Its use in Isaiah 5:14 is very striking and singular. The verse reads, “Therefore hell (that is, sh’ol, the grave) has enlarged herself” (Heb. Nephesh, her soul). This instance is enough to prove how UNEMPHATIC the word nephesh is in the phrase and that it is simply equivalent to a pronoun....

It is true that we could take a MINORITY of cases of this phrase in the PRESENT-DAY theological sense provided we READ INTO the word nephesh a conception that we do not find in it elsewhere in Scripture, but they can be taken AS WELL in the sense of the MAJORITY of instances, in which it is quite plain that the nephesh can only mean the PERSON as a WHOLE. This being so our faith in the consistency of Scripture and the principle of interpreting it by itself, oblige us to take them CONSISTENTLY in the sense of the MAJORITY.

The Soul and the Emotions

There are about a HUNDRED AND TWENTY-SIX passages in the OT in which the soul (Heb. Nephesh) is especially connected with the desires or emotions. This usage arises out of the weak use of nephesh which we have just treated and many cases are on the boarder-line. Except that they deal with desires or emotions they could well be placed among the passages where nephesh means “I” etc., or “myself” etc. In fact we can add about fifty-four instances to that usage of the word, such as Genesis 34:8; 1 Samuel 2:16, 23:20 and possibly 30:6, four cases in Isaiah, five in Jeremiah, six in Ezekiel, three in the Minor Prophets, eleven in the Psalms, five in Proverbs, four in Job and six in the Song of Solomon. These last six all consist of the expression “My soul loveth.” Among these instances are one which refers to an animal (Jer. 2:24) and three which refer to God (Jer. 12:7, 15:1; Ezek. 23:18)....

...about twenty-two instances in which the word “soul” is added to the word “heart” in such expressions as “with all thy heart and with all thy soul” (nephesh). In the combination of HEART and SOUL we see we see the combination of CONSCIENCE and WILL (heart) with conscience BEING (soul - nephesh)...The people are called upon with all their heart and soul to seek the Lord (Deut. 6:5, 13:3, 30:6), to serve Him (Deut. 10:12, 11:13; Josh 22:5; 1 Chron. 28:9), to lay up His words (Deut. 11:18)...All of these engage the conscience, but some also the emotions, the memory and faculty of knowledge. There is NOTHING in these examples to lead us to the idea of an IMMATERIAL PART of a human being carrying his personality and consciousness and able to SURVIVE his death.

We have seen that the nephesh DIES when the BODY (which is part of it) dies....None of these...say a word about IMMORTALITY or LIFE beyond death...this concentration of the word nephesh on the mind and emotions is a natural and intelligible use.

Mind and Feelings

We must now look carefully at the remaining examples of nephesh which emphasises the MIND and the FEELINGS as opposed to the whole man. They number about fifty and may be divided into nine sections. (1) We find the nephesh to be the organ of resolve or determination: “If it be your mind that I should bury my dead” (Gen. 23:8)...(2) The nephesh is spoken of as the seat of feelings in general. Thus: “for you know the heart of a stranger” (Ex. 23:9)...(3) There are about fifteen examples the nephesh as the seat of sorrow, the Hebrew often using the phrase “bitter of soul”...

Of course there are is an outer and an inner side of man, but no word is said in Scripture here or elsewhere about the IMMORTALITY of the latter. The soul is thought of as being “within” man in contrast to his “flesh” in the same way as is the soul or nephesh of an animal. Those who keep, love and study a dog or cat can of course see the flesh and by means of it communicate with its little happy affectionate childlike mind, but do they not often say, “I wish I knew what was passing in his little mind”? Because the dog has teeth and a stomach it can eat its food, but it is because it has a nephesh that it can enjoy it - and miss it when it does not get it.

(4) There are about eighteen cases in the OT in which the nephesh is spoken of as the seat of desire. There are four in Deuteronomy including the desire to eat grapes (Deut. 23:24) and the desire for wages (Deut. 24:15)...(5) Another emotion the seat of which is the nephesh is anger, of which there are four examples to be found in Judges 18:25; 2 Samuel 17:8; Ezekiel 25:15 and Ezekiel 36:5...(6) An interesting example is found in 1 Samuel 1:15, where Hannah says, “I...have poured out my soul before the Lord.” She is referring to her fervent prayer, but the words might equally well be an example of the weak use, “my soul” meaning “myself.” The passage stands on the boarder line. (7) A doubly interesting passage occurs in 1 Samuel 2:35, where nephesh (translated “mind”) is shown to be the cradle of PURPOSE, the purpose being that of the Lord Himself: “And I will raise me up a faithful priest, that shall do according to that which is in mine heart and in my mind.” (8) There are two passages in which the emotion which rises in the nephesh is joy. They are Ezekiel 25:6 and Proverbs 16:24. (9) Lastly we have a very interesting example from Proverbs 27:9, where the nephesh is seen to be the origin of the counsel or advice. “Hearty counsel” in that verse is in Hebrew “counsel from the soul.”

The Nephesh in Life and Death

There are about a HUNDRED AND FIFTY-FIVE passages in the OT in which the meaning of nephesh slides lightly into that of LIFE and is sometimes best translated in English by the word “life.” Clearly we cannot list the whole, but we will select some examples at random...Ex. 21:30, “he shall give for the ransom of his life whatsoever is laid upon him,” that is, for the ransom of his soul or himself...Deut. 19:6, “Lest the avenger of the blood pursue the slayer...and slay him” (Heb. “Slay him in soul”). Notice that the avenger kills the soul...:1 Samuel 28:9, “wherefore then lay you a snare for my life, to cause me to die?” The Hebrew says, “a snare for my soul (nephesh).” Notice the woman expects the death of her soul...Jonah 2:5, “The waters compassed me about, even to the soul,” that is, my life was almost gone and I was almost drowned. Jonah expected to loose his soul, that is, himself, by drowning...

Among those passages in which nephesh occurs with the emphasis upon LIFE and DEATH, of which the above are examples, there are half a dozen which need CAREFUL examination.

The FIRST is in 1 Kings 17:21, 22, part of the story of the raising to life of the widow’s soul at Zarephath by Elijah the prophet. There we read: “And he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the Lord, and said, O Lord my God, I pray you, let this child’s soul come into him again. And the Lord heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived.”

Now this may be the VERY TEXT for which some of our readers will have been looking. If we were to take it in ISOLATION, we could take it to mean that the soul leaves the body at death and was in this instance recalled by Elijah’s prayer...First, neither here nor elsewhere in the Bible is anything said about IMMORTALITY in connection with the soul. Secondly, of hundreds of occurrences of the word nephesh this is the ONLY one that permits us to think along such lines, lines that are in open CONTRADICTION to the only conclusion that can be drawn from a great many other occurrences of the word. Thirdly, if we look in the margin of our Bibles we shall find that the Hebrew original of the last words of verse 21 reads, “let this child’s soul come into his INWARD part again.” This puts a different construction on the passage. The soul does not here return to the body. It returns to the child’s inward parts, those parts which are the seat of the emotions and thoughts, which we have already seen to be associated with the nephesh. This is a perfectly intelligible way of expressing the child’s coming to life again. In any case we can see that the writer did NOT think of the soul as being the REAL child or carrying his personality....

Our NEXT passage is in Isaiah 10:18, “it...shall consume the glory of his forest and of his fruitful field, both soul and body.” ...The forest and the fruitful field are FIGURES for the people and the land of the king of Assyria, about whom the passage is speaking. The phrase “both soul and body” is explained in the margin as “from the soul and even to the flesh.” ...it refers to the death of men by fire with subsequent burning of their corpses. This again need not be taken as a literal prediction, but as a FIGURE OF SPEECH for the destruction of a nation and empire taken from the burning of a forest.

If we turn to Jonah 4:3, we shall read Jonah's prayer, "Therefore now, O Lord, take, I beseech you, my life from me." "Life" here is Hebrew nephesh. Jonah prays that his soul might be taken from him. Notice that Jonah does not leave his body, but Jonah's soul leaves HIM. The passage is similar to 1 Kings 17:21, 22. It is quite rightly and properly translated, "take...my life from me." This is exactly what it means.

There are two passages in Proverbs 28 which we ought to look at. In verse 17 we read, "A man that does violence to the blood of any person (nephesh) shall flee to the pit." Nephesh here has its fundamental meaning of a man or person, but the phrasing is interesting. In verse 25 we find the words, "He that is of a proud heart stirreth up strife." The "proud heart" is in Hebrew an insatiable (or wide) soul (nephesh). This is an occurrence of nephesh thought of as the seat of desire.

Lastly we turn to Job 33:29, 30:"Lo, all these things works God oftentimes with men, to bring back his soul from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living." In isolation this text might refer to resurrection, but the preceding context, as well as natural probability, makes it more likely that it refers to PRESERVATION FROM DEATH. In either case we notice that it is the soul (nephesh), the WHOLE man, that descends to the pit of death.

Our study of the meaning of NEPHESE, the soul of man, now comes to an end...note (1) that never once in over SEVEN HUNDRED AND FIFTY occurrences of the word is the idea of IMMORTALITY connected with it and (2) that from only ONE passage, 1 Kings 17:21, 22, and that taken in ISOLATION, could we reasonably infer that Scripture speaks of the NEPHESE as a SEPARATE ENTITY that LEAVES the body at death. Even so, we hope that in dealing with that passage we have shown conclusively that this CANNOT be its meaning.

The Nt Corresponding Word For Nephesh

The Greek word used in the NT which corresponds to the Hebrew nephesh and is found representing it in quotations from the OT is PSYCHEE.

This was the appropriate word to represent nephesh, as it had an ancient history in the Greek language with much the same overtones as nephesh. It was common since the HOMERIC poems, the great epics dating perhaps from the eighth or seventh century B.C., which were taught in the Greek schools and on which all educated Greeks were brought up. It had like nephesh the meaning of the life, of the whole man and of the seat of the desires and thoughts. Occasionally it was used in the weak sense with a proper name as an expression for the man himself, but apparently never with a personal pronoun.

In the Homeric poems the PSYCHEE was consistently represented as SURVIVING AFTER DEATH as a GHOST in a shadowy world and in the thought of the fifth and fourth centuries, culminating in the great PLATO, we find the idea of the IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL elaborated.

This last idea, connected sometimes, but by no means generally in Greek MYTHOLOGY and PHILOSOPHY with the word PSYCHEE, is never found belonging to the Hebrew nephesh as

we have seen. The association of psychee with it in heathenism however, provided an opportunity for its introduction by semi-converted heathen into Christian thought, about the turn of the second and third centuries A.D. and for read the idea BACK INTO the word psychee as it occurred in the NT.

When dealing with important Greek words in the NT, especially the great THEOLOGICAL TERMS, we need always to bear in mind that the Greek words do not bear the particular meanings which they may have had in HEATHENISM, but always those of their ORIGINAL HEBREW equivalents in the OT, where the ideas originated. The link between the Hebrew of the OT and the Greek of the NT is the great SEPTUAGINT version of the OT made at Alexandria in the third century B.C. The translation was made by Jews, who of course understood the meaning of the Hebrew words and intended the Greek that they used to answer to it. Thus, the Septuagint follows the Hebrew and the NT follows the Septuagint. The Septuagint version was not inspired, but in the providence of God it provided a valuable LINGUISTIC LINK between the Old and New Testaments.

Psychee and Animals

The Greek word psychee as used in the NT follows the Hebrew nephesh in all FIVE of its senses. It has ONE additional sense also, which occurs only TWICE and which we shall see to be of great interest. There is ONE occurrence where psychee is used (in the plural) of animals: fish, whales and sea-monsters in fact. It will be found in Rev. 8:9, “And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life died.” The Greek says, “and had souls.” “Life” is the proper English translation, but few will suppose that the life or souls of the fish are IMMORTAL. This is enough to show that the word psychee does NOT essentially carry the conception of IMMORTALITY.

Psychee and Man

There are FOURTEEN occurrences in the NT of the word psychee meaning a human being, exactly in the same sense as the Hebrew nephesh, FOUR of which are in quotations from the OT.

The first TWO, which appear in the same verse, are the most important and require special examination. In Matthew 10:28 we read, “And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul:but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.” In this text we find the contrast between soul and body which sometimes occurs in the NT, though very seldom in the Old under the form of soul and flesh. Our text here, taken in ISOLATION is easily capable of implying the SURVIVAL of the soul AFTER the death of the body. And our friends who believe that the soul survives, normally take it in this sense. If there were any word either Old or New Testament to connect survival or IMMORTALITY with the soul, they would undoubtedly be right. But a careful study of the meaning of the word “soul” in the original language of the OT, and also as we shall see of the New, shows that it is always connected with a human being who is alive on earth and that it dies or is destroyed when death comes to him in the way that is so familiar with our experience.

When we bear this in mind, the meaning of the Lord’s words here becomes clear.

To kill the body here means to take the present on earth. But this does NOT KILL the soul or PERSON HIMSELF. It only PUT HIM TO SLEEP. He is finally destroyed in the SECOND DEATH, when his person or self is killed for ever.

All will agree that destruction in hell is the SECOND DEATH...Parallel to this verse is the Lord's declaration that Jairus' daughter was not DEAD but ASLEEP (Matt. 9:24). She was ACTUALLY dead ("kill the body"), but as she was going to wake up she could rightly be said to be asleep. In the same way all the dead will rise on the day of judgment, so that as they now lie in their graves their souls, that is to say, they themselves, may rightly be said not to have been FINALLY killed or destroyed. The death which we all know is (as we have seen) the death of the soul, but it is NOT FINAL.

Further examples of psychee meaning "person" are to be found in Acts 2:41, in Acts 3:23 and 7:14, both in quotations from the OT, in 1 Peter 3:20; 2 Peter 2:14; Romans 2:9, 13:1; 1 Corinthians 15:45 in a quotation from Genesis 2:7; Revelation 18:3 in a quotation from Ezekiel 27:13, and Revelation 20:4.

The remaining case is Revelation 6:9, which needs special study.

The souls spoken of here are often thought of as DISEMBODIED spirits of the martyrs. A difficulty lies in their STRANGE POSITION UNDERNEATH the Altar...These verse are all symbolic, in keeping with the whole of the Apocalypse. The key to their meaning lies in Leviticus 17:14, where the SOUL is identified with the BLOOD. The passage is a PARALLEL with Genesis 4:10, "the voice of thy brother's BLOOD CRIES unto me from the GROUND."

The souls are the DEAD PERSONS of the martyrs (see Numbers 5:2 and other passages in Numbers). The souls in Revelation 20:4 have also been occasionally taken to be DISEMBODIED spirits, but the word emphasises the opposite. The souls of the martyrs and the righteous are themselves restored in resurrection FROM THE DUST OF DEATH...

Psychee Meaning Self

There are in the NT TWENTY-FOUR examples of the word psychee used in the WEAK sense, seven of which are found in quotations from the OT.

They are: Matt. 11:29, 12:18, 26:38; Mark 14:34; Luke 1:46, 2:35, 12:19 (twice); 14:26; John 12:27; Acts 2:27, 31; 1 Peter 1:22, 2:25, 4:19; 2 Peter 2:8; 3 John 2; Romans 16:4; 2 Cor. 1:23; 1 Thess. 2:8; Heb. 6:19; 10:38; 12:4 and 13:17.

In Matt. 12:18 and Heb. 10:38, both quotations, the word psychee (" my soul ") is used of God in the sense of "I." In 3 John 2 the health of the soul is often taken in the spiritual sense as opposed to the health of the body, which is supposed to be first spoken of in contrast. But we cannot force this alien sense upon the word psychee. The verse is a prayer that the prosperity and health which Gaius was enjoying at the moment might continue.

Psychee as the Seat of Emotions

There are TWELVE occurrences of the use of psychee in this sense in the NT. The first four are in the Gospels and are all quotations from the OT, the soul being combined and contrasted with the heart. They are: Matt. 22:37; Mark 12:30, 33; Luke 10:37. The remaining occurrences are as follows: Acts 4:32, 14:2, 22, 15:24; Eph. 6:6; Phil. 1:27; Col. 3:23; Rev. 18:14.

The last instance is interesting. It refers to Babylon the Great under the figure of a woman.

Just as with nephesh in the OT, though psychee in these instances does not represent the WHOLE man but the INNER part of him, there is no hint ANYWHERE that the psychee ALONE carries the PERSONALITY and CONSCIOUSNESS, or that it SURVIVES the body, or that it is IMMORTAL. It is inseparably connected with the BLOOD (Lev. 17:14). If man possessed a psychee that is IMMORTAL, the fact is of such tremendous importance that it is INCONCEIVABLE that we should not find it stated DIRECTLY either in the description of the creation of man or from time to time during references to death.

Psychee in the Sense of Life

This is the most frequent sense of the word in the NT, there being about FORTY-SIX occurrences. It will be necessary to look at most of them, but to save space we will not quote the words of the text, but ask the reader to turn to their Bibles. In these references the word psychee is sometimes translated “life” and sometimes “soul,” the basic meaning in each case being the person or the self. The list of references follows:

1. Matt. 2:20. This is quite straightforward. We notice that, as in the OT, the soul (psychee) is put to death when the body dies.

2 and 3. Matt. 6:25. Here we see that the soul (psychee) is associated with food and drink, as with the blood (Lev. 17:14), shows that it does not survive the body.

4 and 5. Matt. 10:39. Here we understand the meaning of the word psychee (life) best if we translate it “self.” The contrast is between the man who lives for the pleasures of this life and the man who lives for Christ and eternity. Incidentally, this verse tells us that in spite of the total change of nature at the resurrection a man still remains a PERSON or psychee in the glory to come.

6 to 9. Matt. 16:25, 26. The same applies here as in numbers 4 and 5.

10. Matt. 20:28. The same applies here.

11. Mark 3:4. “Life” is here quite a correct English translation. By altering it to “person” we shall see the underlying meaning.

12 to 15. Mark 8:35-37. The same applies as in numbers 4 and 5.

16. Mark 10:45. The same applies here.
17. Luke 6:9. The same applies here as in numbers 11.
- 18 and 19. Luke 9:24. The same applies here as in numbers 4 and 5. In the following verse we find the actual substitution both in Greek and English of “himself” for “his soul” or “his life.”
20. Luke 9:56. Here “men’s lives” can be simply rendered “men.”
21. Luke 12:20. “Life” is the correct translation. We notice again that at death the man does not leave his body, but his soul (psychee) leaves the man.
- 22 and 23. Luke 12:22 and 23. This is identical with numbers 2 and 3.
24. Luke 17:33. The same applies here as in number 4.
25. Luke 21:19. The meaning of this verse is, “By your endurance you will acquire possession of your souls” (psychee), that is, of your lives or of yourselves. The verse is parallel with Matt. 24:13.
26. John 10:11. To lay down one’s life is the same as to give yourself.
27. John 10:15. The same applies here.
28. John 10:17. The same applies here.
- 29 and 30. John 12:25. The same applies here as in numbers 4 and 5.
- 31 and 32. John 13:37 and 38. this is parallel with numbers 26 to 28.
33. John 15:13. The same applies here.
34. Acts 15:26. This is the same as numbers 26 to 28.
35. Acts 20:10. This is exactly parallel with the use of nephesh in 1 Kings 17:21, 22.
36. Acts 20:24. Here psychee is properly translated “life.” The underlying meaning is “self.”
37. Acts 27:10. The same applies here.
38. Acts 27:22. The meaning of psychee here is “person.” Notice that “loss of life” in the ordinary sense means the loss of the soul.
39. James 1:21. “Your soul’s” mean “you.” We may well conclude that the salvation here spoken of is eternal salvation from the second death.

40. James 5:20. "A soul" here means "a person." Again the salvation is clearly eternal salvation from the second death.
41. 1 Peter 1:9. Exactly the same applies here.
42. 1 Peter 2:11. The soul here means the life or the person.
43. Romans 11:3. In this quotation from 1 Kings 19:10, where psychee represents nephesh, to seek my life means to seek to kill me.
44. Philippians 2:30. "Life" here means "self."
45. Hebrews 10:39. The same applies here. The issue here is eternal salvation.
46. Revelation 12:11. "Their lives" again means "themselves."

Soul and Spirit

There are two important NT passages in which the word psychee bears a SIXTH shade of meaning which does not appear in the case of nephesh in the OT.

It appears in 1 Thessalonians 5:23 and Hebrews 4:12 in contrast to pneuma, spirit. In the former of these verses we read, "I pray God your whole spirit and soul (psychee) and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." ...The key to this verse lies in the fact that it was addressed to believing Christians, who, while they are still in the flesh in this world, possess two natures, the original Adamic nature with which they were born and the new spiritual nature created in them by regeneration. The former of these is called "soul" and stands for all that the nephesh stands for in the OT and for all that psychee stands for in the NT. The body is of course the outward visible "flesh," as the Hebrew of the OT would express it.

The second text in which the same contrast is found is Hebrews 4:12, "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."....

Thus we reach the end of our study of the words NEPHESH and PSYCHEE with their contribution to our understanding of human nature.....

Hebrew N'shamah - Breath, Wind, Air

If we turn again to Gen. 2:7, we shall see that “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.” We have already seen what it means to become a living soul. This great verse shows us the process. First, we have MAN made of the dust of the ground. We notice in the texts of our Bibles that the word “of” on the first occasion on which it occurs in the verse is in italics. This means of course that it is absent from the original. Our margins confirm this. They say, “formed man dust of the ground.” Man is not some composition made of dust. He actually CONSISTS of dust, and we are reminded of this humble position of this, several times in the Bible (see Gen. 3:19; 18:27; Ps. 103:14, 104:29; Job 34:15; Ecc. 3:20, 12:7).

We notice there is no hint of the “soul” being the REAL man, and the “body” being a temporary habitation for him. The man is there before ever he becomes a soul by the inbreathing into his nostrils of the breath of life.

The BREATH of life in Gen. 2:7 represents the Hebrew n'shamah, which is a life principle issuing from the Lord God. The word occurs twenty-five times in the OT. In one instance (Job 37:10) it is said to produce FROST and ICE, and in four it is used of the BLAST of the wrath of God. In the remaining 20 it is used of the life principle breathed into man by God.

We notice that it was breathed into his NOSTRILS, and such passages as Deut. 20:16; Josh 10:40, 11:11, 14 show that it relates to his actual PHYSICAL BREATHING by the inhalation of AIR. We remember that Man's soul is in his BLOOD and indeed his blood is his soul. Thus he is kept in being as a LIVING SOUL by the inhalation of OXYGEN out of the AIR, and medical science today knows of course a great deal about the connection between this intake of oxygen and the blood.

In TWO of the passages in which n'shamah is referred to, we find the ANIMALS included as well as man (Gen. 7:22; Ps. 150:6). This agrees with the fact that, as we have seen, they are souls just as man is a soul.

The Breath of the Spirit

If we look in our margins at Gen. 7:22, we shall see that for “the breath of life” the Hebrew says, “the breath of the spirit of life.” While we know that the Holy Spirit to be the Divine Spirit of life, it is probable that this passage here does not refer to Him, but to the PRINCIPLE of life, which is the SAME as n'shamah, but on a wider scale. The word for “spirit” is ruah and we shall shortly be dealing with it. This passage then teaches that the n'shamah is the SAME THING as the ruah of life, but derives from it as a limited portion of it.

The probability that this is the meaning of this passage arises from the fact that there are FIVE passages in which n'shamah and ruah appear as PARALLELS...Isaiah 42:5, “he giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein; Job 27:3, “All the while my breath is in me, and the spirit of God is in my nostrils”...Job 33:4, “The Spirit of God has given me

life.” In spite of the capital letter in our version it remains probable that the “spirit” here is again the principle of life PARALLEL with n’shamah...

The Spirit of God

There is one more great word that we need to study in order to grasp all that the Bible reveals to us about the nature of man. This is the word RUAGH, usually translated “spirit” and its NT equivalent PNEUMA, which we will leave until we reach the NT as in the case of nephesh and psychee.

This word has a GREATER VARIETY of meaning than does nephesh, but it is not dissimilar to it in its range.

There are a LARGE number of occurrences of ruagh in the sense of “wind,” which is probably its elementary meaning. There are about a HUNDRED AND NINETEEN of these, including TWO Aramaic occurrences in the book of Daniel. There are also a large number of cases in which the word is used to describe a PERSON BEING.

There are about EIGHTY-TWO references to the SPIRIT (Ruagh) or HOLY SPIRIT of God....There are about SEVENTEEN references to created PERSONAL BEINGS described as ruagh, either good or evil. It is important to notice that no HUMAN being is among them. A human being is NEVER called a spirit in the Bible. He possesses a spirit, but he IS not a spirit. As we have seen, he is a nephesh or soul.

Ruagh as Life Principle

We are not concerned with the two senses of the word ruagh which have just been mentioned, as they do not touch our argument or effect the subject we are treating.

We next find ruagh used WIDELY in the sense of LIFE PRINCIPLE, and here it concerns us deeply. In Gen. 2:7 we saw that man was made of the dust and that he became a LIVING SOUL by the inbreathing into his NOSTRILS of the n’shamah of life.

In Gen. 7:22 we find this n’shamah referred to (margin) as the breath of the spirit (ruagh) of life. The n’shamah seems to be a property or PORTION of the ruagh and to be concerned with what we today should call the PHYSICAL life. The ruagh which is also a principle of life is much WIDER. It produces and sustains the INNER as well as the OUTER life in man, his intellect, abstract thoughts, emotions and desires as well as covering the whole action of the n’shamah on the physical life.

We find ruagh occurring in this sense IN PLACE OF n’shamah FIRST in Gen. 6:17, “to destroy all flesh, wherein is the BREATH (ruagh) of life, from under heaven; and every thing that is in the earth shall die.” This applies to BOTH men and animals, so that the latter share this ruagh or life principle with man. Though attempts have been made to show that animals do NOT have ruagh but only n’shamah, they fail in the face of this passage and of Gen. 7:15 and 22 or Ecc. 3:21, which plainly state that animals possess the ruagh of life.

There are FORTY-NINE passages in the OT in which ruagh refers to the life principle...we will not take up space by listing them all, but will select a few illustrative examples.

Numbers 16:22, "O God, the God of the spirits of all flesh." Here and in the parallel passage in Num. 27:16 the word ruagh seems to include its sense of spirit as a disposition of the MIND as well as the principle of life. Judges 15:19, "and when he had drunk, his spirit came again and he revived." This revival is not from death, but from EXHAUSTION, the use of ruagh here being exactly PARALLEL to that of n'shamah in Daniel 10:17. We find exactly the same use in 1 Samuel 30:12. In Isaiah 38:16 we find Hezekiah saying, "in all these things (that is, in the mercies of God) is the life of my spirit." Hezekiah is probably referring to the recovery of his HEALTH and his deliverance from DEATH...Then in Jeremiah 10:4 we find, "for his molten image is falsehood, and there is no breath (spirit) in them." This means that the image, though a god to the idolator, is not ALIVE.

In Lamentations 4:20 we have an interesting and intelligible figure of speech, "The breath (ruagh) of our nostrils, the anointed of the Lord, was taken in their pits." The reference is to King Zedekiah, who is thought of as the nations very life.

In Ezekiel we have TEN instances of ruagh as life principle (Ezekiel 1:20, 21, 10:17, 37:5, 6, 8, 9, 10), ONE relating to exhaustion (Ezekiel 21:7) in the same sense as Judges 15:9 and 1 Samuel 30:12. In the book of the same prophet we find ruagh used THREE times for the NEW REGENERATE principle of life which is put within the believer when he is converted...(Ezekiel 11:19, 18:31, 36:26).

In Habakkuk 2:19 there is another statement that the IDOL has no ruagh, that is to say, is not alive.

A very interesting example occurs in Malachi 2:15. The prophet is arguing for faithfulness in marriage and reminds his readers that God created only one woman at the beginning, though He could have created as many as He wished. "And did He not make one? Yet He had the residue of the spirit." God had at His disposal as much spirit as He wished to breathe life into as many women as He wished.

In Psalm 31:5 we have in prophecy the words of the Lord Jesus on the cross as He was dying, "Into thine hand I commit my spirit." He entrusted to God the human spirit...He possessed as a man, so it could be restored to Him in resurrection.

Death again is the theme of Ps. 76:12, "He shall cut off the spirit of princes," that is, take away their lives.

Death and creation are the theme in Ps. 104:29, 30, "You take away their breath (ruagh), they die, and return to the dust. You send forth your spirit (ruagh), they are created."...

In Ps. 146:4 we have an important passage dealing with death..."His (that is Man's) breath (ruagh) goes forth, he returns to the earth." Man's spirit, the principle that makes him a living soul and keeps him alive, is taken from him at death.

There are SEVEN references in the book of Job. Job 6:4, "For the arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poison thereof drinks up my spirit." The arrows are a poetical figure for the wrath and chastisement of the Almighty. To drink up his spirit (ruagh) means to drain his life. Job. 9:18, to take his breath (ruagh) probably means simply to live. Job 10:12, the spirit (ruagh) is the principle that keeps him alive. Job 12:10, breath here is ruagh. The text teaches that the Lord's hand controls and maintains every Man's life. Job 17:1, My breath (ruagh) is corrupt." See the margin, "My spirit is spent." Job thinks his life is failing. Job 27:3, the spirit (ruagh) of God is the spirit of life breathed into man at his creation. Job 34:14, 15, Elihu speaks here of the power of God to destroy man by taking back the spirit (ruagh) which He gave him.

There are SIX important references in Ecclesiastes. As they all deal with death...Ecc. 3:19, 21 (twice); 8:8 (twice); 12:7. On each occasion the Hebrew word is ruagh....

Ruagh as the Disposition and Seat of Emotions

As well as having the sense of the life principle in man the word ruagh can also mean a Man's INNER DISPOSITION as the seat of his THOUGHTS and EMOTIONS. This is similar to the sense of nephesh when it refers to the INNER man as well as to the WHOLE man as a person or living being...We shall NOT FIND a single reference that would lead us to look upon Man's ruagh as CONSCIOUSLY surviving his death...

There are about TWENTY-SEVEN instances where the spirit (ruagh) is the seat of GRIEF, generally referred to in Hebrew as "bitterness of spirit." Examples are Gen. 26:35, "Which were a grief of mind (ruagh) unto Isaac and Rebekah." Exodus 6:9, "but they harkened not unto Moses for anguish of spirit (ruagh) and for cruel bondage." 1 Samuel 1:15, "I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit (ruagh)"...Nine times in Ecclesiastes we find the words "vanity and vexation of spirit (ruagh)".

An Aramaic instance in Daniel 7:15 is, "I Daniel was grieved in my spirit (ruagh) in the midst of my body." This passage is interesting because it speaks of the relationship between "ruagh" and "body." The word translated "body" means "sheath" in Aramaic. Thus what we should call the physical body is regarded in this passage as the sheath or covering of the inner man or spirit. The MIND or PERSONALITY is WITHIN but there is nothing here or elsewhere from which we may infer that the ruagh CONSCIOUSLY survives the breaking of the sheath. The most we can say is that the passage is consistent with such an idea IF we were able to find it revealed anywhere in Scripture.

There are about NINE passages in which WISDOM is spoken of in connection with the ruagh. Thus we have in Exodus 28:3, "And you shall speak unto all that are wise hearted, whom I have filled with the spirit (ruagh) of wisdom."...Deuteronomy 34:9, "And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit (ruagh) of wisdom."...we find FIVE times in the book of Daniel the heathen

kings declaring that in Daniel was “the spirit (ruagh) of the gods”...by this they mean a spirit of wisdom...

There are TWO instances in which we find the ruagh governing the WILL, “every one whom his spirit (ruagh) made willing” (Ex. 35:21) and in an opposite sense, “for the Lord your God hardened his spirit (ruagh)” (Deut. 2:30).

In Numbers 5 we find THREE times “the spirit (ruagh) of JEALOUSY” (verse 14 (twice) and 30), where we can possibly understand this to be a feeling or disposition that temporarily came upon a man.

The spirit is the seat of COURAGE , as we find in Joshua 2:11 (where ruagh is translated “courage”); Joshua 5:1; 1 Kings 10:5; Isaiah 19:3, 29:10; Jeremiah 51:11; Haggai 1:4 (three times); Proverbs 18:14 and 2 Chronicles 9:4.

There are SIX passages in which ruagh appears as the seat of ANGER. They are Judges 8:3, where ruagh is translated “anger” ; Ezekiel 3:14; Proverbs 14:29, 16:32; Ecclesiastes 7:9 and 10:4.

It is interesting to find about FOURTEEN passages in which the ruagh is the seat of PERVERSENESS, EVIL or REBELLION. Thus we find Isaiah 19:14, “a perverse ruagh,” - Hosea 4:12 and 5:4, “the ruagh of whoredoms,” - Zechariah 13:2, “the unclean ruagh.” This seems to be a national spirit.

Malachi 2:15, 16 shows us TREACHERY or UNFAITHFULNESS in the ruagh.

In Psalm 32:2 we see the possibility of “GUILE” or DECEIT in the ruagh.

Psalm 78:8 speaks of “a generation...whose spirit (ruagh) was not steadfast with God.” Proverbs 15:4 tells us that PERVERSENESS in the TONGUE is a breach or wound in the ruagh. Proverbs 25:28 we find the man who cannot control his own ruagh.

In Job 15:13 we find the charge, “you turn your spirit against God.” Ecclesiastes 7:8 speaks of “the proud in spirit (ruagh).” Finally we have in the Aramaic passage Daniel 5:20 the statement that King Nebuchadnezzar’s mind (ruagh) was hardened in pride.

There are TWO interesting passages which show the ruagh seeking and searching after God. They are Isaiah 26:9 and Psalm 77:6. As the speaker in each case is a godly man, the reference may perhaps be to the regenerate spirit...

In about SEVEN passages the ruagh is seen as the seat of CONTRITION or HUMILITY, Thus we have the famous and beautiful passage in Isaiah 57:15, “I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble.” Again in Isaiah 66:2, “but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit.”...

In Proverbs 11:3 there is a reference to a “FAITHFUL spirit” (ruagh). This shows the ruagh as a disposition or the fount of character.

In addition to these there are about FIFTEEN references to ruagh in a more GENERAL sense.....

There are about TEN passages in which the word ruagh is specially connected with PROPHECY. In the seven passages Numbers 11:17, 25 (twice), 26, 29; 2 Kings 2:9, 15 it might be possible to interpret the word of the Holy Spirit of God. In any case it is a special gift of inspiration and not the normal human spirit. In three cases the ruagh is a false or lying one (Ezek. 13:3; Hosea 9:7; Micah 2:11). However we interpret these passages our argument is not affected.

Spirit in the New Testament

We saw that the Greek word psychee corresponded in the NT to Hebrew nephesh. In the same way the corresponding word to Hebrew ruagh is pneuma. This word has not so long a known history in the Greek language as has psychee. It does not occur in the Homeric poems. In literature it first appears in the historian Herodotus. Its meaning is “wind” or “breath” breathed in or out. Thence it came to mean life principle and occasionally a living person, rather in the sense of psychee. Thus it had a few of the senses of ruagh, but it does not seem to have carried others till it came to represent it in the NT.

Pneuma as a Person

There are about TWO HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FOUR instances in the NT of the use of pneuma with or without the adjective hagian, “holy” - to denote the HOLY SPIRIT of God....The references in some of these is a matter of judgment owing to the well-known difficulty of distinguishing in some cases whether a given reference is to the Holy Spirit or to the new nature in believers.

In addition to the references to the Holy Spirit there are some FIFTY-SIX passages in which pneuma denotes a PERSON. Most of these are references to evil spirits and most occur in the synoptic Gospels and Acts. We need not dwell on them, but there are TWO instances which we ought to look at.

Speaking to the Samaritan woman in John 4:24 the Lord Jesus said, “God is a Spirit (Pneuma)”.....Then again in 1 Cor. 15:45, a text we have already touched on when dealing with psychee, the apostle says, “The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.” This is, as all agree, a reference to the risen Christ...Father in John 4:24, the Son in 1 Cor. 15:45...This bears sufficiently on our theme by showing that God as Spirit is the source of all life.

Pneuma as Wind

Pneuma only ONCE means “wind” or “blast” in the NT. We shall find the occurrence in 2 Thessalonians 2:8 in a quotation from Isaiah 11:4 and Job 4:9, “And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth.”

Pneuma as Life Principle

There are NINE instances in the NT in which pneuma means “life principle” just as does ruah in the OT...In Luke 8:55 the spirit (pneuma) returns to the dead child, daughter of Jairus. We ought not to suppose that what returned was CONSCIOUS in itself APART FROM the body. The usages of ruah in the OT show that this means that God gave back to the child the life principle which He had taken at death....James 2:26 gives us a very clear view of the relationship of spirit (pneuma) and body. revelation 11:11 shows us the spirit (pneuma) of life entering into the dead bodies of the witnesses, so that they revived and stood up. In Revelation 13:15 we find the false prophet empowered to give pneuma to the image of the beast, so that it could speak like a living person...we have the significant word, “For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy” (Rev. 19:10). The vital principle of prophecy, that which gives it meaning and life, is its testimony of Jesus. This is a figurative use of pneuma on the analogy of its literal use in connection with human life.

Pneuma as the Regenerate Nature

There are about TWENTY-NINE occurrences in the NT of pneuma used in reference to the NEW REGENERATE NATURE. In this sense it sometimes unites and combines the sense of pneuma as life principle with that of disposition or character. The new nature is certainly a new life principle, but it is an essentially moral life principle. It is in itself a holy disposition or character.

In Matthew 26:41 and Mark 14:38 we find the spirit (pneuma) opposed to the flesh, as so often in the apostle Paul’s epistles....In 1 Peter 3:18 “spirit” (pneuma) is again contrasted with “flesh.” Here “spirit” means the glorified nature of Christ in resurrection. We may compare Romans 1:4 and 1 Corinthians 15:45. The glorified resurrection nature, this time of the saints, is again the meaning of pneuma in 1 Peter 4:6. Believers now dead will one day live again in a glorified nature with a spiritual body as a result of hearing and believing the Gospel when they were alive on earth before their death.

There are nine references in the Epistle to the Romans...The regenerate nature is represented by pneuma in Romans 2:29, where the apostle says it effects circumcision of the heart. In Romans 8:1 and 4 we have the contrast between flesh, the old nature, and spirit, the new. We have the same in Romans 8:5, where pneuma in this sense occurs twice...The child of God carries a life principle within him, which is the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit and insures his resurrection to life immortal on the glorious day of resurrection at the second coming of the Lord (Rom. 8:11)....

Further references to the regenerate nature occur in 1 Cor. 5:5; 6:17, 20; Gal. 3:3; 6:18; Phil. 4:23; I Thess. 5:23. where it is contrasted with psychee; Heb. 4:12, where, the same contrast occurs;We also have references to the regenerate nature in 2 Tim:4:22 and Philemon 25.

Pneuma in 2 Corinthians 7:1

There is a strange use of pneuma in 2 Cor. 7:1, which seems to be unique in the NT, “Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.” We have here, as so often, the contrast between flesh and spirit, but neither is used in the exact sense of the old and new natures...Pneuma here cannot mean the new nature because filthiness cannot be thought of as affecting the new nature...Flesh and spirit are put here for CARNAL THINGS...The apostle is exhorting to holiness and to the avoidance of all defilement in things of the flesh, by which he means IMMORALITY, and in things of the spirit, by which he means false religion...

Pneuma as Man’s Disposition and Character

There are rather under FORTY passages in the NT in which pneuma appears as a disposition of man and the source of his character in the same general sense as does ruah in the OT. An examination of these passages will show however that some are on the borderline and it is a matter of judgment whether to class them in this division of the sense of the word or to place them among the instances which refer to the regenerate spirit.

The following passages show the pneuma as the source of HUMILITY: Matt. 5:3; 1 Cor. 4:21 and Gal. 6:1.

In the following it is the seat of KNOWLEDGE and WISDOM: Mark 2:8; Luke 2:40; Acts 6:10; Eph. 1:17 and 4:23.

In the following it is the seat of GRIEF: Mark 8:12; John 11:33; 13:21 and Acts 17:16.

“The Spirit and power of Elias” (Luke 1:17) is a passage probably best placed among those instances which refer specially to the spirit of prophecy.

In four passages the pneuma is the seat of JOY: Luke 1:47; 1 Cor. 16:18; 2 Cor. 2:13; 7:13.

In Luke 9:55 is an instance of PERVERSE spirit.

There are four instances of the spirit being the seat of COURAGE or STRENGTH: Acts 18:5, 25; Romans 12:11 and 2 Timothy 1:7.

In Acts 19:21 and 20:22 the pneuma is the source of PURPOSE or RESOLVE.

There are several Pauline passages in which the pneuma is seen as the seat of WORSHIP and the SERVICE of God. In these we are probably intended to think of the regenerate spirit. They are: Rom. 1:9, 8:16; 1 Cor. 5:3, 4, 7:34, 14:2, 14, 16:18; 2 Cor. 4:13; Phil. 1:27; Col. 2:5....In

John 4:23, 24 worship in spirit and truth means inner worship, the lifting of the heart to God in faith, prayer and obedience, as opposed to ritual or legal or any other form of outward worship. The regenerate spirit is seen as the instrument and channel of worship because its nature is in some sense akin to that of God, Who is Spirit (verse 24).

In 1 Corinthians 2:11 the pneuma is seen as the seat of SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS. This is a unique use in the NT. Only a man himself knows the depths, and the motives of his own heart, and the apostle says that this knowledge of himself lies in his spirit (pneuma). We should almost expect to read the word “heart” here and we may well think that the use of the word pneuma is influenced by its use for the Spirit of God in the next sentence. It would be very unwise to read into this unique use of the word the idea that the pneuma is the seat of a CONSCIOUSNESS that can SURVIVE AFTER the spirit leaves the body at death. Such an idea is not found in the verse itself.

The Pneuma of the Prophets

Apart from possibly Luke 1:17 the NT adds ONE instance to the TEN to be found in the OT where ruagh relates specially to the prophets. This is to be found in Revelation 22:6, “the Lord God of the spirits of the prophets.” The meaning is the same as that of ruagh when it is connected with the prophets.

Ruagh and Pneuma

We have now examined carefully the meaning of these Hebrew and Greek words and so far as space will allow provided examples of every sense that could possibly bear on our argument. The only places in which the idea of the spirit surviving the body might be deduced from them are the instances in Ecclesiastes (especially 12:7) where the spirit is said to go back at death to God who gave it, and such passages as Luke 23:46 and Acts 7:59 where the spirit at death is commended into the hands of God.....

The Heart

...it would be useful to glance at the Hebrew and Greek words translated “heart.” We might not have found it necessary to do so, as these words are not used in connection with the creation of man, as are nephesh and ruagh. Yet a well-known evangelist recently quoted in a public address Psalm 22:26, “Your heart shall live for ever,” to prove NATURAL IMMORTALITY for all men, righteous or wicked, and elaborated the theme that the “heart” would survive the body at death and go on living to all eternity either in heaven or hell. A glance at the text will show the impossibility of rightly extracting such a notion from it. The context makes quite clear that the wicked are not in view in the passage at all. It is concerned with “the meek” and “they that seek the Lord.” The eternal life that is promised is promised to them alone. Nor does this life consist of survival after death as if the “heart” lived but not the body. The expression “your heart” (or whatever the appropriate pronoun may be) is frequently used for “you,” just as we have seen to be the case in the “weak” use of nephesh. The promise is thus a promise of eternal life to the people of God, which comes, as we shall later see, in the only way known to Scripture, by a

glorious resurrection...We appreciate his difficulties...but should he not have been warned by the words that occur in verse 29 of the same psalm, only three verses lower down, “None can keep alive his own soul.” We may compare Psalm 69:32.

The Hebrew words for “heart” are LEV, LEVAV, and LIBBAH, the Aramaic words occurring in Daniel are LEV and L’VAV, and the Greek word is KARDIA. These words have certain parallels with ruagh and pneuma. They are sometimes used in a strict parallelism with ruagh. They are used in much the same sense as ruagh in its references to the disposition and the seat of the emotions, but they cover a wider ground. There is a regenerate heart, which is the same as a regenerate spirit. The heart is the deepest part of man, the seat of the will and conscience. One or other of the words is sometimes used to express the centre or midst of something, e.g. the sea (Ex. 15:8):1 Peter 3:4 has something of this sense.

In the case of Nabal we read of the death of his heart (1 Samuel 25:37). This probably means that he became unconscious. He seems to have had some sort of stroke. As in the case of nephesh the Scripture speaks in several places of the heart of God (2 Sam. 7:21, etc.). In Job 1:8 and 2:3 we read of Satan’s heart and in Daniel 4:16 and 5:21 of “the heart of a beast,” meaning the nature of a beast. This is sufficient proof that the heart never expresses an IMMORTAL part of a man which has the property of surviving death and living forever.

Several times in the book of Proverbs we find the expression “to lack understanding” (e.g:6:32, etc.). In Hebrew this is always “to lack heart.” Similarly we find “to get heart” (e.g:15:32). The occupation of the heart with material things (as we should call them) as well as spiritual seems proved by Proverbs 27:9, where we find that it enjoys ointment and perfume.

There is an interesting passage in Song of Solomon 5:2, “I sleep, but my heart waketh.” This looks like the heart could be conscious while its owner asleep, but the context is best suited by the R.V. rendering, “I was asleep, but my heart waked,” that is, she woke up when she heard her beloved knocking.

In 1 Thessalonians 3:13 we find the heart, put for the person himself, appearing before God at the coming of our Lord Jesus.

In addition to Psalm 22:26 which we have already examined, there is only ONE passage from which it has been found possible to deduce the IMMORTALITY of the HEART. This is Ecclesiastes 3:11, “He has made everything beautiful in His time:also He has set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God makes from the beginning to the end.” “The world” translates in Hebrew olam, which usually means “eternity” or “the world to come.” Most commentators (though not all) and modern translators read “eternity,” and it has been concluded that because eternity is in Man’s heart, his heart is eternal or immortal.

This would by no means follow, especially when based upon a single obscure and difficult passage without ANY SUPPORT elsewhere in Scripture at all. But is not the heart, the heart (or midst) of the beautiful things (“everything beautiful”)? The beautiful creation that God has made is all related to eternity, so that man cannot find out the meaning of God’s work “from the beginning to the end,” that is, in time.

NEW TESTAMENT TEACHING

....It is sometimes thought that the experiences which the apostle Paul relates of himself in 2 Corinthians 12:2-4 show that a man is capable of consciousness from his body and that therefore his spirit is capable of consciousness after death. The first of these conclusions is true. We experience such consciousness in dreams. What the apostle experienced was a vision (verse 1). We shall all agree that the prophets and apostles were granted in which they were transported out of their immediate surroundings, but it does not for a moment follow that dead persons could experience visions or consciousness in any way. If they could, we should find the fact revealed in Scripture, but we have already found it firmly and consistently contradicted.

The Witch Of Endor

After examining what the Scripture reveals on the spirit of man and the meaning and nature of his death we seem to have reached the best place to look at the story recorded in 1 Samuel 28 of King Saul's dealings with the "witch" of Endor. The "witch" was what is today called a medium and the meeting in which Saul took part was what is today called a seance. The "familiar spirit" was what is today called the medium's "control." All such dealings with spirits were forbidden by the Mosaic law (Exod. 22:18; Lev. 20:27; Deut. 18:10-12). Many have believed that this passage teaches the survival of the spirits of the dead and find confirmation for their view in the fact that the spirit which appears in the story is referred to simply as "Samuel."

No such conclusion however can arise from the use of the name. The Bible regularly speaks in the language of phenomena and consistently with this practice the name is used because Saul thought that it was Samuel who was speaking and the supposed spirit appeared to be Samuel to him and possibly also to the medium.

There are at least three good reasons why the spirit could not have been Samuel. The first is the definite teaching of Scripture on the spirit of man and the nature of death, which we have already thoroughly examined. The second reason is the insuperable difficulty of supposing that having refused to communicate with Saul by any legitimate means (1 Sam. 28:6) the Lord would speak to him by a medium and use practices which He had forbidden in His law under pain of death and called an abomination. The third reason is the fantastic difficulty of supposing that a spirit from the dead could appear as "an old man . . . covered with a mantle." It is clear from the story that what happened at the Endor seance was one those two things of which one happens at every modern seance. The dead Samuel may have been impersonated by a demon, as happens at many seance. The woman said she saw "gods ascending out of the earth." We must remember that Saul never saw anything. He only heard what the medium said to him. Was in fact in touch with a demon, this would account for demoralisation and death the next day. On the other hand the woman may have been particularly clever and crafty, as are some today. She may have invented the whole scene. She would know Saul by his height (1 Sam. 10:23; 28:12). She may have pretended that she saw a supernatural figure and placed words in its mouth she thought Samuel would have been likely to say, describing the "ghost" in a way that would suggest Samuel to Saul. She may have the opportunity to take a hand by suggestion in the death of hoping to be rid of him and to be free to carry on her trade (1 Sam. 28:9). Every Bible-believer today regards a seance with a modern medium as actuated by demons or occasionally by fraud. None supposes

that the medium can really call back to earth the godly dead. Is it not then only reasonable to regard the seance which Saul attended in exactly the same light? This conclusion is made practically certain by the statement in 1 Chronicles 10:13 that Saul died because he consulted one that had a familiar spirit. Readers will notice that the words “one that had” are in italics. What he consulted was the familiar spirit itself, not the ghost of Samuel.

Hebrew Muth

The ordinary Hebrew word meaning “to die” is muth. It occurs in the Old Testament over eight hundred times. In the great majority of cases it is used in the simple and straightforward sense of the death of men or animals. There is no hint in its usage of any distinction between the two. Indeed there could not be in view of the direct statement in Ecclesiastes 3:19 that death is the same in either case. Muth means exactly the same as “to die” in English. It does not explain the meaning and nature of death any more than does the word “die” in English. Both words in the two languages express the phenomenon of the cessation of life with which we are all so sadly familiar. No evidence appears at the death of any man or woman that any invisible part of him survives any more than it does at the death of any animal.

As in English and other languages muth is sometimes used in a figurative sense. We talk for instance of the engine of a motor car “going dead.” Such figurative uses do not detract from the literal sense. They are built upon it. Their whole point depends on it. Thus muth can be used of a nation (Isa. 65:15; Hos. 2:3; Amos 2:2), a tribe (Deut. 33:6; Hos. 13:1), or a city (2 Sam. 20:19). It means the destruction or elimination of a nation, a tribe, or a city. None of these uses supports the idea of individual survival. On the contrary we find the word muth in Deuteronomy 2:16 parallel with tamam meaning “to be consumed,” “to be spent,” “to be finished.” In the context this word need not be inconsistent with survival, but suggests the opposite.

In nine passages in the Old Testament muth is used in a general sense in connection with sin, closely parallel to Romans 6:23. Here it almost certainly covers the second death as well as, or instead of, the death of which we have universal experience in this world. The passages are 2 Samuel 12:13; Jeremiah 31:30; Ezekiel 3:18-20, 18:4-31, 33:8-27; Psalm 34:21; Proverbs 19:18, 21:25; Job 5:2..... It is worth noting here that muth occurs in connection with resurrection in Isaiah 26:19, where the dead are said to need awakening and to “dwell in dust.”

A basic passage that we must look at in connection with the word muth is to be found in Genesis 2:17 (compare Genesis 3:4): “for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.” It is clear that neither Adam nor Eve actually died in the day in which they ate the fruit of the tree and little difference is made if we substitute “when” for “in the day that”.... More likely however the word said to Adam is exactly paralleled and explained by the word spoken by Solomon to Shimei (1 Kings 2:37, 42, notice especially the R.V. and R.S.V.). Shimei did not die on the day that he left Jerusalem, but he became subject to death on that day. There is thus no need to introduce any figurative sense into the word muth in Genesis 2:7, though we may well suppose that in this passage it extends to the second death.

Hebrew Gava

This word occurs twenty-four times in the Old Testament and means quite simply “to die” in the sense to which we are universally accustomed. It throws no light on the nature and meaning of death in any sense other than what we see and experience except perhaps in Psalm 104:29, “they die and return to their dust.” This is a reference to the death of animals, which we have seen from Ecclesiastes 3:19 to be identical with the death of man.

Greek Words Meaning “To Die”

In the New Testament we have two words meaning “to die” in the ordinary sense, *apothanein* and *teleutan*. Their meaning overlaps as the second occurs once in the synoptic Gospels in a parallel passage to the first. The first occurs about seventy-seven times in the New Testament and the second about eight times. There are six special senses in which we occasionally find *apothanein* used, three of which are definitely figurative. (1). Twice it is used of the second death (John 6:50; Romans 8:13). (2). By an easily intelligible figure it is used of seed sown in the ground from which the corn ultimately grows up, the growth being likened to resurrection and life (John 12:24; I Corinthians 15:36). We do not use the conception of death in this sense in ordinary speech in English. (3). It is used figuratively twice by the apostle Paul in the sense of the nearness of death or the hazard of death (1 Corinthians 15:31; 2 Corinthians 6:9). (4). The apostle uses it in the theological and spiritual sense of the death of all believers in the sight of God with Christ in His death on the cross (2 Corinthians 5:14). This is not a literal death but refers to the effects of Christ’s death upon the believer’s position before God. We could translate “then were all dead” as “then are all counted to have died.” (5). In Revelation 3:2 we find the word in a completely figurative but quite intelligible sense:(6). In Jude 12 we find the word used of trees, a sense that is familiar in English today.....

Hebrew and Greek Words for Death

An examination of the verbs used in Scripture for “to die” has shown us little if anything about the nature or meaning of death except that death is identical in the case of men and of animals. We learn rather more when we study the nouns meaning “death.” The Hebrew word is *maveth*, obviously from the same root as *muth*. It occurs in all round about a hundred and fifty times and generally has the ordinary meaning of “death.”

From this word *maveth* we learn three important things about the nature of death.

(1). No praise of God is possible in the grave or in death (Isaiah 38:18). How different is this revealed truth from the idea of the holy dead praising God in heaven! It is to be noted that this verse forms part of King Hezekiah’s song of praise to the Lord on his recovery from what might have been a mortal sickness. Some at least of the brethren who still cling to the view of natural immortality reject this verse as being the ignorant view of Hezekiah. But there is no ground or evidence whatever for doing so. How can we possibly suppose it to be uninspired (or, if we prefer, the inspired record of an uninspired remark) when it stands immediately next to the

wonderful verse which precedes and which is one of the gems of Scripture? Dare we follow the destructive critics in picking and choosing in this manner?

(2). From the occurrence of maveth in Psalm 6:5 we find that there is no remembrance of the Lord in death. As long as they are capable of remembering Him saints cannot forget Him. This means that in death they cannot remember and the only reason can be because they are unconscious.

(3). David again in Psalm 13:3 speaks of the sleep of death. This is in exact agreement with what the whole Bible tells us about death, as we shall see and as we should expect.

Thus the result of the departure from a man of the life principle or spirit and its return to God (Eccles:12:7) is a state of sleep in which there is no remembrance and no possibility of praising God.

In several places maveth is used in reference to the second death. Here we will list the passages Ezekiel 18:23, 32, 33:11; Psalm 7:13, 56:13; possibly Psalm 68:20, Proverbs 8:36, 11:19, 12:28, 13:14, 14:12, 27, 16:25, 18:21, 21:6, 24:11.

Maveth Used Figuratively

There are five instances in which maveth is used in a figurative sense.....(1). Thus death (maveth) can be put for a deadly plague (Exodus 10:17).....(2). We may perhaps see in Deuteronomy 30:15, 19 an application of maveth to the nation of Israel as a whole, just as we have seen in the case of muth...(3). In 2 Samuel 19:28 “dead men” is in Hebrew “men of death” (maveth). It means “worthy to die,” but the meaning of maveth is not affected. (4). In 2 Kings 2:21 “death” (maveth) seems to be put for the bitterness of the waters unless it be used quite literally for the result of drinking them. (5). In 2 Kings 4:40 “death” is used for “deadly poison”.....

Greek Thanatos in the New Testament

The word thanatos can be traced in the Greek language as far back as the Homeric poems. Its meaning is quite simple, and is identical with that of English “death.” In the New Testament except for three instances of a different Greek word with which we need not be concerned (Matthew 2:15; Acts 8:1, 22:20) “death” is always the rendering of thanatos. The word occurs between seventy and eighty times and bears generally the literal simple meaning.

The word is used about twenty-seven times either solely of the second death or to include it with the death of which we now have experience in a general reference to death as being the result of sin. The passages are Matt. 4:16 and Luke 1:79, both in quotations from the OT; John 8:51; James 1:15, 5:20; 1 John 5:16 (three times), 17; Rom. 1:32, 6:16, 21, 7:5, 10, 13 (twice); Rom. 8:2, 2 Cor. 3:7, 7:10; Rev. 2:11, 20:6,14, 21:8. The word is also used in a figurative sense. (1). It is used for spiritual death which is clearly spoken of in Ephesians 2:1 and defined in 1 Corinthians 2:14. This spiritual death is insensitivity to spiritual things. Those thus dead have no regenerate life and their death is spoken of from the point of view of regenerate life....(2). The

word is used in a figurative sense in Romans 6:4 for being dead to sin. The apostle says that we are buried by baptism into death. This death, as the previous verse shows, is really the literal death of Christ. The word *thamatos* here refers to the effects of Christ's death upon the believers. (3). The word is used in 2 Corinthians 11:23 for nearness to death or risk of death....

Before we leave our study of this word it is important that we notice John 11:11-13, where the Lord Jesus quite definitely describes death as sleep. There are differences between sleep and death, but the analogy must completely break down if death is not a state of un-consciousness. This leads directly on to our next paragraph.

Death as Sleep

Three words in the Old Testament meaning sleep and two Greek words in the New are used to describe death. In Hebrew we have *shachav* used in the frequently occurring expression, so-and-so "slept with his fathers." *Shachav* really means "to lie down" but in a quotation in Acts 13:36 it is rendered by the Greek word *koimasthai*, which means "to sleep." Thus the kings and others who died are said to sleep with their fathers. If their spirits were alive in another world, could this possibly be regularly said without a hint that the real person was not sleeping at all?

Next we have the Hebrew word *yashen*. This occurs as a verb in Jeremiah 51:39, 57 and in Psalm 13:3, a text to which we have already called attention...and as an adjective in the well-known verse Daniel 12:2:"Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake." This is a reference to the resurrection at the last great day and the prophet describes the condition of the dead before their resurrection consistently with the rest of Scripture. They are sleeping in the dust of the earth.

Lastly we have the Hebrew *shenah*. This is a noun and occurs with *yashen* in Jeremiah 51:39, 57. We also find it in Psalm 76:5, "the stout-hearted are spoiled, they have slept their sleep." This sleep can clearly be nothing but death. The word occurs again in Psalm 90:5, "thou carriest them away as with a flood; they are as a sleep." This is the sleep of death, the figure being reinforced in the following verse by the figure of the grass being cut down and withered.

The final occurrence of *shenah* is in the very important passage Job 14:10-15 with special reference to verse 12. We cannot cavil at verses as being uninspired as they are the words of Job, not of any of the three friends (42:7). Here we read that when man dies he wastes away, or according to the margin is weakened or cut off. When spirit leaves him, "where is he?" that is, he is no longer in being. This is Man's state in death. It would be final were it not for the resurrection both of the just and of the unjust, which makes it temporary and turns death into a sleep. We continue to read in verse 11 following that man lies in the grave without rising (as he does morning by morning in the case of natural sleep). The dead do not awake and from sleep till the end of the world. Job then asks in his anguish to die and lie in the grave. He asks if a man will live again after death and he answers yes. He waits in the grave all the time that God appoints till his change comes. This is the change described in 1 Cor. 15:51. Then, he says, God will call and His sleeping servant will hear His voice, answer and come forth in resurrection (John 5:28). Now is it reasonable, is it possible, that this detailed description of man in death would be given us here if it only concerned the lower and unimportant part of him and if dying

introduced Job and every godly man immediately into the presence of the Lord in heaven or paradise where he could be perfectly satisfied without his body in eternal glory? If such is the case, what is the purpose of the resurrection at all, at the very least what is the purpose of the emphasis on it throughout the Bible? No hint is given in this passage in Job or anywhere else in Scripture that the dead are alive in an invisible world. It is a matter of great thankfulness that most evangelicals who believe that they are have been able to resist successfully the errors that arise from such a belief, yet there is no doubt that it makes easier the road to prayers for the dead, to spiritualism, to Mariolatry and saint worship and to purgatory.

Death as Sleep in the New Testament

Death is described as sleep in the New Testament more frequently than in the Old. The reason may be that resurrection, which turns death into sleep, is more closely in view.

There are two Greek words meaning “sleep” used in the New Testament. The one that is usually employed for the sleep of death is koimasthai. From it derives the Greek noun koimeeteerion from which comes eventually from our word cemetery, and incidentally it is interesting that the root of koimasthai is also the root of our word “home.” So the home and the cemetery are the same thing! Both mean sleeping-place.

Koimasthai is used in the New Testament fourteen times of death. The references are:(1). Matthew 27:52, “Many bodies of the saints which slept arose.” Attempts have been made to connect the words “which slept” with the bodies instead of with the saints, but the original Greek absolutely forbids this. The word is in the genitive case agreeing with “saints,” not in the nominative to agree with “bodies.” In fact the original says “bodies of the sleeping saints.” (2). John 11:11, “Our friend Lazarus sleepeth.” These are the Lord’s own words. (3). Acts 7:60, “When he had said this, he fell asleep.” If Stephen’s martyrdom had taken place today and been described in one of the evangelical periodicals, these words would never have been written. Instead we should have read, “When he had said this, he was called “home,” or possibly, “he entered the presence of his Lord.” The expression “called home,” which is a favourite euphemism for death today, never occurs in the Bible. Is it not better and easier and safer and happier to believe God’s Word exactly as it stands and thus to believe that Stephen “fell asleep”? (4). Acts 13:36, “For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep.” This is a quotation from 1 Kings 2:10, where Hebrew shachav is used. It confirms the apostle Peter’s words in Acts 2:34 that “David is not yet ascended into the heavens.” (5). Peter 3:4, “Since the fathers fell asleep.” (6) 1 Corinthians 7:39, “the wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will.” The word translated “be dead” is koimeethee, “be asleep.” Thus sleep is here contrasted with life. (7) 1 Corinthians 11:30, “many sleep.” The probable meaning of sleep here is death. (8) 1 Corinthians 15:6, “but some are fallen asleep.” Some of those to whom the Lord had appeared had died. (9) 1 Corinthians 15:18, “then (that is, in that case) they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished”...(10) 1 Corinthians 15:20, “but now is Christ risen from the dead, the firstfruits of them that slept.” Thus Christ Himself slept during His three days in the grave, as do the great majority of His people. (A few will be alive at His coming.) (11) 1 Corinthians 15:51, “we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed.” Some believers will be alive at the Lord’s coming, but all, living and dead, will be changed in a moment (compare Job 14:14). (12). 1

Thessalonians 4:13, “concerning them which are asleep,” that is, about Christians who have died. (13) 1 Thessalonians 4:14, “so also them which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.” The more accurate meaning is that God on the great day of resurrection will bring the sleeping saints from the grave through Jesus (that is, as a result of the work of Jesus) with Him (that is, with Jesus, just as He brought Jesus). (14) 1 Thessalonians 4:15, “we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.” To prevent here means anticipate. Those who are asleep are called the dead in the next verse.

Greek *Katheudein* with Reference to Death

The second New Testament Greek word, the one more often used for ordinary sleep, is *katheudein*. It is used for death certainly four times and possibly five. It is used by the Lord of Jarius’ daughter in the three parallel passages in the Gospels, Matthew 9:24; Mark 5:39; and Luke 8:52. In each case the Lord is recorded as saying that she was not dead but asleep. She was in fact quite dead. What He meant was that, since He was going in a moment to raise her to life, her death, which would have been permanent, was turned into a temporary sleep. This illustrates one of the reasons why believers who have died referred to in the New Testament as sleeping.

In Ephesians 5:14 we find sleep and death as parallel conceptions: “awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead.” It makes no difference that the passage does not refer to literal death.

Finally in 1 Thessalonians 5:10 we read, “Our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.” This probably refers to being alive or dead at the time of His coming.....

The Rephaim

We have now examined in both languages the words “to die” and “death.” These two words include among their forms the participle or adjective meaning “dead.” No occurrence of these words gives any hint that death means anything but the simple deprivation of life.

There is however a difficult Hebrew word, sometimes translated “dead,” which needs examination. This word is *rephaim*. It occurs several times as a proper name or with the translation “giants,” and refers to a race of the past, thought of as extinct. It was this that probably led on to the meaning “dead.”

The *Rephaim* have been often said to have been thought of as shades or ghosts rather in the Homeric sense. Not only does such an idea never occur elsewhere in Scripture, but we have already collected more than sufficient evidence to show that the Scriptures consistently contradict and deny it. The idea may well have arisen from the poetic figure in which the word occurs in Isaiah 14:9, a passage with which we shall deal when we come to study the word *sh’ol*. It may be that some among ancient Israel and Judah believed that the *Rephaim* were shades, but such a false belief would never be connected with the Scripture of truth, at least without a clear warning.

In Isaiah 14:9 and 26:14 the word refers to dead kings or lords of the past. In Isaiah 26:19, where the Rephaim appear at the end of the verse (translated “dead”), they appear to be in contrast to the blessed dead. The reference is best taken to the resurrection of the wicked. In Psalm 88:10 we have “Shall the rephaim arise and praise thee?” Here the rephaim are parallel to muth, also translated dead” in the first part of the verse. In Proverbs 2:18, 9:18; and 21:16 the word seems to be put for the dead in general. Lastly in Job 26:5, whatever be the meaning of the verb, which is very difficult, the word connects with sh’ol and destruction in verse 6. There is nothing in any of the occurrences that obliges us to put the meaning “shades” upon the word, and it seems unreasonable to force it upon it in face of the combined and consistent testimony of the rest of Scripture.

The Death of Sisera

The Hebrew verb shadad in the passive participle of the Kal mood is once translated “dead” in Judges 5:27. The meaning of the verb is “spoil” or “rob,” and it is occasionally translated “destroy.” The meaning seems to be that Sisera was robbed of his life.

Nekros in the New Testament

The Greek word nekros meant originally a corpse and later came to be used as an adjective meaning “dead.” It is an original word in the Greek language stemming from a root having the general meaning of “death,” which appears in the Slavonic and Aryan languages and also in Latin. It is known in Greek literature since the Homeric poems and is used in the plural to mean “the dead” just as we speak in English of the living and the dead. In Homer the dead (hoi nekroi) are thought of as existing in an underworld as ghosts, but such an idea never occurs in the Bible.

The word nekros meaning “dead” occurs over one hundred and twenty times in the New Testament often in the phrase “raised (rise, etc.) from the dead.” The word is used figuratively of the prodigal son in Luke 15:24, 32, where Arndt & Gingrich’s lexicon explains it as either “thought to be dead” or “morally dead.” It would be quite unsafe and unreasonable to conclude from this figurative use that death is consistent in a literal sense with some sort of life. The point of the figure lies in the literal meaning of the word. The same is true of the figures in Romans 6:11; Eph. 2:1, 5; Col. 2:13; Matt. 8:22; Luke 9:60. We also find dead works (Hebrews 6:1, 9:14), a dead church (Revelation 3:1), dead faith (James 2:26), dead sin (Romans 7:8) and the dead body of the believer as opposed to his living spirit (Romans 8:10). This last means that the believer’s body still has the old Adamic nature (but his spirit is regenerate and born of God - his new spirit of course. None of these figurative uses affects our argument. They reinforce the literal meaning of the word as it occurs in well over a hundred further instances. We may compare the verb nekro in Colossians 3:5; Hebrews 11:12 and Romans 4:19 and the noun nekrosis in 2 Corinthians 4:10, where the reference, as Arndt & Gingrich again explain, is to “the constant danger of death in which the apostle lives.”

The Grave

The last division of this section is perhaps the most important of all. When the Scriptures speak of death they often couple it with the grave. The significant original words are sh'ol in Hebrew and haidees in Greek. As they occur in the Bible they correspond exactly in meaning. Haidees was the word used in Greek mythology for the underworld or abode of the dead and it is quite likely as a result of this that so many have sought to retain this meaning for it in the New Testament and to transfer the meaning back to Hebrew sh'ol. The Greek word however in the New Testament is as always governed by the meaning of the word in Hebrew in the Old. Both mean in fact the abode of the dead, but not at all in the sense of heathen mythology. Hebrew sh'ol occurs sixty-five times in the Old Testament. It is translated "grave" thirty-one times in the text and twice in the margin, three times and "hell" thirty-one times. "Grave" and "hell" are inconsistent translations and this fact shows that the translators were in some confusion over the meaning of the word. In the New Testament haidees occurs eleven times, ten times translated "hell" with "grave" once in the margin and "grave" once with "hell" in the margin. The translation "hell" is confusing, especially in the New Testament. There is there a competing word geenna occurring eight times, seven times in the Gospels and once in the Epistle of James. It is invariably translated "hell" and rightly so, as it refers to the lake of fire, the place of the doom of the lost...Here we shall look carefully at the occurrences of sh'ol and haidees and shall discover that their true meaning is "the grave," where the dead lie buried in the earth in deep unconsciousness until the day of resurrection.

The two words occur about forty-one times meaning "the grave" without any special emphasis. Thus we have Jacob saying that he would join his son in the grave (Gen. 37:35). Again he says that if Benjamin came to any harm it would bring him down to the grave (Gen. 42:38). The words of Jacob are repeated by Judah to Joseph (Gen. 44:29, 31). In 1 Kings 2:6 and 9 David instructs his son Solomon not to let Joab go down to the grave in peace and to bring Shimei down to it with blood.

In Isaiah 5:14 the prophet speaks poetically of sh'ol (hell) enlarging itself and the people of the Lord going down into it. In Isaiah 14:11 the pomp of the king of Babylon is brought down to the grave (sh'ol), and in verse 15 the king himself is brought down to it. The eight occurrences that we have had hitherto do not tell us whether we are to think of sh'ol as the grave or an underworld of ghosts, but here in the context of Isaiah 14:15 we have "the sides of the pit," the kings lying in glory in their own tombs (ver:18), "thy grave" and "the stones of the pit," "a carcass" (ver:19), "burial" (ver:20). All this points strongly to "the grave" where the dead lie buried as the meaning of sh'ol. In Isaiah 28:15, 18 we find death and hell (sh'ol) as parallels. Our study of the words muth and maveth earlier in this section have shown us that death means the cessation of life, and unconscious sleep without remembrance and without the possibility of praising God. The parallelism here thus again tends to "the grave" as the meaning of sh'ol. In Isaiah 38:10 king Hezekiah says that he had thought that in his illness he would go to the gates of the grave (sh'ol). By itself this reference is inconclusive as to the meaning of sh'ol, but its connection with verse 18, we shall look at later, brings out the meaning well.

In Ezekiel 31:15, 16 and 17 there are three references to the king of Assyria, and the great kings with him going down to sh'ol. In verse 15 it is called "the grave" and in verses 16 and 17 "hell"

and described as “the nether parts of the earth.” This means underneath the earth, where the dead lie buried. Few Bible-believing Christians will believe, as the heathen did, that there is a world of spirits or shades in “the nether parts of the earth.” Ezekiel 32:27 is a text that shows conclusively that sh’ol is the grave where the dead lie buried. It speaks of those who have gone down to hell (sh’ol) “with their weapons of war and they had laid their swords under their heads.” They are said to be lying there. These are the great warriors and generals buried with their weapons.

The enormous capacity of sh’ol and death to devour men is mentioned by the prophet Habakkuk (2:5). The passage couples sh’ol with death, but in isolation throws no light on the question of the nature of sh’ol.

There is an important passage in Psalm 49:14. The psalmist is encouraging the godly not to be afraid or envious of the wicked. Twice he says that Man’s fall has made him like the beasts that perish. Twice in verse 14 he mentions the grave (sh’ol). He says that men are laid in it like sheep. So sheep lie in sh’ol. This is proof positive that it cannot be a world of shades or spirits. There in the grave Man’s beauty consumes away, but on the resurrection morning the righteous will have dominion over the wicked. There is another reference in verse 15 which we shall deal with shortly. Another proof of the meaning of sh’ol is found in Psalm 88:3, where the psalmist Heman says that his life draws nigh to the grave (sh’ol). In verse 5 he compares himself to the slain that lie in the grave. The word here is kever meaning a tomb. To be in sh’ol is thus to be buried in a tomb. The “pit” in verse 4 is Hebrew bor which we shall look at shortly. The psalmist Ethan in Psalm 89:48 tells us that no man can prevent himself dying nor can he deliver his soul from sh’ol. In Psalm 141:7 David says “Our bones are scattered at the grave’s mouth.” The grave here is sh’ol. It normally receives bones (not ghosts), but here they lie unburied.

There are seven references in the book of Proverbs 1:12, 5:5, 7:27, 15:11, 23:14, 27:20, 30:16. The only one that needs comment is 15:11. There we are told that sh’ol is before the Lord. If we are inclined to conclude from this fact that sh’ol is a place of departed spirits all of whom are known to the Lord, we are prevented from doing so by the addition to sh’ol of the word “destruction.” The Lord knows all the living and all the dead as well. All will appear one day before His throne of judgment.

In the book of Job there are six references, most of which are important. In Job 7:9 Job tells us, “As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away; so he that goeth down to the grave (sh’ol) shall come up no more.” Thus the man that goes down to sh’ol is like a vanishing cloud which disappears into nothing. This does not give the impression of a surviving spirit. Job also says that no one will come up from sh’ol. He does not mean to deny the final resurrection of which he himself elsewhere speaks. He means that the dead will never return to their houses and their old life, as the following verse shows. We have already noticed the important passage Job 14:10-15. There is a reference in it to sh’ol (verse 13). It is a place in which man lies down and sleeps (verse 12). In Job 17:13 Job again refers to sh’ol. It is a place of darkness, corruption and the worm (ver:14). It is again mentioned in Job 17:16 and translated “the pit.” There in sh’ol men rest together in the dust. These references are proof positive that sh’ol means the grave. “Departed spirits” do not rest in the dust. In Job 21:13 there is what we might call a neutral reference. In isolation sh’ol might here be a lower world of ghosts or shades. We have however noted several passages in which sh’ol could not have this meaning, but must mean the grave.

This shows how hasty conclusions from isolated texts can lead into error. All that Scripture says on a given subject must be taken together and compared. In Job 26:6 there is a reference which is practically identical with that in Proverbs 15:11. In Song of Solomon 8:6 Solomon tells us that “love is strong as death; jealousy is cruel as the grave.” For “cruel” the Hebrew word means “hard.” The king means that the grave goes on obstinately receiving men.

When we come to the New Testament there are three references the Apocalypse which we should notice here. In Revelation 6:8 we have death and haidees mentioned together, the reference probably being to Hosea 13:14. A very interesting and informative reference in Revelation 20:13. The verse is speaking of the general resurrection and makes a significant distinction between the dead in the sea, in death and in haidees. Now if haidees were a world of “departed spirits” or shades, all the dead would be there, whatever the circumstances of their death, but we see from this verse that this is not so.

It easy to understand how the dead can be in the sea, but what is the difference between death and haidees? It is quite easy to understand if we remember that, as so many occurrences of sh’ol have shown, sh’ol (haidees) is the grave where the dead lie buried. Obviously it is different from the sea. Death therefore, in this verse the abode or condition of those dead neither in the sea nor buried in the grave, must refer to those who are burnt, blown to bits or eaten by wild beasts etc. The purpose of this threefold distinction in this verse is to emphasize that ALL the dead, whatever their condition or position, will rise in the resurrection on the day of judgment. In the next verse (Revelation 20:14) we find death and haidees cast into the lake of fire. This means that at the end of the world they are consigned to final and utter destruction and will never appear or function again.

Rest in the Grave

Before we go on to look at certain uses of sh’ol and haidees which show emphases there are three points which it would be well to consider. We sometimes hear the phrase spoken of someone who has “passed to his rest.” This phrase is unscriptural if we take it to mean rest in heaven or paradise, but it is quite Scriptural if take it to mean in the grave. The word “rest” is used of the grave in Job 3:17, 18. In that chapter (verses 11-19) Job asks why he did not die at birth. Had he done so, he would have lain still, been quiet, slept and been at rest (ver:13). There is no world of living ghosts here.

He would have been as unconscious as an unformed fetus born untimely (ver:16). There in death or in sh’ol “the wicked cease from troubling; and there the weary be at rest” (ver:17). “There the prisoners rest together; they hear not the voice of the oppressor.” So that death and the grave can come as a relief to sufferers such as Job was. How could these inspired words of Job be true if the spirits of the ungodly are suffering in hell after their death?

All Men Together in the Grave

It is important to notice that in no reference to sh’ol is any distinction made between the godly and the ungodly. Sometimes the one are spoken of and sometimes the other. All are together in the grave. Efforts to overcome what is a difficulty to those who believe in survival have resulted

in such theories as that of two divisions in sh'ol or haidees. Even paradise has been placed in haidees. For such theories there is no biblical foundation whatever. But if we understand that haidees is the grave, all difficulty vanishes. There is no distinction between the godly and ungodly in death. The great difference comes in resurrection.

The Ancient Creeds

All who know the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed will realize that they follow Scripture in omitting reference to survival after death and emphasising "the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting" and "the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come." Various theories have been built on the statement in the Apostles' Creed of Christ that "He descended into hell," which is commonly connected with the idea of the survival of His soul or spirit while His body lay in the tomb. In fact this statement was originally an alternative to the statement that He was buried. The latter was the usual expression. The former appeared in the Creed as used in a few churches. When the superstitious ages began to set in, the descent into hell was completely misunderstood and the statement was combined with that of the burial. The fact that it originally meant the same thing is confirmed by its absence from the Nicene Creed, the two Creeds being parallel in their phraseology.

In the same way the phrase "the communion of saints" is sometimes taken to imply an active fellowship between the church on earth and the "departed" in heaven. Again the absence of this phrase or its equivalent in the Nicene Creed shows that it is a part of the preceding phrase. It is simply a definition of "the holy catholic church."

Passing Alive Into Sh'ol

There are two passages in Scripture which speak of men going down quick, that is, alive, into sh'ol. They are (1). Numbers 16:30-34. Moses declares that the proof that Korah, Dathan and Abiram had provoked the Lord would be their descent alive into sh'ol. In the sense in which many understand sh'ol, a land of living spirits, everyone descends alive into it. But it is obvious from this passage that to do so is a strange and exceptional thing. Immediately the ground split beneath them and swallowed them up and they went down alive into sh'ol (translated "the pit") and the earth closed over them. This shows conclusively that sh'ol is the grave where the bodies of the dead lie buried under the earth. (2). Another passage is to be found in Psalm 55:15, where David prays that his enemies may go down alive into sh'ol

The Depth of Sh'ol

There are nine passages in which the DEPTH of sh'ol is emphasised. It is down below us. Few would believe today that there is a world of living ghosts below the surface of the earth, but it is exactly there that the dead lie buried. Some of these passages contrast the depth of sh'ol with the height of heaven (or the sky, there being no distinction between the two in the language of the Bible).....

Sh'ol and the Resurrection

There are twelve passages in which sh'ol and haidees appear in special connection with resurrection. We shall be dealing with these in detail in our next section and will only touch on them briefly here.

(1):1 Samuel 2:6: Here Hannah in inspired language tells us that the Lord brings men down to sh'ol and brings them up in resurrection.

(2. and 3). Hosea 13:14 (twice). This is the prophet's great prediction of victory in resurrection over the grave.

(4). Psalm 16:10. This is David's prediction of the resurrection of Christ. We discussed this when dealing with the soul (Hebrew nephesh).

(5). Psalm 30:3. This is not a direct reference to resurrection, but to prevention from descending into the grave, as the second part of the verse shows.

(6). Psalm 49:15. This is a prediction of resurrection.

(7). Psalm 86:13. The meaning is the same as that of No. 5.

(8). Matthew 16:18. This is the saying of the Lord Jesus that the gates of "hell" shall not prevail His church. Very many believe this to be a declaration that Satan will never overcome the church. But "hell" is never used in sense for the devil in Scripture. The word is "haidees" meaning "the grave" and the saying is a promise of resurrection for every true believer.

(9 and 10). Acts 2:27, 31. Here we have the apostle Peter's quotation from the sixteenth Psalm, which is a prophecy of the resurrection of Christ. We dealt with the passage when we were studying the Hebrew word nephesh, when we found that "my soul" means "me."

Haidees here as elsewhere means "the grave" where the Lord Jesus was lying.

(11). 1 Corinthians 15:55. It is customary now for Greek editors to substitute thanate meaning "death" in this passage for haidees meaning "the grave," but judgment on literary grounds might well appear to favour the latter. The passage is adapted by the apostle from Hosea 13:14. If haidees is the right reading, it means "the grave," as it is defeated by the resurrection of the righteous.

No one doubts the meaning in this case, but perhaps few realize that the Greek word is the same as is often confusedly translated "hell."

(12). Revelation 1:18. Here we find the risen Christ declaring, "I have the keys of death and of hell." "Hell" here is haidees, meaning "the grave." There are no keys of hell, if we confine the meaning, as we should do, to the lake of fire, the place of destruction of the lost. No one will

ever come out of it. The Lord's words here mean that He will open the doors of death and the grave and bring His people out of them in a glorious resurrection.

The Sorrows of Sh'ol

There are two passages which speak of the sorrows or pains of sh'ol. These are to be found in 2 Samuel 22:6 and Psalm 18:5, two recensions of the same psalm of David, where speaking in the name of Christ he says, "The sorrows of hell (sh'ol) compassed me about: the snares of death prevented me." Misled by the translation "hell" and by the idea of hell as a place of eternal torment, many have supposed that the psalmist was speaking of the torments of hell. However, had he experienced them, he would not have been alive in this world to say so. These sorrows and pains are those that accompany dying. They came in acute measure to the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross. The same is true of verse 3 of the anonymous Psalm 116: "the sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me."

Figurative Language About Sh'ol

There are three passages in Scripture in which figurative, allegorical or poetic language is used about sh'ol and one in which the word itself is used in a figurative though easily intelligible sense. As we approach these passages, we must bear in mind the consistent and unmistakable language of Scripture about sh'ol, which describes it as the grave where the dead lie buried in the dust in profound and unconscious sleep.

Our first passage is Isaiah 14:9-20. The prophet is addressing the great king of Babylon (ver. 4). When the king comes down to the grave, the kings and leaders are pictured as rising from their thrones on which they were seated in the grave and taunting him with his weakness. The impossibility of this passage being literal is proved by the fact that, if the kings were "departed spirits" in sh'ol, the last thing that they would be doing would be sitting upon thrones. In verse 11 the actual state of the great king in the grave is described: "the worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee." Again in verses 18 and 20 we read that all the kings lie in magnificent tombs and are buried. This is the real state of things. Of the king of Babylon it is said (ver. 19, 20) that he is cast out of his grave like a carcass trodden under foot and will not be joined with the rest in burial. This language does not fit "departed spirits," but it fits the buried dead.

Similarly in Ezekiel 32:21 we find "the strong among the mighty" speaking to Pharaoh "out of the midst of hell" (sh'ol, the grave). In verse 31 the prophet says that when Pharaoh sees them there he is comforted over his own fate. This means that the sight and memory of great kings of bygone days dead and buried bring a message to Pharaoh and he is less troubled when he approaches defeat and death at the thought of them.

Jonah 2:2 needs to be mentioned at this point. Jonah called to the Lord when he was inside the fish. He says, "out of the belly of hell (sh'ol) cried I." He here confuses intentionally in a poetic phrase the grave in which men are normally buried and the inside of the fish in which he himself was at the time buried. He emphasises his burial and his helplessness by comparing his position to one buried in the grave. He was not actually in sh'ol, but he was in a place which in many

respects was like it. The phrase also carries the meaning that the place in which he was was as terrible as sh'ol.....

The Silence of the Grave

There are four passages which speak of the absence of praise, the silence and the lack of activity in sh'ol. The first is Hezekiah's utterance in his beautiful inspired song of thanksgiving (Isaiah 38:18). We have already noticed this passage in which death is spoken of as well as sh'ol. Hezekiah says that the grave (sh'ol) cannot praise the Lord. In Psalm 6:5 David says the same thing: "in the grave (sh'ol) who shall give thee thanks?" Here too sh'ol is joined with "death" and we have already noticed the passage.

The third passage shows us sh'ol as a place of silence: "Let the wicked be ashamed, and let them be silent in the grave (sh'ol)" (Psalm 31:17). Finally we find absence of activity and consciousness in the grave (sh'ol): "there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest" (Ecclesiastes 9:10).

Sh'ol Used for Second Death

There are three passages in the Old Testament where it is possible that the word sh'ol is used for the second death. There is no Hebrew word in the Old Testament corresponding to the New Testament geenna meaning "hell," the place of the destruction of the lost, so that it is possible that sh'ol could be used to express it, although we know from Revelation 20:14 that haidees (sh'ol) will itself be destroyed in the lake of fire. The passages are Psalm 9:17, 31:17; Job 24:19.....

The Pit

In a few instances the Hebrew word bor translated "the pit" is used as the equivalent of sh'ol. The passages are Isaiah 14:15, 19, 38:18; Ezekiel 26:20 (twice); 31:14, 16, 32:18, 23, 24, 25, 29, 30; Zechariah 9:11; Psalm 28:1, 30:3, 88:4, 143:7; Proverbs 1:12, 28:17. The only two passages that need comment are Zechariah 9:11 and Proverbs 1:12. In the former the pit without water is sh'ol, the grave. The prisoners are the godly dead, whose Lord ("thy prisoners") has the keys of the grave (Rev. 1:18). With these keys He opens the pit and sends out the prisoners as a result of His blood-shedding by which He made a covenant with them (Matthew 26:28). In Proverbs 1:12 the thief compares the damage that he intends to do to his victims to their consumption by sh'ol, which he identifies with the pit.

The pit of destruction in Psalm 55:23 and the pit in Psalm 69:15 are the same thing, but the Hebrew word here is b'er, which means literally a well, not bor, a water cistern, or pit.

Conclusion

Our study of the Hebrew words for "death" and "the grave" with their Greek New Testament equivalents and their usage has shown us that men lie asleep in death till they are raised at the

last day and that the grave (sh'ol, haidees) is a place of darkness and silence where there is no activity, no remembrance of God and no praise of Him..... We can but conclude that natural immortality, what is called "the immortality of the soul," does not exist, and we are prepared to go on to our third section and examine the glorious victory over death by which God brings His children home to Him in eternal life. Death thus emerges as the deprivation of life, the "enemy" of mankind (1 Corinthians 15:26), the first installment of the penalty of Sin, a deprivation that would have been permanent and final, as it is in the case of the beasts, were it not turned into sleep by the assured hope of resurrection. Only once in the Old Testament do we find poor suffering Job speaking of the grave as a relief, where "the wicked cease from troubling" and "the weary be at rest" and his utterance is matched by that of the Holy Spirit in Revelation 14:13, telling us that the blessed dead rest from their labours. This rest is not in a life of activity in glory, but temporarily in the grave.

We may strengthen this conclusion by referring to the following Hebrew and Greek words used on occasion to describe death. We need not burden the reader with full quotations, but urge all those who are interested or who may still doubt our conclusions to look up the occurrences of the words in a concordance:

- (1). shaghat, translated. variously "pit," "corruption," "ditch," "destruction," "grave" and used eight times directly of death.
- (2). shoah, translated "desolation," "storm," "wasteness," "destruction," "to destroy," "desolate" and referring once directly to death in Psalm 63:9.
- (3). sho, translated "destructions" and referring to death in Psalm 35:17.
- (4) mashghith, translated "destroy," "corruption," "trap," "destroying," "utterly" (marg. "to destruction"), "destruction" and referring several times to death.
- (5). ed, translated "calamity" and "destruction."
- (6). avaddon, translated "destruction," used with reference to death and sh'ol.
- (7). avaddoh, translated "destruction" and connected with sh'ol in Proverbs 27:20.
- (8). apoleia, the Greek word meaning "destruction," used once of death in Acts 25:16, though the reading is doubtful.
- (9). olethros, a second Greek word meaning "destruction" used once with the probable reference to physical death in 1 Corinthians 5:5.

The usage of the following verbs will strengthen the case still further:

- (1). avad, meaning "to destroy," "perish," "be lost," used directly of death some thirty-nine times.

(2). gharam, meaning to devote or utterly destroy, used some twenty-three times directly of death.

(3). saphah, meaning to consume, used directly of death seven and perhaps eight times.

(4). shagath, meaning to destroy, and used five times directly of death.

(5). shamad, meaning to destroy and used eighteen times directly of death.

(6). apollumi, the Greek word meaning to destroy, perish or be lost, corresponding to Hebrew avad (see Revelation 9:11), used about twenty-eight times directly of death.

(7). exolothreuo, a strong word meaning to destroy utterly, used of death in Acts 3:23 in quotation from Leviticus 23:29. In all the occurrences of these words whether in the Old Testament or the New there is no hint that death as we know it means anything but destruction in the sense in which we speak of an animal being destroyed.....

RESURRECTION

We have sought in our first two sections to look as thoroughly as possible into the teaching of Scripture on the nature of man and the meaning of death. We found that what the Bible says on both these great subjects consistently agrees that the dead are lying in their graves in a sleep of profound unconsciousness, in which they neither know nor remember anything of what happens in the world.

In this section we study the joyful teaching of God's victory over death, first in the Lord Jesus Himself, and then in all His believing people. How are these promises fulfilled? The teaching of the Bible on this matter is clear, definite and unmistakeable. It has been rejected and despised by destructive critics and unconverted theologians, but never by any Bible believer however tenaciously he may cling to the idea of natural immortality, because no one can fail to see the teaching in the Bible.

Revelation or Inference?

Those believers who hold to natural immortality add to it the doctrine of resurrection and accept both. On this point we will ask three questions. First, how is it that the doctrine of resurrection is taught clearly and definitely in Scripture, exactly as we should expect in the case of so momentous a theme, while the doctrine of survival or immortality of the "soul" is not once taught definitely? This theme is just as great and momentous. There are a few passages from which, if they are taken in isolation (but only so), such a doctrine can be inferred, but even assuming that such an inference could stand up against the consistent testimony of Scripture as a whole, is it reasonable, is it conceivable that such a tremendous truth about the nature of man and the real meaning of death should be left to be understood by us by inference? We are left to fall back on the writer mentioned on page 28, who stated, "The Bible does not anywhere state the immortality of the soul, it assumes it." But surely all readers will agree that it is the Word of God alone which is basic and axiomatic.

Relationship of Survival and Resurrection

Our second question is this. If the believer at death is released from the "burden" of his body, is "called home," enters immediately the presence of his Lord and is reunited with his loved ones, enjoying complete satisfaction and spiritual bliss, what is the need or purpose of resurrection? This very question was once asked of the writer by a thoughtful Christian lady. If a human being can live in perfect happiness without his body and exercise all the functions of a full human life, why should he be burdened again with his body? An answer of course can be given: "Because the whole man has been redeemed." This is a theoretical answer which does not really touch the question, but as we sought to show in our first section the whole man cannot exist apart from his body. This question is sometimes met by speaking of "paradise" instead of heaven and assuming incomplete satisfaction until the last day, but evangelical Christians do not generally speak like this.

Those Brought Back to Life

There is a third point that needs to be raised. In the Old Testament there were three restorations of dead persons to life in the days of the prophets Elijah and Elisha. In the Gospels there were three people raised by the Lord Himself and in the period of the Acts there were two raised by the apostles. If these eight persons had been enjoying a life of bliss in glory, was it not greatly to their disadvantage, if not positive cruelty, to bring them back to the weaknesses and troubles of the world? Again, how is it that not so much as a hint is recorded to have been given by any one of them of experiences passed through during the time between death and restoration, which varied from a few minutes in the case of Eutychus to four days in that of Lazarus? We may reasonably believe that, had they enjoyed such experiences, they are likely to have spoken often of them for the rest of their lives. The stories as they stand all give us the impression that these persons awoke from a profound sleep.

Everlasting Life

There runs throughout the Old Testament a recurring note of Messianic blessing to come. In the law and the prophets this is almost wholly national in character. In the Psalms and Wisdom writings it becomes more personal. It is clearly outside our scope to follow through all these promises. The absence of direct references to resurrection in the books of Moses and the smallness of their number in the rest of the Old Testament has been remarked upon, the main reason being the occupation of the Old Testament with the typical temporal blessings of the typical people of God, all of which may be read in the light of the Gospel and turned, as it were, into spiritual realities.

When we reach the New Testament, we find that the kingdom of God and everlasting life, two aspects of the same thing, form the blessings promised to the individual believer through faith in Christ. References to resurrection are many more in number in the New Testament, illustrating the fact that life and immortality have been brought to light through the Gospel (2 Tim:1:10). We will examine these references in both Testaments and we shall find that God's purpose for His people is to give them victory over death by a glorious resurrection to take place instantaneously at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ in glory at the end of the world. At the coming of the Lord, which will be sudden and instantaneous, the generation of living believers will be transformed in an instant by the same change as the dead at the resurrection and be caught up to meet the Lord, abiding with Him henceforth in eternal glory. The resurrection of believers will be on the same model as the resurrection of Christ. God's way of victory is far more glorious and triumphant and far happier for the believer than the way of survival and natural immortality.

Christian people shrink from the idea of their loved ones lying for years in the grave, but they forget that the unconsciousness of the dead is so profound that time does not pass for them. Children will sometimes go to bed early to make the morning come quickly. The moment after the believer draws his last breath and closes his eyes he opens them again in the presence of Jesus in resurrection glory with all his loved ones and the whole loving brotherhood of the church of God around him. He has his resurrection body, his house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. He never has, nor will have, nor can have the experience of a strange kind of life

without a body, separated from his loved ones left on earth, a life which, when all is said and done, can only be described as that of a ghost.

Victory Over Death

We will divide our Scriptural references into four sections:(1) those dealing in a general sense with victory over death, of which there are only two examples; (2) those dealing with resurrection; (3) those dealing with the coming of the Lord; and (4) those dealing with the glory to come.

If we turn first to Isaiah 25:8, we shall find the first promise of victory over death “He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces.” This passage is quoted by the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:54 and its fulfilment explained to take place at the resurrection of believers at the coming of the Lord. The connection with the coming of the Lord is implied in the following verse Isaiah 25:9, when the people of God are found expressing their joy at the presence of God and His salvation.

The second passage that promises victory over death is to be found in Hosea 13:14: “I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death; O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave I will be thy destruction.” The second part of this passage differs widely from the Hebrew in the Greek version and is quoted, again with some alteration, from that version by the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:55, being joined there with Isaiah 25:8. We thus have the direct testimony of the New Testament that victory over death comes at the resurrection of the people of God. If resurrection meant only the restoration to the godly of a part of their being which they could live in perfect happiness without, there would be little point in celebrating it so emphatically as a victory.

Resurrection in the Old Testament

Our first passage is Isaiah 26:19. Here we find six separate points:(a). The resurrection of the people of God. The dead who belong to Him will live, the context showing that by “live” the prophet means “live again,” a usage we so often find in the New Testament. (b). The resurrection is personal and individual. “My dead body” will arise at the same time as all the godly. (c). The godly dead are called upon to awake and sing. When the call comes to them, they are asleep, and they will hear the call just as Lazarus heard the Lord’s loud call to him to come out of his grave (John 11:43). Thus one day we shall hear and shall share in the great song of victory over death raised by millions of voices. Now would this be a natural way to address the dead if they were alive in heaven and had been joining in a song of triumph for centuries? Would they under such circumstances be told to awake? (d). The dead who are called upon to awake are said to be dwelling in the dust, not in heaven or paradise. As we have seen in our second section, this is the consistent teaching of the Bible about death. (e). The dead will arise to life, strength, freshness and youth on the resurrection morning. All this is indicated in the prophet’s words, “thy dew is as the dew of herbs.” (f). There will also be a resurrection of the unjust. When dealing with the rephaim, we saw that this was the probable meaning of the last sentence of this verse. In the immediate context we find the coming of the Lord to judgment connected with the resurrection (ver. 21).

In Ezekiel 37:1-14 we find the then future Gospel revival and restoration described in terms of resurrection. It is scarcely possible to see an account of literal resurrection in verses 1 to 10, though some have done so. In verses 12 to 14 we may well see a continuation of the figurative description of spiritual revival (compare John 5:25), though based on actual resurrection as it will take place at the last day. We may thus perhaps look to these verses to be a promise, prophecy and picture of our resurrection. We find (a) the opening of the graves, (b) our coming up out of our graves, (c) our being brought into the land (Greek gee) of Israel. This land is the new earth (Greek gee) in the eternal glory to come (2 Peter 3:13). (d) We find the spirit of life put within us.

We now come to Psalm 16:10, 11, a passage which the apostle Peter tells us is a prophecy of the resurrection of Christ. We have dealt with this passage before. The soul (Heb. nephesh) of Christ, that is Himself, the whole Man, was in sh'ol, that is, the grave, but He was not left there. After three days He rose again. He was shown the way of life and joy in the presence of God with pleasures at His right hand for evermore.

In Psalm 17:15 we find David's prophecy of resurrection for himself and each individual believer. Here we find (a) that we shall see the Lord's face, (b) that we shall be righteous before Him. Our sanctification will then be as perfect as our justification is now. (c). We shall enjoy satisfaction, (d) we shall awake, that is, from the grave on the day of resurrection, (e) we shall be like the Lord. We have exactly the same message in 1 John 3:2.

In the book of Job there are two important passages dealing with resurrection. The first is found in Job 14:14, 15. We have already had occasion to touch on this passage. Job has spoken of the sleep of death, from which a man does not awake till the end of the world (ver. 12). He asks to be hidden in the grave and remembered at the last (ver. 13). He asks in verse 14 if a man will live again after death. The unexpressed answer is yes. He will wait in the grave (sleeping and unconscious) all the time that God appoints for him, till his change comes. This is the great change to take place at resurrection (1 Cor. 15:51, 52). On that day the Lord will call to each sleeping saint and he will answer (ver. 15), just as Lazarus answered the Lord's call (John 11:43).

The second passage in the book of Job is the well-known Job 19:25-27. Here we find (a) that job has been given by inspiration knowledge of the last day and the resurrection, (b) that the living Redeemer will stand at the last day on earth. The Redeemer is of course the Lord Jesus and Job's reference may well cover both His first and second comings. (c) Job's body will come to corruption in the grave, (d) yet he will see God in a risen and glorified body. There is doubt here about the preposition translated "in." It may be translated "without." In this case it means that Job will see God without the old weaknesses and sinfulness of the natural body which was sown in the grave. The preposition is perhaps best translated "from." In this case it means that Job will see God on the resurrection morning from the very eyes which he possessed at the time of speaking, although they would be transformed and glorified. (e) We are taught the identity of the individual in resurrection with the person that he was before death. The last sentence of verse 27 is better rendered in the margin, "my reins within me are consumed with earnest desire (for that day)."

The last Old Testament passage is to be found in Daniel 12:2, which looks beyond the Gospel age to the resurrection: "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some, to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." A difficulty here lies in the words "many of them," which appear to imply that there will be some among the dead who will not awake at all. This may be the slender foundation of the teaching of the Christadelphians on the subject. The explanation seems to be in the Greek version which translates "some...some" by "houtoi.. ..houtoi," "these...these." This allows us to take the "many" to refer to those who rise to life and the residue to those who rise to shame. The Apocalypse teaches us that there will be an interval between the resurrection of the just and that of the unjust (Rev. 20:5).

The dead here are again described as "them that sleep in the dust of the earth." This cannot refer to bodies apart from the real persons who are their owners. Bodies as such can neither sleep nor wake. Only the whole conscious person, of whom indeed the body is a vital part, can sleep or wake. It would be untrue to describe as sleeping those who had been for centuries enjoying fullness of joy in the Lord's presence.

Verse 3 goes on to describe the blessed and glorious condition of the righteous after their resurrection. Before we leave the Old Testament there are two points that should be noticed. Firstly there are at least two general references to the power of God to make alive as well as to kill (Deut. 32:39; 1 Sam. 2:6), in which we may see an indirect reference to resurrection. We notice that if a man is killed he may be made alive. He is not kept alive at death.

Secondly we may notice that references in Scripture to death, though they may touch only indirectly upon it, tend to give the impression that a person as such descends to the grave and never suggest that he may be alive in some other world. Naturally it is impossible to follow all these out, but we may take an example from 2 Samuel 18:17: "And they took Absalom, and cast him into a great pit in the wood, and laid a very great heap of stones upon him." Most modern Christians would have written, "And they took Absalom's body, and cast it into a great pit in the wood, and laid a very great heap of stones upon it." We would venture to ask our readers when reading their Bibles to keep an eye open for any such references and carefully judge the impression which they obtain from them.

The Resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ

It becomes clear as we read the New Testament that the model for the coming resurrection of the people of God is that of the Lord Jesus Christ, on which it is based and with which its nature is essentially identical.

This is made specially clear by the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 15. Thus if we turn to the Gospels we shall find that His resurrection has the following characteristics: (1). His tomb was empty, so that He rose in the very body that He had taken from Mary (Matt. 28:6). If we have been able to follow the findings to which our study in our previous sections has led us, this is exactly what we should expect. (2). He met with and spoke to His disciples after His resurrection (Matt. 28:9, 10, 16-20). (3). At their first meeting with the Lord after His resurrection His disciples did not always recognise Him (Luke 24:16). (4). He was recognised later by a

characteristic action or word (Luke 24:31). (5). In His resurrection body He was capable of vanishing and appearing suddenly, so that the nature of His body was completely changed and raised to a higher plane (Luke 24:31, 36). This is what the apostle Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15:45, 51. (6). The marks of the nails were still in His hands and feet (Luke 24:39). His body was still composed of flesh and bones (Luke 24:40). (7). He ate food after His resurrection (Luke 24:42,43). (8). The body of the Lord at the moment of resurrection had passed through the graveclothes (John 20:4-9) and presumably through the stone at the grave's mouth. (9). The Lord told Mary Magdalene not to touch Him (John 20:17), although the other women shortly afterwards clung to His feet (Matt. 28:9). The significance of this is not easily understood. (10). The spear wound was still in the side of the Lord as well as the nail prints in His hands and feet (John 20:27).

To sum up the nature of the resurrection appearances of the Lord we find two principles underlying them, (a) identity of Person and (b) change of nature. It is clear from Scripture that our own resurrection will be governed by these as well.

Resurrection in the Gospels

We turn first to the direct teaching of the Lord about the resurrection in answer to the Sadducees who denied it. This is found in parallel passages in the first three Gospels, Matthew 22:23-33; Mark 12:18-27; Luke 20:27-40. The Sadducees invented an artificial objection to resurrection with which they foolishly supposed that they could catch the Lord. They based it on the law to be found in Deuteronomy 25:5, 6, which ordained that a man should marry the widow of his deceased elder brother and raise up children in his brother's name. They told the story of seven brothers, who all married the same woman one after the other in accordance with this law and asked whose wife she would be in the resurrection. The Lord answered this foolish conundrum at once by explaining that there was no sex or marriage in glory after the resurrection. He then went on to tell the Sadducees that the fact of resurrection is contained in the words of the Lord to Moses at the bush, "I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob" (Exod. 3:6). He states that God is not the God of the dead but of the living. It is extraordinary that so many have read into these words the doctrine of survival and natural immortality, drawing the conclusion that if God declares Himself the God of the living and not of the dead therefore Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and the departed people of God must be alive now. It is extraordinary because such a conclusion destroys the whole point of the passage, which is to prove the resurrection.

If the dead are now living in a disembodied state, to say that God is the God of the living and not of the dead does not in any sense prove resurrection.

Instead it removes the necessity of it. The Lord's argument requires that the dead are not now living in a disembodied or any other state. God is the God of the living, not of the dead. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are now dead. Therefore they must come to life in resurrection in order to fulfil and vindicate God's declaration. Thus the resurrection is proved, as the Lord says. The evangelist Luke makes this clearer by adding the sentence, "For all live unto Him." He means that all the dead live (not indeed in an absolute sense), but in the sight of God. They do so

in view of the glorious resurrection in which they are to be restored to life and live for ever with Him in glory.

These passages are among the strongest in Scripture against survival and natural immortality. It is impossible to reconcile them with them.

We now turn to Luke 14:14. Here we find the Lord telling those who entertain the poor and those who cannot entertain them in return that it will be recompensed them in the resurrection of the just. Notice that there is no word about recompense at death. If, as the Lord here distinctly states, recompense does not come till resurrection, it follows that the departed, if they are alive, have not got perfect satisfaction and fulfilment. This is a dangerous and unscriptural doctrine. But difficulty vanishes if we believe the teaching of Scripture that the dead are sleeping in their graves.

Resurrection in the Gospel of John

In the Gospel of John the Lord Himself gives us four wonderful promises of resurrection: (1). Raising the dead and making them alive is the work both of the Father and the Son (John 5:21). (2). All who are in the tombs will hear the voice of the One Who is Son of God and Son of man and will come forth, the good to a resurrection of life and the bad to a resurrection of judgment (John 5:28). Many have deduced from this verse that there will be a simultaneous resurrection of the just and the unjust, but it need not bear this meaning and it seems from Revelation 20:5 that there will be an interval between the resurrection of the one and that of the other. (3). The Lord Jesus will not lose a single one of His believing people, but will raise up each one at the last day, because it is the Father's will that everyone that believes on the Son should have everlasting life and the Lord Jesus will raise him up at the last day (John 6:40). Thus we are taught that the way to everlasting life in the final glory is by resurrection on the last day. (4). We find the marvellous and well-known promise of the Lord Jesus at the grave of Lazarus: "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in Me, though he die, yet shall he live, and whoso liveth and believeth in Me shall never die." (John 11:25, 26). We are here taught that resurrection and everlasting life are the gift of Jesus alone, that the believer will be raised to life even if he dies, as most believers have done already. Here "live" means "live again," as so often in the New Testament.

Thirdly we are taught that every believer living at the last day when Christ returns in glory will never die. We may also give to these words the undoubted meaning that when once a believer is raised he will never die (Luke 20:36).

We notice that not only in making these promises did the Lord never say, "Whoever believes in Me I will take home to be with Me in glory when he dies and will also raise his dead body at the last day," but that no such promise is once found in any verse of the New Testament.

Resurrection in the Acts and General Epistles

From the references to resurrection in the Acts of the Apostles we learn that the apostles preached in Jesus the resurrection from the dead (Acts 4:2) - It is never said that they preached any disembodied life between death and resurrection. At Athens the apostle Paul preached Jesus

and the resurrection (Acts 17-18). Again it is never said that he preached any other hope. In the course of the same address he announces the day of judgment with Christ Jesus as judge, the proof of this being His resurrection (Acts 17:31). Some of his hearers mocked at the resurrection and some postponed a decision (Acts 17:32). If he had preached like some of the great Athenian thinkers the immortality of the soul, they are not so likely to have mocked.

When the apostle was before the council in Jerusalem, he declared that the issue at stake was the resurrection of the dead (Acts 23:6). These references show the extent to which the resurrection was on his heart and mind. Before Felix the Governor the apostle declared that he shared with the Jews the hope that there would be a resurrection both of the just and the unjust (Acts 2, 4-15). The Jews must have known this from Isaiah 26:19. In Acts 26:8 the apostle asks King Agrippa and the other distinguished members of his audience why it should be thought incredible among them that God should raise the dead, and he connects the resurrection with the promise made to the fathers (Acts 26:6, 7).

We may search the book of Acts in vain for any reference whatever to a disembodied survival between death and resurrection.

Resurrection in the Apostle Paul's Epistles

Nowhere in Scripture do we have clearer or more glorious promises of the resurrection than we do in the writings of the apostle Paul. Thus he tells us in Romans 6:5 that, if we have been joined to Christ in His death, we shall be joined to Him in His resurrection also. In Romans 8:11 he tells us that, if the Spirit of the One Who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in us, the One Who raised Jesus from the dead will also make alive our mortal bodies. Both these passages may include a reference to the power of the Holy Spirit enabling us to live in newness of life by sharing the resurrection life of Christ while still in this world.

In Romans 8:23 in the context of the whole creation groaning and travailing together he says that we also groan within ourselves waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body. We may notice that he does not say that we groan within ourselves waiting for the release from our body. What we wait for is the redemption of our body from the grave by resurrection, which will make real and external to us the blessings which we now enjoy in our spirits by faith. But there would be no sense or point in saying this if we are to be "called home" at death to glory and perfect satisfaction.

It is in the epistles to the Corinthians that we find the clearest and most definite teaching about the resurrection in the two great passages 1 Corinthians 15 and 2 Corinthians 4 and 5. Before these there is the statement in 1 Corinthians 6:14: "God hath both raised up the Lord and will also raise up us by His power." Our future resurrection follows from the resurrection of the Lord.

The fifteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians is the great chapter which deals with the resurrection from every aspect, perhaps in answer to a question on the subject which had been asked the apostle by the Corinthian believers. He occupies verses 1 to 8 by affirming the death, burial and resurrection of Christ and lists six post-resurrection appearances of which the last had been to

himself. In these verses we may notice the apostle's statement in verse 6 that some of the five hundred brethren who had seen Him had fallen asleep.

Many Christian writers today would have said, "Some have been called home." We may also notice that the whole of the apostle's teaching in this chapter is based upon the resurrection of Christ and not a word said about, much less based upon, the survival of Christ between death and resurrection. Some have thought that such a survival is taught in 1 Peter 3:18, where Christ is said to have been put to death in flesh but quickened (that is, made alive) in spirit. But if this text had referred to survival it could not have said "made alive." It must have said "kept" or "preserved alive." The "spirit" is the resurrection nature of Christ (1 Corinthians 15:45) and the "spirits" of verse 19 are "the angels that sinned" (2 Pet. 2:4). In verses 9 to 11 the apostle diverges for a little from his main topic to emphasise God's grace to him and his own unworthiness to be entrusted with the Gospel.

He goes on in verses 12 to 19 to ask his readers how it can be possible for them to deny that there is any resurrection. He points out that if this is so then Christ is not risen. The consequences of this are threefold: 1. Faith is vain; 2. Believers are still in their sins; 3. Those fallen asleep in Christ are perished. This last is very important. It means that believers sleeping in their graves would never wake up.

Now the apostle triumphantly declares that Christ is risen. Resurrection and life came by man, just as death came by man. Christ rose as the first-fruits, then will rise those who belong to Him at His coming.

Then comes the end. We cannot tell for certain all that the apostle means by the end, but it will comprise the complete victory of Christ over all His enemies, the last to be destroyed being death. God will then be all in all (verses 20 to 28).

Here the apostle diverges again to introduce arguments for the truth of the resurrection drawn from the experience of his readers and of himself (verses 29-34). If there is no resurrection, he says, there is nothing left in life but to enjoy the present, and he gives a solemn warning against sin and ignorance.

From verses 35 onwards he works up to his grand climax at the end of the chapter. Dealing with the question of the method of resurrection he compares death and resurrection to the sowing of seed in the ground and the appearance of the grain when it comes up. The one is utterly unlike the other, yet an identity runs through them. The bodies of those who rise differ as the various earthly creatures differ and as the heavenly bodies differ. The body is sown in weakness, but raised in power. It is sown a natural (Greek *psychikon*) body, it is raised a spiritual body. This agrees with the fact that the first man Adam was made a living soul (Greek *psychee*) and the last Adam, Christ Jesus, was made a life-giving spirit (Greek *pneuma*). As we have borne the image of the earthly, so shall we bear the image of the heavenly.

The apostle goes on in verse 50 solemnly to declare that flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. He continues, "Behold, I shew you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump. For the trumpet

shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed". Dead and living will be changed instantaneously and glorified at the coming of the Lord when the trumpet sounds. Now could the apostle have said, "We shall not all sleep," if none of us are ever going to sleep at all, but to live in glory in a disembodied state? It would be a strange way of putting the facts. It is a person who sleeps, not a dead body as such. Waking and sleeping are not words which can properly apply to a body apart from a whole person. If a modern Christian had written this passage, he would have written somewhat as follows: "We shall not all die, but those who die will be changed at the moment of death. When the trumpet sounds, the glorified spirits will be reunited to their bodies, and we shall be changed." But we shall find that it is safer and happier and better to believe that the inspired writers meant exactly what they said and used words according to their accepted meaning among their contemporaries.

When the resurrection to incorruption and immortality has taken place, then the final victory over death will have been won. In view of these wonderful facts we may know that our labour in the service of the Lord is not in vain (verses 53-58). Another great passage relating to the resurrection is to be found in 2 Corinthians 4:14 to 5:10. In 4:14 the apostle says that in all the trials and pressures of his ministry he is sustained by the knowledge that the One Who raised up the Lord Jesus will raise him up also with Jesus and present him with the Corinthian believers. But if he knew that he was going to be in glory in a disembodied condition immediately upon his death, is not this the very place where he would have mentioned this as being at least part, if not the whole, of the hope that, sustained him? Yet no; he fixes his hope on the resurrection. He knows, at least he does not mention, any other hope. And it is after his resurrection, not before, that he expects to be presented in the presence of God. In verse 16, his outer man is his Adamic nature, his soul, himself as he is in this world. His inner man is his regenerate nature, obtained from the Spirit of God at his new birth. In verse 18 he contrasts temporal things and eternal things.

If we turn on to 5:1, we find the apostle speaking of our earthly house of this tabernacle and the possibility of its being dissolved in death. This earthly house is the natural body of 1 Corinthians 15:44 and the tabernacle which the apostle Peter knew he must soon put off (2 Peter:1:13,14). If this is dissolved, that is, if we die, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. This is the spiritual body of 1 Corinthians 15:44, which we are given in resurrection. We do not have this building immediately upon death and the apostle does not say here that we do. A verse or two later on he denies it.

Now if the apostle had expected to be with Christ in glory in a disembodied state, could he have passed this expectation entirely over in a context such as this and fixed his whole hope on his resurrection body? "We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle be dissolved..." why this is exactly the place to say "...we shall be in spirit in the presence of the Lord in heaven." But he did not say it. The only reason can be that he knew of no such hope.

He goes on to say that in this tabernacle we are in distress. We long to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven, that is, our resurrection body (ver. 2), "if so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked" (ver. 3). An equally possible translation of the Greek words *ei ge* (if so be) is "inasmuch as." Whatever exactly is the apostle's meaning in this verse, it is clear that he is not looking for, nor does he desire to be "naked," that is, in a disembodied condition. He

repeats this in verse 4. Though distressed in this tabernacle, his desire is not to be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. This is the same thing as he describes in 1 Corinthians 15:53. It has been thought that to speak of the body as a building or a garment implies a spirit or person that continues to live separately from it. But this natural figure of speech need mean no more than that there is a mind within the body and joined to it and indeed in view of the direct Scriptural teaching that we have reviewed can mean no more. Man is indeed what is called today a psychosomatic unity. He has an outward physical man and an inward man of thought and emotion. This readily intelligible figure of speech cannot by itself sustain the doctrine of the survival of the spirit or the immortality of the soul, especially in the absence of any Scriptural statement of either.

In verses 6 to 8 the apostle says that we know that when we are present in the body we are absent from the Lord. Yet we desire rather to be absent from the body and present with the Lord. Many have taken this to mean present with the Lord in a disembodied state. But this is not so because (1) the whole context of the passage deals with resurrection (4:14 and onwards), (2) the apostle does not desire a disembodied condition (5:3, 4), (3) “the body” in verses 6 and 8 means this earthly body, as is clear from verse 10, (4) the only possible way in which the apostle can be present with the Lord is by resurrection (1 Thess. 4:17, which we shall study shortly). The apostle has in mind only two states, the present earthly one in this “natural” (Greek *psychikon*) body and the one in resurrection glory. Here we are absent from the Lord. There we shall be present with Him. He knows of course that the generation living at the end will pass from the one to the other instantaneously without experiencing death, and he was like us completely ignorant of the time when that moment would be. This view of the apostle’s meaning is confirmed by his references to the judgment at the conclusion of the passage (ver. 10), which takes place at the end of the world.

The apostle’s language here is also consistent with the fact that in the dying believer’s subjective experience he passes instantly from this world to resurrection glory. So profound is his unconsciousness in death that on closing his eyes he opens them at what to him is the next instant on the resurrection morning.

This fact, as our next passage shows, formed an important element in the apostle’s hope.

We pass on to Philippians 1:20-27. The apostle speaks of his expectation and hope that he will be ashamed in nothing, but that in all boldness both always and at the moment Christ would be magnified in his body, whether by life or by death. He is ready to live or die, whichever brings greater glory to his Lord.

To him, he says, to live is Christ. This is one of the great, deep, heart-searching statements of the Bible. The apostle was absorbed in the interests, and glory of his Lord. His whole life was devoted to them alone. For him to die was gain. There were two reasons for this. One was his own personal gain in passing out of this toilsome and troublous world and finding himself in an instant of time on the resurrection morning, as he will do. The other reason was the ultimate gain to the Lord’s cause and the increase of the Lord’s glory that his death would bring, if it proved to be God’s purpose and way of witness for him. He says that he is being pressed between the two, his desire being fixed on “departing and being with Christ,” as this is very much better. The

“departure” is his dissolution in death (Greek analusai), but this will bring him instantly into the presence of Christ with his loved ones and the whole church about him in resurrection glory.

The words “to depart and be with Christ” are represented in Greek by two infinitives prefixed by a single definite article, the effect being to bring together in a startling way two things which are different and apart. Thus in the believer’s experience the moment after closing his eyes in death he is in his glorified body in the eternal state. How much better, more joyous and more triumphant is God’s promise and God’s purpose for His children than the expectation that so many of them have of going at death to heaven in a disembodied state, leaving behind their loved ones on earth and obliged to wait for years or centuries as ghosts for the final consummation. Some dread the idea of lying for years in the grave. But they know nothing of this interval. They are translated in experience to final glory and will awake to look in the face of Jesus just as they have been hoping to at death, but with far greater glory, joy and wonder than possibly could be the case if they were in a disembodied state.

Indeed we shall see from 1 Thessalonians 4:17 that the only way of being with Christ is by resurrection. Here we may indeed see the reason for the statements of the New Testament that “the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.” It is nigh to every believer, who only has to wait for it till he closes his eyes in death. Yet such was the devotion of the apostle’s life that in spite of this wonderful prospect before him he realised that to remain in this world would be more necessary and more profitable for the believers under his care, and he was content to do so.

In the same epistle the apostle mentions again the great change that will take place at our resurrection (see 1 Corinthians 15:43, 49, 53). He speaks of the Lord Jesus Christ Who at His coming will change the body of our humiliation and fashion it like unto the body of His glory, and he says that it is for this Saviour that we look (Phil. 3:20, 21).

We pass on for a moment to 1 Thessalonians 4:16. We will study the whole context when we come shortly to deal with the predictions of the coming of the Lord. Here the apostle says, “The dead in Christ shall rise first.” This does not mean before the dead out of Christ, but before the living believers are changed, even if it be only an instant before. At the end of verse 17 we find the words “and so shall we be for ever with the Lord.” The words “together with them” a little earlier in the verse make it clear that these final words apply to the dead as well as the living. Now the word “so” is Greek houtos, which means “in this way.” Its place here at the beginning of the sentence makes it emphatic, so that the meaning of the sentence becomes “And this is way that we shall be for ever with the Lord,” implying that there is no other way and leading us to conclude that we shall not be with the Lord till the day of resurrection.

We conclude the references which occur in the apostle Paul’s writings by looking at Hebrews 6:2, the epistle being included in the Pauline corpus, if not directly by his hand. This is a rather striking passage. The apostle lists six subjects which he calls elementary principles of the Christian faith, which believers are to leave behind and build upon. The fifth of these is the resurrection of the dead. Now if this is an elementary principle, part of the foundation, how much more would the immortality of the “soul” be if it were an actual fact? Yet it is not mentioned among the fundamentals of the faith, just as it is not mentioned anywhere else in Scripture, though it is definitely contradicted in such passages as Ezekiel 18:4.

Resurrection In The Apocalypse

Only two passages concern us here. The first is Revelation 1:18. Here the Lord Jesus as He gives to the apostle the great vision of Himself in His risen glory says to him, "I am He that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore." He goes on to explain that as a consequence of His own resurrection He has the keys of death and the grave. This means that He will unlock the gates of death and the grave and let His people out of them in resurrection. The same thing is said of the Lord in Psalm 68:20.

Our last passage is the rather mysterious Revelation 20:4-6. It remains mysterious because it has not yet been fulfilled and therefore we cannot yet be certain of its meaning, though it has caught the imagination of many who have dogmatized fiercely upon it and contradicted each other. The quotations at the beginning of verse 4 from Daniel 7 make it probable that this is a picture of the day of judgment with the saints judging the world (Matt. 19:28; 1 Cor. 6:2,3). In any case the passage deals with resurrection.

Misunderstanding of the Scriptural meaning of the word "souls" (Greek psychas) in verse 4 has caused some to regard those here seen sitting upon thrones as being in a disembodied state. The word in fact leads us to the opposite conclusion. Here are the souls, the persons, the very selves, of the martyrs living and reigning in resurrection and life. This must be an actual resurrection, because all are agreed that the resurrection of the rest of the dead, who are the wicked dead, mentioned in verse 5, is their actual resurrection. The two resurrections referred to in verse 5 cannot be of a totally different nature. The language would be forced and harsh. Thus there seems to be an interval of the period called in this chapter a thousand years between the resurrection of the just and that of the unjust. Here we see the saints risen and reigning. The NT (New Testament) makes clear the close connection between the RESURRECTION and the COMING of the Lord. The two take place at the same moment of time. It will therefore be desirable to look at the more prominent of the passages which predict the second coming....

The OT (Old Testament) writers have much to say of their future Messianic blessing, but it was not generally given to them to distinguish the INTERVAL BETWEEN the first and second comings...

There are however THREE passages in the later Minor Prophets and TWO in the Psalms where we can definitely distinguish the SECOND coming.

1. Haggi 2:6, where we have the prophecy that it will not be long before the Lord of hosts shakes the heaven and the earth. This is quoted by the apostle in Hebrews 12:26 and referred to the end of the world [*aion age*][words in brackets added].

2. Zechariah 9:14. Here the prophet says the Lord will be seen over the people. This we may take to refer to the gathering...of the saints. His arrow will go forth as lightning. Here we see His destroying wrath against the wicked. The Lord will blow the TRUMPET. This is the trumpet that will summon the blessed dead.

3. Zechariah 14:5. Here it is a quite definite prediction of the SECOND COMING: “And the Lord my God shall COME, and all the SAINTS WITH THEE.”.

4 and 5. Psalm 96:13 and 98:9, “for he cometh to judge the earth.” Here the last judgment appears, which is the other great event associated with the resurrection and the second coming.
THE SECOND COMING IN THE GOSPELS

In the Gospels we have the wonderful account of the SECOND COMING given us by the Lord Himself in the great parallel passages of Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21. It comes at the climax of the apocalyptic prophecies dealing with the siege of Jerusalem and the subsequent troubles both for the Jews and the church. We find: (1) That it is to take place immediately at the end of the Gospel age (Matt. 24:29; Mark 13:24). (2) It is to be preceded by signs, astronomical or international, or both (Matt. 24:29; Mark 13:24; Luke 21:25,26). (3) The people of the earth will mourn in despair (Matt. 24:30). (4) They will see Christ’s coming on the clouds with power and great glory (Matt. 24:30; Mark 13:26; Luke 21:27). (5) He will send His angels (Matt. 24:31; Mark 13:27). (6) With a loud sound of a trumpet (Matt. 24:31). (7) The angels will gather the elect (Matt. 24:31; Mark 13:27).

We also learn that the DAY and the HOUR of the coming are UNKNOWN and that the world will NOT EXPECT IT up to the LAST MOMENT.

We find the same picture in Luke 17:24-37. Here we find the instantaneous suddenness of the day (verse 24); the continuance of the world socially and commercially until the day (verses 26-30); the revelation of Christ (verse 30); the urgency of being ready (verses 31-33); the separation of the righteous and the wicked (verses 34,35).

In Luke 18:8 we find a suggestion that when Christ comes He will not find MANY BELIEVERS on the earth.

In John 14:3 we have the Lord’s lovely promise that He will come again and receive us unto Himself. He would hardly have said this if He had been going to receive each one of us unto Himself at our DEATH. It is His COMING that teaches us to look to, that glorious coming at the END of the world, which has the TWOFOLD purpose of RECEIVING His people and JUDGING the world.

The Second Coming in the Acts and the General Epistles

We find an important reference to the second coming in Acts 1:11. It immediately follows the account of the ascension of Christ. It consists of the promise given to the disciples by the two angels that the same Jesus whom they had seen going into heaven would so come in like manner as they had seen Him go, that is, that there would be a personal bodily return from heaven. Thus the Scriptures build up for us a clear picture of the Lord’s glorious return.

In the General Epistles there are twelve references to the Lord’s coming. In James we read, “Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord.” It is then that the reward will come and the coming draws nigh (vers 8)...

In the same way the apostle Peter tells us to have hope to the end for the grace that will be brought to us at the revelation of Jesus Christ (1 Peter 1:13). Again our hope is directed to the second coming.

In 1 Peter 4:5 we are directed again to the day of judgment, when the wicked will give account of their lives and in 1 Peter 4:7 the apostle tells us that the end of all things has drawn nigh....In verse 13 of the same chapter the apostle tells us to rejoice in sharing the sufferings of Christ, that we may rejoice at the revelation of His glory. He does not speak of rejoicing at any “home-call” at the time of death.

Again he tells the shepherds that when the Chief Shepherd appears they will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away (1 Peter 5:4). We may notice that he does not say that they will receive it when called into the Lord’s presence at the time of their death. He knows nothing of such a call. It would not be victory over death but an evasion of it...

There are three references to the coming of the Lord in the first epistle of John. The first is in 2:28, “And now, little children, abide in him, that if he appear we may have boldness and not be ashamed before Him at His coming.” The word “if” does not indicate a condition but is used simply as an argument. He certainly will appear. His coming is His appearance and manifestation. It is then that we shall meet Him with confidence or with shame, but this could not be said if our meeting with Him was going to be centuries or years beforehand at death.

Again in 1 John 3:2 we read, “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it does not yet appear what we shall be. We know that if He appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.” We notice that it is when He appears that we shall see Him as He is, not as disembodied spirits at death.

Again in 1 John 4:7 the apostle speaks of our having boldness in the day of judgment. Thus he consistently sets before us for our expectation the coming of the Lord and the day of judgment.

The apostle Jude refers to the same great event as having been foretold by Enoch the seventh from Adam: “Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousand of His saints, to execute judgment upon all” (Jude 14).

The Coming of the Lord in the Epistles of the Apostle Paul

We have seen that NONE of the apostles who were the authors of the General Epistles mention any hope or promise of being with the Lord in a disembodied state at death. All point us to His coming at the end of the world [aion *age*][words in brackets added]as the time when we shall see Him and be with Him.

In the same way in the writings of the apostle Paul (including Hebrews) there are eighteen references to His second coming.

Thus in Romans 2:15-16 the apostle gives us his prophecy of the great day of judgment. He calls it the day of wrath and of the revelation of the righteous judgment of God, in which both just and unjust will receive their reward. It is the day when God judges the secrets of men. The judgment of this great day forms the whole background of his doctrine of justification by faith.

Similarly in Romans 14:10 he says, “We shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ,” or, as other manuscripts say, “of God.”

The apostle connects the coming of the Lord with the judgment in 1 Corinthians 4:5, “Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who will bring to light the hidden things of darkness and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts.” All judgment of others is to be left to the Lord.

In Ephesians 4:30 the apostle reminds us that we have been sealed by the Holy Spirit of God unto the day of redemption. This is the day of our redemption of our bodies (Rom. 8:23). We may notice that he does not say “unto our home call at death.” But would he not surely have done so, if he had known of such an event and been looking forward to it?

We have already noticed the apostle’s statement of the resurrection in Philippians 3:21. We may add here that he connects this immediately with the coming of the Savior (Phil. 3:20). He says that we look for the coming of the Savior, thus clearly fixing our hope for the future upon that event and not upon death.

The apostle directs our attention to the same event in Colossians 3:4, “When Christ who is our life, shall appear, then shall you also appear with Him in glory.” To appear here means to be revealed or made manifest. It is when Christ comes that we shall be made manifest with Him in glory, not at death.

The epistles to the Thessalonians are the most explicit of all the apostle’s writings on the subject of the coming of the Lord. Thus in 1 Thessalonians 1:10 he tells us that to wait for God’s Son from heaven is one of the two main purposes of conversion. If we are to wait for His coming, it is clear that we cannot also be waiting for a “home call” to enter His presence at death.

In 1 Thess. 2:19 the apostle tells us that whom we may by grace have led to Christ will be our joy, crown and glory before our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming. But if they had been going to meet us in heaven in a disembodied state between death and the resurrection, would they not have been so there?

One of the GREAT passages of Scripture relating to the SECOND coming of the Lord is found in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17. We have already dealt with it in connection with the resurrection. It ranks with Matthew 24:30, 31, on which it is based, and 1 Corinthians 15:51, 52. In verses 16 and 17 of this chapter the apostle speaks of a shout and the voice of the archangel (Matt. 24:30, the Son of man coming); the clouds (Matt. 24:30, the clouds of heaven); we shall be caught up (Matt. 24:31, the angels will gather together His elect). We have already noticed that this is the way we shall be for ever with the Lord (1 Thess. 4:17).

In 1 Thessalonians 5:23 we have the apostle's prayer that our whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto (R.V. "at" which is better) the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. We noticed this text in our first section. There is an important reference to the Lord's coming to judgment in 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10. The apostle says that troubled believers will all have rest together at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven. This surely, to say the least, suggests strongly that the apostle never thought of any of them having rest before that great event. He speaks also of mighty angels; flames of fire; the punishment of the wicked, which we shall study in our fourth section of Christ being glorified in His saints and admired in all those who believe.

When we turn to the epistle of the Hebrews, we find three references to the coming of the Lord: 1) Hebrews 9:28, "To them that look for Him He shall appear the second time without sin unto salvation." Our salvation will be completed at the appearance of the Lord: 2) Hebrews 10:37, "For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry." The coming of the Lord will not be long delayed... 3) Hebrews 12:26, "Whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised saying, Yet once more I shall shake not the earth only, but also heaven." The first shaking was at Sinai, the second will be at His coming.

We find five references to the coming of the Lord in the Pastoral Epistles.

In 1 Timothy 6:14, 15 it is called "the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which in His times He shall show, who is the blest and only Potentate." This tells us that God knows the time of the appearing and will bring it about when it is due.

In 2 Timothy 1:12 we find the well known confident expression of the apostle, "I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day." It is worth noting that the apostle does not say "against my home call."

In 2 Timothy 4:1 the apostle speaks of the judgment of Christ Jesus of the living and the dead, His appearance and His kingdom.

We turn to the apostle's famous words in 2 Timothy 4:6-8. He speaks of his approaching departure and looks back over his victorious life. "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness." Now if he excepted this at death here is just the place to say it - "which the Lord, the righteous judge shall give me" - when I am called home to be present with Him at my departure? No - "shall give me AT THAT DAY." Till then the crown is "laid up" in waiting and it will be given to "all who love His appearing," the whole number of the people of God together.

Our final passage is in Titus 2:13. Here the apostle tells us that we are to live in this world "looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Christ Jesus." His appearing is the hope of the church. We are to live looking for it, not looking for glory or blessedness at death.

The Second Coming in the Apocalypse

In Revelation 1:7 we have a great declaration of the coming of the Lord, which we might say is here set before us as the goal of history, "Behold, He comes with clouds." This is taken from

Daniel 7:13 and agrees with the declaration of the angel in Acts 1:11. "Every eye shall see Him and they also which pierced Him." This is taken from Zechariah 12:10....Probably the Jews as a whole are meant by those who pierced him...."All the tribes of the earth shall wail because of him." this also is taken from Zechariah 12:10 and refers to the despair of the wicked at the last day, though it may also refer to the mourning of repentance that comes in greater or less degree to every believer at conversion...

In the last chapter we have the promise, "Behold, I come quickly" (Rev. 22:12)....Almost at the very end of the Bible the promise is repeated in Revelation 22:20, "Yes, I come quickly," and the waiting church echoes back the prayer, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

Thus throughout the New Testament the coming of the Lord is prominently emphasised and set before the believer as the one great hope towards which he is to press.....

Paradise

Twice in the New Testament the world to come is referred to as Paradise. This is the Greek word borrowed from the Persian meaning an orchard or fruit garden. It suggests the restoration of the garden of Eden with the innocence and happiness that man enjoyed there, and we may be sure that the eternal garden will be greater and better than the one on earth which Adam lost.

The first of the two occurrences of this name is found in the Lord's words to the dying thief on the cross (Luke 23:43). These read in our version, "Verily I say unto you, Today shalt thou be with me in Paradise." These words might possibly be taken in the apostle's sense in Philippians 1:23, but not very honestly. As they stand they strongly imply, if they do not require it, the survival both of the Lord Jesus and of the thief in a disembodied state after their death and their presence together in Paradise on that day, and in this sense they are very often taken, with every excuse in the case of those who do not know the original, although they contradict everything that the Bible has to say elsewhere on the subject.

When however we look into the original we find that, although the words can quite well be translated as they are found in our version, they can be translated even more agreeably to the Greek, "Verily I say unto thee TODAY, thou shalt be with me in Paradise." The point of saying, "I say unto thee today" is twofold. First, it is an accustomed phrase in the Hebrew. We often find Moses saying, "The commandments which I command thee this day." Secondly, the day on which the Lord spoke to the thief was the very day which made the thief's entry into paradise possible by the mighty event of the Lord's suffering and death, which was taking place upon it. Thus the Lord's answer was an exact response to the poor thief's request that He would remember him WHEN HE CAME INTO HIS KINGDOM (verse 42).

That this is the right interpretation of the Greek is made clear by the second occurrence of the name Paradise, which is in Revelation 2:7. Here the overcomer is promised access to the tree of life, "which is in the Paradise of God"....

Everlasting Life

This is the description that we find in John's Gospel of the glory to come. In John 5:24 we have the assurance that the believer has everlasting life and will not come into condemnation but is passed from death to life...In John 8:51 we have the promise that the one who keeps Christ's word will never see death. At the end of his life on earth his death is turned by the fact of the coming resurrection into sleep and he will never be touched by the second death.

Again, the Lord Jesus promises that He gives to His sheep everlasting life and they shall never perish (John 10:28). In John 14:2 we find the precious promise that the believer's place in eternity will be in the Father's home. "In my father's house are many mansions...I go to prepare a place for you."

Again in the great prayer of John 17 the Lord Jesus tells us the Father's purpose is that the Son should give eternal life to all the Father has given Him.

Eternal life is the basis of the glory to come. It stands in CONTRAST to the eternal death of the wicked and to the mortal condition of the believer and all men on earth.

The Inheritance and the Crown

If we turn to the Epistles of the apostle Peter, we find four references to the glory to come.

In 1 Peter 1:4 it is called "an inheritance, incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you" and in the following verse it is called "salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."

This makes it clear that we reach the inheritance by RESURRECTION at the COMING of the Lord. Had it been ready to be revealed at death, the apostle must surely have said so. This wonderful salvation is the inheritance of the people of God. In 1 Peter 5:4 the pastors who fed the flock are told that they will receive the crown of glory that fadeth not away. We should notice that this crown will be received "when the chief Shepherd shall appear," not at death.

In 2 Peter 1:11 the apostle tells us that if we do our diligence to make our calling and election sure, an abundant entrance will be ministered to us into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.....

Glory, Honor and Immortality

This is the comprehensive description of the eternal state which the apostle Paul tells us that the righteous seek (Rom. 2:17). He also calls it glory, honor and peace (Rom. 2:10). It stands in contrast to indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish (verses 8 and 9).....

The believer in the world to come will share the glory and honor of Jesus, will never die and will possess perfect and permanent peace.

We notice that the apostle tells us that the righteous SEEK FOR immortality (as the Greek says, “incorruptibility”).

Thus the apostle confirms our contention that immortality is not natural to all men but is God’s gift to those who believe in Christ.

In 1 Corinthians 13:12 we find the moving description of the glory to come as the state in which we have perfect vision of God’s face and perfect knowledge of Him.

A reference to eternal glory is found in Ephesians 1:18, where the apostle speaks of the hope of His calling and the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints...

We must now complete the picture by examining carefully what the Scriptures teach us about the judgment and ultimate condition of the lost. As we sought to show that victory over death in RESURRECTION at the COMING of the Lord is a so much happier and more satisfying prospect than that of survival in a disembodied state, so we shall hope to show that the teaching of Scripture about the final state of the lost is far less burdensome, more satisfactory and more reasonable than the idea that springs from belief in natural immortality.

Universalism Unscriptural

Before we turn to the teaching of Scripture about the lost it is worth reminding ourselves that in addition to the teaching that we are seeking to establish and the widespread theories that we seek to overthrow there is a third view of the eternal destiny of the wicked. This is the view that all men, whether believers or not, will be ultimately saved, believers in the way in which the Bible teaches us, unbelievers after long period of suffering and purgation. We need not be ashamed of casting a wistful glance at this view. God Himself would have all men to be saved (1 Tim:2:4).

But no one can honestly find it in the Bible. It can be traced back at least as far as Origen, a church father of the third century, a man who also held strange views on various subjects.

There are liberals both ancient and especially modern who have adopted and taught it. There are a few isolated texts in the Bible which appear superficially to support it, and a few evangelical Christians have desperately clung to them, but the support quickly crumbles before a serious examination of the teaching of Scripture as a whole on the subject.

We will not therefore take up space by seeking to refute this view, which is not likely to be held by more than a very few of those readers to whom this book is primarily addressed....

Death the Wages of Sin

We will begin with the great principles laid down in BOTH Testaments:”the wages of sin is death” (Rom. 6:23); “the soul that sinneth it shall die” (Ezek. 18:4, 20). This punishment of sin of course comprises the death with which we are all so sadly familiar, but reaches far beyond it to include the final retribution, which the Bible calls the second death (Rev. 20:14, 21:8).

In our second section we examined carefully the Hebrew and Greek words used for death and found that the meaning of death in the Bible was the CESSATION OF LIFE. The minority of occurrences, we saw, in which the words are used in a figurative sense take their point from the literal meaning of the word and enhance it.

Thus when we read of the second death the natural inference is that, whatever differences in detail there may be, the principle is the same in both cases. Our friends who believe and teach NATURAL immortality make SEPARATION the underlying principle to be found in the word “death” as (and only as) it is found in the Scripture. To them the FIRST death means the separation of the “soul” from the body and the SECOND death means the separation of the person from God...When they speak of the death of their dog, they mean the cessation of life....

No seeker coming fresh to the Bible would understand death in any sense but its ordinary and natural one. Some have thought that the second death is defined as THE LAKE OF FIRE, but an intelligent, even a quick reading of Revelation 20:14 and 21:8 will show us that the OPPOSITE is true. The lake of fire IS the second death.

...death as we know it is a cessation of life, and would indeed be cessation of being if it were not for the fact of RESURRECTION (1 Cor. 15:18). Resurrection turns death into a sleep, from being final to being temporary. But there is NO resurrection from the SECOND death. It is FINAL cessation of life.

An argument to explain the term “second death” and similar expressions has sometimes been seriously put forward which says that the lost do not live in hell but EXIST there. This is a CONTRADICTION in terms. An INANIMATE object can EXIST without LIVING, but a LIVING being in which life is inherent, part of its essence, cannot CEASE TO LIVE without ceasing to EXIST.

After natural death a dead body may of course exist for some time, but if a living being is consumed by FIRE, cessation of existence follows at once, unless one may say that a person or an animal may exist in the form of smoke or ashes. These are the very two substances to which, as we shall see, the Bible directly informs us the wicked are reduced. A living being cannot exist without living. Indeed we may accept our friend’s definition of the SECOND death as being SEPARATION from God. In a spiritual sense the lost cannot be more separated from God than they were before. God is everywhere.

Therefore to be separate from Him in an absolute sense can only mean to be nowhere.

The Second Death

The ordinary Hebrew and Greek words for “death” and “to die” are used in a MINORITY of instances to define the SECOND death. The Hebrew word MAVETH, which we examined....has reference to the second death altogether about FIFTEEN TIMES.

In Deuteronomy 30:15 and 19 we find Moses saying to the people, “I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil;” “I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing.” If we think of these words as addressed to the nation as a whole, MAVETH means loss of NATIONALITY and independence, but if we think of them as primarily applied to the individual, as we surely must, MAVETH must signify the SECOND death. It is set in CONTRAST with life and equated with evil and cursing.

There is a possible reference to the second death in Psalms 56:13. This passage may certainly be taken in an evangelistic sense as a reference to it, but David was perhaps thinking primarily of deliverance from murder or assassination at the hands of his enemies.

In the book of Proverbs the word MAVETH refers TEN times to the second death.

The references are Proverbs 8:36; 11:19; 12:28; 13:14; 14:12, 27; 16:25; 18:21; 21:6; and the heart searching 24:11 with the following verse.

The word MAVETH occurs in all about a hundred and fifty times and we sought to prove, we hope convincingly....that apart from a few instances of figure of speech it bears the natural and ordinary meaning of death as cessation of life. This fact provides a strong inference that its meaning is the same when it refers to the second death.

We find the same situation when we come to the Greek word THANATOS in the New Testament. The expression “the second death,” HO DEUTEROS THANATOS, occurs four times in the book of Revelation 2:11, 20:6, 14, 21:8.

In addition to this we find THANATOS referring 19 times to the second death, on 10 occasions in direct connection with sin: Matt. 4:16; Luke 1:79; John 8:51, 52; James 1:15, 5:20; 1 John 5:16, 17; Romans 1:32, 6:16, 21, 23, 7:5, 10, 13 (twice) Romans 8:2; 2 Cor. 3:7, 7:10.

THANATOS occurs between seventy and eighty times and, as we sought to show...bears with only about nine exceptions to the natural and ordinary meaning of death as cessation of life. The exceptions are not due to any change of meaning but to figurative use.

Again the natural inference from the use of the same word is that the second death means cessation of life.

MUTH and APOTHENEIN

The Hebrew word MUTH meaning “to die” is used in the ordinary sense of both men and animals....We also find it in 11 passages in which it either alludes exclusively to the second death or includes it in a single reference with earthly death.

These passages are Genesis 2:17, 3:4; 2 Samuel 12:13; Jeremiah 31:30; Ezekiel 3:18-20, 18:4-31, 33:8 ff; Psalm 34:21; Proverbs 19:16, 21:25; Job 5:2.

Again the inference is the same. The second death is the same in principle as that which we know here. If the death that we know is the cessation of life, which comprises, as we sought to show, cessation of consciousness, how can the same term be used for both it and for the second death, without comment or explanation, if the latter means something totally different? How can the same be used for cessation of life and ceaseless life in misery?

Exactly the same hold good in the case of the Greek word APOTHANEIN. It is used twice in reference to the second death, in John 6:50 and Romans 8:13.

We have thus not yet found anything in the expression “the second death” or in the language in either Testament to define it.

Everlasting Destruction

In 2 Thessalonians 1:9 we find that the ultimate punishment of the wicked is everlasting destruction. This actual passage we will examine in greater detail later. In our own language the word “destruction” has a range of meanings depending upon the nature of the person or thing destroyed and upon the agency which effects the destruction. Thus we may speak of the destruction of a reputation, of a nation, of an animal, or of a person. In all these cases the sense of the word is, or may be, different. Again the result will be different if a person is destroyed by a blow on the head, by drowning, or if he is consumed in flames, but it may in all these cases be called destruction. Again we may speak of a man being destroyed by financial ruin.

What sort of destruction is the second death?

Let us examine ALL the words that bear upon this final destruction in Scripture.

Destruction in the Old Testament

There are twenty-eight Hebrew words for which the translation “destruction” among others occurs in the Old testament and of these 14 bear certainly or probably on the second death. We will begin with these and then pass on to deal with verbs meaning “to destroy.”

There are four forms which stem from the great root AVD meaning “to destroy,” “to lose,” “to perish” and corresponding almost exactly to the Greek APOLEIA, APOLLYMI (see Rev. 9:11). The forms are AVADDOH, AVADDON, AVDAN, and AVDAN (slightly different in pronunciation). We may add OVED translated “perish.” OVED is used only of nations. Of the other forms there are 9 occurrences altogether, of which 8 refer to death that we know and one (Job 31:12) to final destruction in the second death.

This confirms the testimony of the words used for death that death and final destruction in the second death are the SAME in principle.

The word ES is usually translated “calamity,” in a minority of cases “destruction.” It is used 4 times in a general sense. These occurrences do not add anything to our argument. It is used 9 times of peoples, where it means “downfall.” It occurs in 2 samuel 22:19 and Psalm 18:18, two

recensions of the same psalm. The psalm is Messianic and is one of the wonderful type psalms in which the psalmist under the Spirit's inspiration composed words suiting the situation of Christ Jesus Himself on the cross and to be thought of as spoken by Him in that situation. Thus the "calamity" here is the crucifixion, suffering and death of the Lord Jesus. It is significant that this can be defined by the same word as that used for the second death. It fits with the facts, which we shall examine later, that the Lord Jesus suffered the very punishment due to sinners.

The word ED is used 9 times out of its total of 24 occurrences of the second death. The passages are (1) Deut. 32:35, "the day of their calamity is at hand." (2 and 3) Proverbs 1:26, "I also will laugh at their calamity." The calamity is described in the following verses as fear, desolation, destruction, a whirlwind, distress and anguish. The wicked will be slain and destroyed (verse 32).

All this is a vivid description of the effect of the day of judgment upon the wicked. In the course of this description appears the suffering which we learn from certain New Testament passages that the wicked will undergo before their destruction. We shall be noticing this later in the course of this section. (4) Proverbs 6:15, "Therefore shall his calamity come suddenly." The day of judgment shall come unexpectedly and instantaneously. (5) Job 18:12, "destruction shall be ready at his side." These are words of Bildad, which we may take as Scripture in place of Job 42:7, which means that the three friends applied their words wrongly in Job's case and the Lord's dealings with him, not that all that they said was untrue.

This cannot be so, as we find words of Eliphaz the Temanite quoted by the apostle Paul as Scripture (Job 5:12,13; and 1 Cor. 3:19). (6) Job 21:17, "how oft cometh their destruction upon them?" It comes to every wicked man when he dies, because once he is in the grave his final destruction is inevitable...In the same passage we have sorrows, destruction and the wrath of the Almighty (verses 17, 20). (7) Job 21:30, "the wicked is reserved to the day of destruction They shall be brought forth (i.e. from the grave) to the day of wrath." (8) Job 31:3, "Is not destruction to the wicked ? and a strange punishment to the workers of iniquity?" The word "punishment" is not represented in the original. The fate of the wicked is called strange probably because it was not God's original intention for mankind. (9) Job 31:23, "destruction from God was a terror to me."

Thus we learn from the use of this word ED that the destruction of the wicked is accompanied by suffering and that there is an analogy between it and the suffering of the death of Christ.

In Micah 2:10 the word GHEVEL translated "destruction" could perhaps be applied to the sinner and the second death, but it does not throw light on our argument. Its meaning is A CORD and the sense stretched very wide. The best translation in this verse would perhaps be "snare," as in Job 18:10.

It is right here to mention the word KID and its interesting occurrences in Job 21:20, "His eyes shall see his destruction." It does not seem certain that the pronouns in this sentence refer to the same person, but assuming that they do it would not be right to rely on this verse for the doctrine that the wicked is conscious after destruction. The word KID occurs nowhere else, and there is therefore no analogy by which we can understand its exact meaning. Even if we insist that it refers to the destruction of the wicked on the last day, it remains true that he will see his

destruction up to the last moment of losing consciousness. The verse says nothing about what happens subsequent to destruction.

The word M'GHITTAH occurs 11 times. It is translated twice "terror," once "dismaying," once "ruin," and seven times "destruction," all seven in the book of Proverbs.

It is only in Proverbs 21:15 that we might think that the word refers to the final destruction of the wicked. Terror, dismaying and ruin are certainly accompaniments of this, whatever be its form and nature.

The word MASHNOTH is used once of the destruction of the wicked in Psalm 73:18. It occurs again only in Psalm 74:3, where it means "destruction," and this is probably its root meaning.

The form QOTEV from the root QTV is found once in Hosea 13:14 and applied to SH'OL, "the grave." It conforms what we read in Revelation 20:14, that SH'OL (Greek HADEES) will be cast into the lake of fire.

In Isaiah 1:28 the word SHEVER, translated "destruction," refers to the judgment of the wicked. Its meaning is "breaking," as many of its other occurrences show.

Another word sometimes translated "destruction" is SHOD. We might think that in Joel 1:15 it referred to the final judgment of the wicked. Its root meaning is "robbery," "wasting," "spoiling."

The word SHOAH occurring 12 times in all means destruction or ruin and is sometimes translated "destruction." It is 6 times translated "desolation" or "desolate," once "storm" (Ezek. 38:9). It is used once as death as we know it (Psalm 63:9) and 4 times of the second death (Psalm 35:8, twice, Proverbs 1:27 and Prov. 3:25).

In Proverbs 1:27 we are brought back to a context in which we found the word ED (see above). The use of this word shows us that the second death is of the same nature as earthly death and describes its onset as violent ruin. We must look to other Scriptures to define and describe the second death more precisely.

Finally we have the Hebrew word SHAGHATH. This corresponds to Greek DIAPHTHORA meaning "corruption," by which it is translated in Acts 2:27 from Psalm 16:10.

It is used 3 times in a general sense and translated "pit" or "ditch." Twice it refers in poetic language to the captivity of Judah and is translated "pit" (Ezek. 19:4, 8). It appears in Psalm 16:10 in David's famous prophecy of the resurrection of Christ, "neither wilt thou suffer thy Holy One to see CORRUPTION."

8 times it is used of death as we know it; (1) Isaiah 38:17, which is Hezekiah's reference to the pit of corruption, out of which he had been "loved;" (2) Isaiah 51:14, referring to death in the pit; (3) Jonah 2:6, JONAH'S THANKSGIVING TO THE LORD FOR BRINGING UP HIS LIFE FROM CORRUPTION; (4) Psalm 30:9, "what profit is there in my blood when I go down to the

pit ?” (5) Psalm 49:9, “that he should still live forever, and not see CORRUPTION.” This is a very significant verse.

It denies the immortality of man and says that instead he will see CORRUPTION in the grave. (6) Job 17:14, where the word is again translated “corruption;” (7) Job 33:18, “he keepeth back his soul from the PIT.”

We have looked at this chapter in our first section. (8) Job 33:22, “Yea, his soul draweth near unto the grave, and his life to the destroyers.”

This same word is used 8 times in reference to the second death. Its use clearly shows that like the grave the second death is a place of CORRUPTION, the EXTINGUISHING of LIFE. The references are Psalm 7:15, 9:15, 55:23, 94:13, 103:4; Job 33:24, 28, 30. This last verse seems more likely to refer to PRESERVATION FROM eternal death, then of course it is the grave, not eternal death that is spoken of.

Greek Words For “Destruction”

The regular word used for the destruction of sinners in the New Testament, often translated “perdition,” is APOLEIA. It is used 15 times of the second death.

The passages are:(1) Matthew 7:13, where we find the broad way leading to destruction and destruction contrasted with life (2) John 17:12, where Judas Iscariot is called “the son of perdition,” that is, the one destined for perdition...(3) Acts 8:20. Here the apostle Peter says:Thy money perish with thee,” literally, “be with into perdition.” (4) 2 Peter 2:1:”damnable heresies,” that is, heresies which bring men to perdition (5) 2 Peter 2:1 again. Those who introduce such heresies bring on themselves swift destruction (6) 2 Peter 3:7. Here the apostle speaks of the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men (7) 2 Peter 3:16, where the apostle speaks of those who wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction (8) Romans 8:22. Here the apostle Paul speaks of “vessels of wrath fitted for destruction.” Destruction is contrasted with glory (9) Philippians 1:28. The apostle says that the calmness of believers in the face of their adversaries is an evident token of destruction to the adversaries. Destruction is contrasted with salvation (10) Philippians 3:19. The end of the enemies of the cross of Christ is destruction. It is contrasted with the transformation of our vile bodies to be fashioned like His glorious body, that is, with a glorious resurrection (11) 2 Thessalonians 2:3, where the man of sin is called like Judas Iscariot the son of perdition (12) Hebrews 10:39. Here the apostle contrasts drawing back unto perdition with believing unto the saving of the soul (13) 1 Timothy 6:9, where the apostle speaks of foolish and hurtful lusts which draw men in destruction and perdition (14 and 15) Revelation 17:8, 11. In both these verses we read of the beast who finally goes into PERDITION.....

We see that in Romans 9:22 APOLEIA is contrasted with glory. Some may feel that this points to its meaning life in ETERNAL MISERY. But this is not possible when we find it contrasted in Matthew 7:13 with LIFE, unless we strain the meaning of the word “life” away from its natural sense to mean “eternal happiness,” for which we have NO Scriptural warrant. If we do so, we force meanings on to words found in Scripture which they do not bear in any other literature

(except theological literature embodying this idea), nor in ordinary speech, and so bring CONFUSION into the minds of readers. The opposite of LIFE is DEATH.

Again we find APOLEIA twice contrasted with salvation (Phil. 1:28; Heb. 10:39). In the latter case the Scripture says, the salvation of the soul. We hope that those who have followed our first section will understand that this means the preservation of a man as a LIVING and CONSCIOUS personal entity.

The use of the word “drown” in Timothy 6:9 may perhaps be felt on the whole to strengthen our view of perdition, and the two verses (8 and 11) of Revelation 17 makes it reasonably certain. They speak of the great political and ecclesiastical power going into perdition, and this can be nothing but its total destruction and extinction. This shows us the way to the true nature of APOLEIA.

There are THREE further occurrences of APOLEIA which we need to study. We find it in Acts 25:16, where EIS APOLEIAN is translated “to die.” This refers to the death of course with which we are so sadly acquainted. It is true that some ancient texts do not contain these two words, but even if we accept their absence the argument is unaffected, for the word had this meaning for those who inserted it in the text.

Finally, we have TWO IMPORTANT instances of the use of the word APOLEIA in two parallel passages in the synoptic Gospels.

Matthew 26:8 and Mark 14:4 we find, “To what purpose is this waste?” The word “waste” represents APOLEIA. Our friends who teach natural immortality make much of these two passages.

They say quite rightly that the ointment was not destroyed or put out of being, actually did it change its form in any way. What happened to it was that it was put to use which those who asked the question considered a wrong one. To them it was a waste, the equivalent of being poured down the gutter. Our friends go on to argue wrongly that this is, or at least may be, the meaning of the word in ALL its occurrences and that therefore the WICKED, when DESTROYED, CONTINUE TO LIVE, but not for the purpose for which they were created.

They do not see that in these TWO passages the word refers to an INANIMATE substance but in ALL the other 16 occurrences to PERSONS. This fact makes a fundamental DIFFERENCE to the MEANING of the word. The final loss of a PERSON is something quite different from the final loss of some ointment. The meaning “waste” is an extension of the meaning “loss” and even in English there is a great difference of meaning between the expression “I have lost my pencil” and “I have lost my husband.”

When we come in a moment to examine the words meaning “to destroy” or “to perish,” we shall see the senses in which the words “loss,” “lose,” and “lost,” can be properly used of persons.

The SECOND NT word meaning “destruction,” OLETHROS, occurs only 4 times, but it is important from our point of view because it is the word used in the phrase “everlasting destruction” (2 Thess. 1:9), with which we began this part of our discussion.

This is the description of the PUNISHMENT of the WICKED. Now of WHAT does this EVERLASTING DESTRUCTION consist? For those ready to understand the word in its simple sense and natural meaning there can be no doubt. It can only mean LOSS OF LIFE and BEING. But our friends who believe in natural immortality are obliged to interpret the word in the light of that idea. Have they any justification for doing so?

The occurrences of the word in 1 Thessalonians 5:3 where it refers to the same thing as 2 Thessalonians 1:9 does not define OR EXPLAIN THE DESTRUCTION, SO WE GET NO HELP. In 1 Timothy 6:9 the word is joined with APOLEIA in a way that suggests that the meaning of the TWO WORDS is the SAME.

This seems to be put beyond doubt by the first of the four occurrences, which we find in 1 Corinthians 5:5. Here we find the apostle speaking of a man delivered to satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Now what can the destruction of the flesh mean but its total elimination? So here we find a proof of the meaning of the word OLETHROS.

Everlasting destruction means the total elimination of those subject to it. We shall find ample proof of this as we continue our study of the use of words in the original languages.

On the OTHER NT word translated “destruction.” It is SYNTRIMMA. It occurs only ONCE, in Romans 3:16 in a quotation from Isaiah 59:7 and represents the Hebrew SHOD. Its underlying meaning is “breaking.” The verse does not seem to point to eternal destruction but rather to the hard way of transgression in this life. HEBREW VERBS MEANING “TO DESTROY” OR “TO PERISH

There are 23 Hebrew verbs in the OT which are sometimes translated “destroy,” of which 13 refer in one or more instances to the second death.

The MAIN word in this connection is the great root AVAD, which occurs about 150 times. It refers directly to the second death 7 or 8 times.

The word refers 9 times to the destruction of inanimate objects, such as pictures, images, places of heathen worship, gates and bars...It is worth noting that no one would think of the idols when cast into the fire as existing in the flames for ever...

In 9 passages the word means “bring to ruin” rather than physical destruction...It will be noticed that no person is the object here.

The word is used about 43 times of the destruction of the nation of Israel...It is used over 30 times to mean “fail” or “perish” of such things as counsel, wisdom or heathen gods...Nothing that is spoken of as failing or perishing continues AFTER it has done so.

The word is used once of a plant (Jonah 4:10) and once of animals (Ezek. 32:13). All will agree that there is no question of SURVIVAL here.

It is used about 40 times of ordinary death.....

The passages in which we may see a direct reference to the second death are as follows:(1) Numbers 24:19...(2) Deut. 7:9, 10...(3) Judges 5:31...(4) Psalm 9:5...(5) Psalm 9:6...(6) Proverbs 11:7...(7) Job. 18:17...

Twice the great root appears in the form OVED. Though the reference in each case is to a nation, the passage (Num. 24:20, 24) are striking and significant. They speak of perishing forever and well illustrate the phrase “everlasting punishment.”

There are 7 passages in which the word means “lost” in a literal sense. Except for one general reference in Ecc. 3:6 they all refer to lost animals, oxen, asses or sheep.

We must not make these references a bias for forcing the meaning “lost” or “lose” on the word as a whole. It is quite easy to distinguish its meaning in Ezekiel 32:13 from that in Ezekiel 34:4, 16.

Thus we have examined the usage and occurrences of the great root word AVAD. There are passages from which we might gather the meaning to be “ruin,” “fail,” or “lose,” but it can scarcely be doubted from the majority of occurrences that the root meaning of the word is to DESTROY in its literal sense....The use of the word so often with reference to ordinary death confirms its meaning and we shall find it further confirmed by other Hebrew words and the NT.

The next word to which we call attention is BALA. It means “to swallow up.” It is used of the second death once in Psalms 21:9. The whole passage is found in verses 8 to 10. David says that the Lord’s hand will find out all His enemies and His right hand those that hate Him. The time when this happens is the day of judgment at the end of the world. “Thou shall make them as a fiery oven in the time of thine anger.” The time of His anger is the day of judgment. Now does being made a fiery oven mean being preserved and suffering in fire for ever? How does David go on? “The Lord shall swallow them up in his wrath, and the fire shall devour them.”

To swallow up can only be a figure for disappearance and the fire does to them what fire as we know it, always does, and what we should naturally expect it to do.

There is no hint anywhere in Scripture that the eternal fire functions in substantially any other way than the fire we know....The palmist goes on to say that the Lord will destroy their fruit from the earth and their seed from among men. If the palmist wished to convey to us the consumption and extermination of the wicked, what other language could he have used?

Surely anyone coming simply to the Bible without preconceived ideas would understand this, and to force the psalmist’s words to mean life in eternal misery is simply to twist his language.

If it be argued that the NT teaches differently, we have a direct contradiction between the Testaments, an idea that no Bible-believer ought to entertain for a moment.

Now we come to the word DACHA, translated “destroy” in Job 6:9. It has a reference to the second death in Psalms 72:4, “He ...shall break in pieces the oppressor.” The root meaning is to break. We may allow the reference to be figurative, but what does it sound more like a figure of? Eternal life in misery? Or violent destruction?

Another word used in reference to the second death (Psalms 144:6) is HAMAN. It is translated “destroy” both here and in Exodus 23:27, where it refers to the nations of Canaan. “Cast forth lightning, and scatter them: shoot out thine arrows, and destroy them.” The root meaning is to “break.” We can hardly imagine the shooting of arrows to lead to life in eternal misery.

In Psalm 28:5 David is speaking of the wicked and the workers of iniquity. He calls upon the Lord to destroy them and not build them up. “Destroy” here is HARAS, which means “to break down.” If this were an isolated passage, we might regard it a neutral to our argument. Our other passages explain the form and meaning of the breaking down.

The word KATHATH is translated “destroyed” with reference to the wicked in Job 4:20. Its root meaning is to “beat down” or “break in pieces.” It occurs in Deut. 1:44. We have already seen that the fact of its occurrence in a speech of Eliphaz the Temanite makes no difference to its inspiration.

The last end of the wicked is referred to by David in Psalm 58:7, “Let them melt away as waters which run continually: when he bends his bow to shoot his arrows, let them be cut in pieces.” “Cut in pieces” represents the Hebrew MUL, which is translated “destroy” in Psalm 118:10, 11, 12. The root meaning is “cut in pieces.”

All will probably agree that this is a figure of speech, but is it is more likely to represent violent destruction, or eternal life in misery? It is worth continuing through to the following verses, “As a snail which melts, let every one of them pass away; like the untimely birth of a woman, that they may not see the sun. Before your pots can feel the thorns, he shall take them away as with a whirlwind, both living, and in his wrath” (Ps. 58:8, 9). We will leave the reader to judge what picture he forms from the words “melt,” “pass away,” “the untimely birth of a woman,” “take away as with a whirlwind.”

We examined the great Hebrew word MUTH in a previous section. We shall remember that it stands for death in general as a result of sin, thus covering both ordinary death and the second death.

In Psalm 9:5 we find another reference to the destruction of the wicked, “Thou hast rebuked the heathen, thou hast destroyed the wicked, thou hast put out their name for ever and ever.” To destroy here is the Hebrew MAGHAH, which means “to blot out.” In the light of such a statement can the idea of the eternal conscious like of the wicked in misery be any further entertained? They are blotted out and their name put out for ever and ever. If the psalmist wished to convey to us the idea of extermination, what other language could he have used?

The word NATHATZ means to break down. It is translated “destroy” in a reference to the second death in Psalms 52:5. David here says that the wicked man will be broken down for ever and ever. He will be taken away and plucked out of his home and rooted out of the land of the living. Here is another consistent testimony.

The word TZAMATH means to cut off. In three instances (Lam. 3:53; Ps. 88:16; Ps. 119:139) it appears NOT to indicate the end of life, as the writer can speak of having been cut off. These can scarcely be taken as a norm, far less are they sufficient to build a doctrine of the second death upon a view of the unmistakable meaning of the other words that we have examined. In other instances TZAMATH is just as clear as they. See for yourself in Job 6:17, where it is parallel with “be consumed” or “be extinguished.” Other occurrences are in Psalm 54:5, 69:4, 101:5, 8, 143:12; Job 23:17. It is used of the second death in 2 Samuel 22:41; Psalm 18:40, 73:27, 94:23 (twice).

Our next word SHAVAR means “to break.” It occurs in Daniel 11:26, translated “destroy.” It is used of the second death in Jeremiah 17:18; Proverbs 6:15, 29:1.

SHAMAD is a word of fairly frequent occurrence, usually translated “destroy.” It is used 56 times of a family, once of a land and 8 times of inanimate objects. It has 18 references to death and 6 to the second death. These are in 2 Samuel 22:38; Isaiah 13:9; Lamentations 3:66; Ezekiel 34:16; Psalm 37:38, 92:7.

To “Destroy” in the Greek Nt

The main word expressing this idea in the NT and covering all but a very few of the occurrences of the English word “destroy” is APOLLYMI. It corresponds in its various shades of meaning almost exactly to the Hebrew AVAD. We shall do well to examine its usage and search out its meaning very carefully.

It is used 9 times of inanimate objects. Wineskins are destroyed when they burst (Matt. 9:17). In the parallel passage in Mark 2:22 both the wine in the skins and the skins are destroyed. In the further parallel passage the skins are again destroyed on bursting (Luke 5:37).

In Luke 21:18 we have the Lord’s promise that not a hair of our head shall perish. This is best taken in a figurative sense meaning that we shall not ultimately be touched or hurt in the very slightest by our enemies or by evil.

1 John 6:27 the Lord contrasts the food that is perishing with the food that abides unto life everlasting. This means food that is connected with a perishing world.

The apostle James speaks of the flower that fades and the beauty of its appearance perishes or is lost (James 1:11).

Again the apostle Peter speaks of gold that perishes (because it belongs to this world) (1 Peter 1:7).

Finally in Hebrews 1:11 quoting Psalm 102 we find that the heavens will perish.

In these 9 instances we have meanings ranging in emphasis from waste and loss through fading away and disappearance to complete literal destruction (Hebrews 1:11) and it is significant that this last passage alludes to destruction by fire (2 Peter 3:7). All of these senses are applicable to the destruction of the lost.

Linked with these 9 passages is the meaning “to lose.” We find 18 occurrences with this meaning, which we remember to have been shared with the great Hebrew root AVAD. In the NT all the passages are in the Gospels with one exception (2 John 8). It is interesting and significant that 11 of these occurrences refer to the losing of things, or to lost things, which can subsequently be recovered or found, and 7 to a final loss from which there is no recovery. This shows how the meaning of the word changes with context and should prevent us from forcing a single meaning on all occurrences of the word.

Among things lost which can be recovered are the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matt. 10:6, 15:24); that which was lost that the Son of man came to save (Matt. 18:11; Luke 19:37): the lost sheep, the lost coin and the prodigal son of Luke 15:4 (twice), Luke 15:6, 8, 9, 24, 32). This shows God regards sinners as lost now already but found by Jesus and recovered by the Gospel.

This state of present spiritual loss or death is not however to be identified with the final condition, as the usage in the remaining 7 passages shows. These are Matt. 10:42 with its parallel in Mark 9:41 and all 5 Johannine passages (John 6:12, 39, 17:12, 18:9; 2 John 8). In all of them the word expresses finality and in numbers 2, 3 and 4 of the five refers to the final loss of the wicked. 1 John 6:39 it is contrasted with being raised up at the last day. In John 17:12 the noun APOLEIA, translated “perdition,” is used in close connection with the verb.

The word occurs 10 times in the Gospels in the famous and heart-searching sayings of the Lord about losing or destroying the soul (Greek PSYCHE) in contrast to saving or finding it (Matt. 10:39, 16:25; Mark 8:35; Luke 9:24, 17:33). We have covered these passages before. The word carries in them the sense of finality.

Once it is used of the death of animals (sheep as representing men) (John 11:50).

Apollymi and Death

There are about 28 cases in which human death is expressed in the NT by the word APOLLYMI. The passages are quite straightforward. They are Matt. 2:13, 8:25, 12:14, 21:41, 22:7, 27:20; Mark 3:6, 4:38, 9:22, 11:18, 12:9; Luke 8:24, 9:56, 11:51, 13:33, 15:17, 17:27, 29, 19:47, 20:16; John 18:14; Acts 5:37; 2 Peter 3:6; Jude 5; 1 Cor. 10:9, 15:18; 2 Cor. 4:9; Heb. 11:31.

Only 4 of these passages require any comment.

In John 18:14 the word APOLESTHAI “perish” has an alternative reading APOTHANEIN “die.” This shows the identity of the idea expressed by the two words.

In 1 Cor. 15:18 the APOLONTO “are perished,” though covering the death with which we are familiar, carries in itself the idea of finality. This passage shows us that only the fact of resurrection prevents death from being final extinction.

In 2 Cor. 4:9 in using the word APOLLYMENOI “destroyed” the apostle is presumably referring to death. He may be speaking in very general terms.

In Hebrews 11:31 the word “with” is expressed by the prefix to the main verb, so that we have the compound verb SYNAPOLETO. The meaning is the same.

Thus in the minds of the NT writers to kill was to destroy and to die was to perish. They would hardly have used such words if they had thought of death as automatic translation to glory and survival there in eternal happiness. The significance for our present argument is that the same word is used to express both death as we know it and the final second death.

The word refers in about 30 passages to the second death, which it would be well to study one by one.

(1) Matthew 5:29; the evangelist speaks of the perishing of a member of the body, which results from its being taken out and thrown away. The parallel is the whole body being cast into hell.

(2) Matthew 5:30. This is the same in slightly variant language.

(3) Matthew 10:28; both soul and body are destroyed in hell.

(4) Matthew 10:38; whoever find his life (Greek PSYCHEE, “soul”) will destroy it.

(5) Matthew 16:25; again the same in rather different words.

(6) Matthew 18:14; the heavenly Father does not will any little ones to perish.

(7) Matthew 26:52; the Lord’s reference here to perishing with the sword is presumably a reference to the final perishing in the second death. It may include temporal judgment.

(8) Mark 1:24; the unclean spirit asks if the Lord has come to destroy them.

(9) Mark 8:35. see number 4.

(10) Luke 4:34; the same as number 8.

(11) Luke 6:9; APOLESAI “destroy” in this verse is perhaps best taken as a reference to death.

(12) Luke 9:24; the same as number 4.

(13) Luke 9:25; parallel with the last.

(14) Luke 13:3; an important passage. The Lord speaks of perishing finally as identical with a violent death. This makes the conclusion certain that ordinary death and the second death have in common the destruction of life.

(15) Luke 13:5; the same as the last.

(16) Luke 17:33; the same as number 4.

(17) Luke 17:33; the same as number 4.

(18) John 3:15; to perish is the opposite of having everlasting life. Here is a simple contrast between death and life. There are no grounds in Scripture for twisting the word “perish” here or elsewhere to mean everlasting life in misery, or for twisting the words “everlasting life” to mean “everlasting happiness.” There are of course passages in Scripture to show that those who possess everlasting life will enjoy everlasting happiness, but the two concepts are distinct.

(19) John 3:16; the same as the last.

(20) John 10:28; here everlasting life is again opposed to perishing.

(21) John 12:25; the same as number 4.

(22) James 4:12; salvation is again opposed to destruction, not to misery or suffering.

(23) 2 Peter 3:9; again the final destiny of the lost is shown to be perishing.

(24) Jude 11; Though the word here is in the past tense for grammatical reasons or literary effects, it clearly refers to the final fate of the wicked. The following verses show that the men of whom the apostle wrote alive at the time of the writing.

(25) Romans 2:12; to perish is the consequence of sin. The following sentence says this will happen at the judgment.

(26) Romans 14:15; the use of the word APPOLLYE “destroy” in this passage raises difficult theological problems, discussion of which does not come within our scope here. Perhaps the translation “lose” should be substituted, the word being used in the evangelist Luke’s sense as applicable to something or someone that is recoverable though lost. If “destroy” is the correct translation, the reference is presumably to the second death.

(27) 1 Cor. 8:11; the facts and problems are the same here as in number 26.

(29) 2 Cor. 2:15; salvation is again contrasted with perishing.

(30) 2 Cor. 4:3; as it stands in our version we again have a reference to the final fate of the lost. It is possible that the real meaning is “hid BY THE THINGS that are PERISHING.”

(31) 2 Thess. 2:10 ; the perishing are again of course the lost.

The reader will have noticed that in the foregoing passages there has several times (we might say many times) been a contrast between salvation or eternal life and destruction or perishing, and that never once has salvation or eternal life been contrasted with everlasting misery or suffering. Some have thought that they have seen it in Matthew 25:46, a passage we shall take up in its appropriate place and shall see that no such idea is there carried. Now if the sinner were really faced with eternal misery or suffering, is it conceivable that this should never be directly stated or made clear when the contrast is made in scripture, so faithfully and lovingly full as it is of warnings, between the destinies of the saved and the lost?

Further Greek Words In The Nt

In the apostle Peter's sermon in Solomon's porch occurs the word EXOLETHREUTHEESETAI, "shall be cut off," quoted from Leviticus 23:29. It refers in the OT to death and here to final destruction, showing how the two can be spoken of in the same terms. This word has the same root as OLETHRON, the word for everlasting destruction in 2 Thess. 1:9.

Another word is PHTHEIREIN. It occurs twice in 1 Cor. 3:17, translated both "defile" and "destroy." Its original meaning is "to corrupt," e.g. morally, or by false religion or propaganda. A recognised sense is "to destroy." The form or method of destruction is not specified.

A stronger word of the same root and meaning is DIAPHTHEIREIN, used twice in Rev. 11:18, the first time meaning to destroy and referring to the judgment and the second death. It is used with reference to ships in Rev. 8:9.

Finally the word KATHAIREIN is used of the destruction of the seven nations in Canaan (Acts 13:19) (in quotation from Deut. 7:1). It is not used of the final destruction of the wicked.

Silence And Darkness

Before we go to study the fire which is the agency of the destruction of the lost, we will glance at a few revealing passages which place doubt the meaning and nature of that destruction. We turn first to Hannah's song in 1 Samuel 2:9; "the wicked shall be silent in darkness." This truth leaves no room whatever for the shrieks and groans of the damned not for the lurid light of the torturing flames nor the red hot floor of hell, on which we have read of infants crawling. And if ever it could be conceivably true that they so crawl, would they do it in silence?

Destruction

The following passages replay study:

(1) Isaiah 1:28; "And the destruction of the transgressors and of the sinners shall be together, and they that forsake the Lord shall be consumed."

What impression would be given by these words to a reader who came for the first time to the Bible with a knowledge of the meaning of the words “destruction and “consume” either in English or Hebrew or in both? Can we honestly say that he would regard this destruction and consumption as an introduction to an eternal life of misery and suffering?

(2) Isaiah 26:11; “the fire of thine enemies shall devour them.”

This is plain, clear language and we shall find a considerable number of further statements to the same effect. To be devoured by fire is a normal thing. It is not the same thing as a quite abnormal preservation in fire to be tormented by it. The fire of the Lord’s enemies may mean (a) fire prepared for them by Him, or (b) fire which their own wickedness will have kindled and made inevitable.

(3) Hosea 13:3. The final end of sinners is compared in this verse to FOUR things: (a) “the morning cloud.” This dissipated and vanishes into the air: (b) “The early dew that passes away.” This disappears off the grass, leaving nothing behind: (c) “the chaff that is driven with the whirlwind out of the floor.” The chaff disappears in the wind: (d) “the smoke out of the chimney.” Smoke disappears into the air.

What impression do these four comparisons make upon you? Do the morning cloud, the early dew, the chaff and the smoke continue forever? If they do not - and we know well they do not - then sinners finally disappear from God’s creation as these four things disappear from the face of the sky, the grass, the threshing-floor and the chimney.

(4) Psalm 68:2; “As smoke is driven away, so drive them away: as wax melts before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God.” Here again we find the smoke and the added vivid picture of wax melting before the fire. Exactly the same picture is given us.

(5) Psalm 73:18-20. Here we find the fate of the wicked described as destruction, desolation, being utterly consumed with terrors. This shows the condition and feelings of the wicked, as they stand before the throne of judgment. Verse 20 goes on to say, “As a dream when one awaketh; so, O Lord, when you awake, you shall despise their image.” We learn here that the wicked will have no more existence in that day than a dream of the previous night.

(6, 7 and 8) Proverbs 13:9, 24:20; Job 18:5, 6. In these three passages we find written respectively: “The lamp of the wicked shall be put out,” “the candle of the wicked shall be put out,” “the light of the wicked shall be put out...and his candle shall be put out with him.” “What!” says an indignant believer in natural immortality, “do you mean to tell me that a Man’s life will be snuffed out like a candle?” Yes. This is the very things the Bible says in these three passages. What can this mean but the extinction of life?

(9) Job 20:7. Among many temporal judgments and terrors which pursue the wicked described in this chapter as well as in chapter 18 we find his final end in this verse. It is that he shall perish forever like his own dung. This corresponds with the eternal destruction of 2 Thessalonians 1:9.

It again gives us surely the strong impression that destruction and perishing in these passages bear their natural meaning.

(10) 1 Chronicles 4:41. This passage does not speak of the final destruction of the wicked, but it has a time note - "destroyed them utterly UNTO THIS DAY" - which well illustrates the meaning of "eternal destruction." ANNIHILATION

There are FIVE passages which directly teach annihilation of the wicked...They are:

(1) Isaiah 41:11, 12. These verses speak of the final condition of the enemies of the people of the Lord. The impression given is that of annihilation.

(2) Ezekiel 28:19.

(3) Obadiah 15:16, "the day of the Lord is near upon all the heathen...they shall be as though they had not been." No words could express annihilation so clearly, so strongly, or so definitely.

(4) Psalm 37:20, "But the wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs:they shall consume; into smoke they shall consume away." These words again can express nothing but extinction. They tell us distinctly that, unlike Moses' burning bush which burnt with fire but was NOT consumed, the eternal flames will do to the wicked exactly what we observe and expect fire to do today.

(5) Proverbs 10:25, "As the whirlwind passes, so is the wicked no more." Again what can these words mean but the extinction? We should note that such passages as Psalm 37:10 do not necessarily carry the idea of annihilation, as may be seen for example from Genesis 5:14 and 1 Kings 20:4 (text and margin).

Weeping And Gnashing Of Teeth

Four times in the gospel of Matthew we are told that on the day of judgment there will be "weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 8:12, 22:13, 24:51, 25:30). The first, second and fourth of these passages speak of "the outer darkness" and continue immediately, "there (Greek ekei) will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Those who believe in the eternal conscious existence of the lost believe that this weeping will be heard for ever in the outer darkness, which they rightly identify as hell. If however we look at the third passage (Matt. 24:51) we shall see that no place is mentioned. "There" means "on that occasion." It is at the throne of judgment, as the real nature of the wicked is revealed to them in all its hideousness, in despair and misery because of what they have lost and missed, as they hear the sentence, perhaps through the temporary suffering, which, as we shall see, precedes their destruction, that the weeping and gnashing of teeth are heard.

Both as based on the OT. We find the weeping in Zephaniah 1:14 and the gnashing of teeth in Psalm 112:10. The prophet like the evangelist uses the word "there" and confirms its reference to the day of judgment, "The great day of the Lord is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of the Lord: the mighty man shall cry THERE bitterly." The psalmist confirms

that the judgment upon the wicked is extinction, “The wicked shall see it, and be grieved; he shall gnash his teeth, and melt away; the desire of the wicked shall perish.”

Everlasting Punishment

Four times in the NT the final state of the wicked is referred to as punishment. First comes the famous phrase at the conclusion of the great judgment scene of the sheep and the goats in Matt. 25:46, “And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.”

Many have relied on this phrase to support the idea of the everlasting conscious suffering of the wicked, reading it as if it said, “everlasting punishing.” This is not the meaning of the word. When the adjective *ATONIOS* meaning “everlasting” is used in Greek with nouns of ACTION it has reference to the RESULT of the action, not the process. Thus the phrase “everlasting punishment” is compared to “everlasting redemption” and “everlasting salvation,” both Scriptural phrases.

No one supposed that we are being redeemed or being saved for ever. We were redeemed and saved once and for all by Christ with eternal results. In the same way the lost will not be passing through the process of punishment for ever but will be punished once and for all with eternal results. On the other hand the noun “life” is not a noun of action, but a noun expressing a state. Thus the life itself is eternal.

It is this phrase “eternal life” that is here set in contrast to “everlasting punishment.” This should warn us that everlasting punishment is likely to mean everlasting death. This is exactly what we find in 2 Thessalonians 1:9, as we shall see. We cannot object that death is not punishment, having been accustomed to use the phrase “capital punishment” all our lives.

The word here translated “punishment” is *KOLASIS*. A glance at the word in Moulton and Milligan’s *VOCABULARY* will show how it was used at the time for pruning and cutting out of dead wood. If that is its meaning here, it reflects Moses’ frequent phrase, “shall be cut off from his people.” Thus the wicked will be finally cut off from mankind.

The same root occurs again in our second occurrence in 2 Peter 2:9, “the Lord knoweth how...to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished,” or possibly, as we have seen, “to be cut off.” The word here is the participle *KOLAZOMENOUS*. Though the participle is in a present form, our translators were clearly right to render it as a future.

Our third passage is 2 Thessalonians 1:9, “who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might, when He shall come.” This makes it clear that the everlasting punishment of Matt. 25:46 is everlasting destruction, and this destruction must be annihilation or personal extinction, since it is destruction from the presence of the Lord.

All will agree that the presence of the Lord is everywhere. To be destroyed from the presence of the Lord can therefore only mean to be nowhere. This seems the more probable meaning of the passage, but let us not press it, as it is possible, though we feel less likely, to interpret the

presence of the Lord here as the time of His second coming when everlasting destruction, as we all undoubtedly agree, will take place. The words used here for “shall be punished” are DIKEEN TISOUSIN. They carry the idea of retribution.

Our fourth and last passage is Hebrews 10:29. The word for “punishment” is TIMORIA. It also carries the idea of retribution. The apostle is contrasting the law with the gospel. He says in verse 28 that anyone who despised Moses’ law died without mercy and goes on, “Of how much sorer punishment, suppose you, shall he be thought worthy, who has trodden under foot the Son of God?”

This passage makes clear that death APART from suffering is a punishment. Eternal destruction is a “sorer” punishment. Therefore death (usually by judicial stoning) was a sore one. Now eternal destruction, preceded, as we shall find, by retributive suffering, is indeed much sorer than temporal death.

Those put to death under the law will rise again at the end of the world, to judgment it is true, but who knows whether some may not have been, or become at the approach of death, believers at heart, who will therefore rise to eternal life? The terror and despair of the lost at the throne of judgment, as we find them portrayed in the Bible, cannot be exaggerated.

The Lost In Prison

This seems to be the proper place to introduce the saying of the Lord in the sermon on the mount to be found in Matt. 5:25, 26, “agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Very I say unto you, thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.” The parallel passage in Luke 12:58, 59 says the same thing in rather different language. It may well have been this passage on which the late Sir Robert Anderson based his description of hell in his book “Human Destiny” as a large prison in which the lost lives for ever under restraint, though he rather curiously conceived of them as accepting their destiny. As he was an efficient and important official of police, we can easily understand this idea as appealing to him. He evidently shrank from the conception of actual fire and literal torments.

Many have felt that this passage justifies the view of the everlasting conscious existence of the lost. But is not the passage a little picture or parable of the wickedness and consequences of lack of forgiveness? Is not the adversary God himself? The who is the judge and who is the officer? They simply represent figures in the parable. And if so, the prison does the same.

In any case can we pit these two isolated passages against what we have seen to be the consistent testimony of the rest of Scripture?

What we indeed learn from these sayings is that once condemned the sinner can never hope for restoration. Not only can he never pay the last farthing, but he cannot even pay the first.

Suffering Of The Lost

Though Scripture teaches, as we have sort to show, the extinction of the unrepentant sinners in eternal destruction, it does not lead us to think of an instantaneous snuffing out of their lives without exaction of full and complete retribution for the wrong done to others by hateful and wicked lives and years of unbroken sin against God. We will select three passages which foresee this suffering.

(a) Obadiah 15, “the day of the Lord is near upon the heathen; as you have done, it shall be done unto you: thy reward shall return upon your own head.” Here we find the law of retaliation in force and on reflection we may feel that this is what we should expect.

(b) Romans 2:9, “tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that does evil.”

(c) Luke 12:47, 48. Here we find that the future suffering will vary in degree according to responsibility. Some have been led to believe from the use of the word “servant” that this passage concerns believers. Apart from the impossibility of such an overthrow of the doctrine of grace the previous verse (46) tells us that it concerns “unbelievers.”

We thus learn that included in future punishment is a period of suffering which varies in degree and precedes the fulfilment of the punishment in everlasting destruction. The length of this period of suffering, light or heavy as it may be, is not stated or mentioned in Scripture. Some with the idea of eternal suffering at the back of their minds put it at centuries or millennia. There are no grounds for doing so.

The Suffering And The Death Of Christ

It has sometimes been forgotten that we have in history at the centre of our faith an open example and illustration of the punishment of sin. The Lord Jesus Christ bore our sins in His own body on the tree (1 Peter 2:24). The use of the phrase “bear his (their) iniquity” several times in the books of Moses proves that to bear our sins means to bear the PUNISHMENT of them and all Bible-believers will agree that this was actually the case.

Now at the time of His passion the Lord Jesus underwent a period of increasing excruciating agony culminating in death. The suffering lasted some hours. There is no reason why we should not take this as the model and example of the final punishment of sin...When the Lord Jesus at last died, full satisfaction was made for the sins of the whole world (1 John 2:2), God’s holy law was vindicated and all sins potentially and actually atoned for.

If He bore the punishment of our sins, that punishment cannot under any circumstances be eternal conscious suffering or misery, for He never suffered this and it is impossible that He could have.

Thus the facts of the suffering and death of Christ Jesus prove conclusively that the punishment of sin is DEATH in its NATURAL SENSE of the deprivation of life....The Lord could not be

held by death. He was in the grave only so long...and as we know and believe, rose to live for ever. The UNrepentant and UNBELIEVING SINNER on the other hand has no escape from DEATH but remains beneath its power eternally.

The Consummation Of The Wicked

We will now consider the usage as it bears on our subject of a few Hebrew words with the general meaning of “consume” before bringing our study to an end by an examination of the words used in passages which speak of the destruction of the wicked by the agency of fire.

(1) ACHAL is the ordinary word meaning “to eat.” Its significance for our purpose is that it was often used to express the ACTION of fire. Fire, as we know, CONSUMES, and there is nothing in the Bible to tell us that the eternal fire does not do the same. One of the earliest occurrences of ACHAL with fire is in Numbers 21:28.

(2) KALAH means “to finish.” We find it in Isaiah 1:28, “And the destruction of the transgressors and of the sinners shall be together, and they that forsake the Lord shall be consumed.” Again we find it in Psalm 59:13, “Consume them in wrath, consume them, that they may not be; and let them know (i.e. let men know) that God rules in Jacob unto the ends of the earth.”

(3) SUPH means “to bring to an end.” It is used of the wicked on the day of judgment in Isaiah 66:17. It appears again in Zephaniah 1:2, 3 and Psalm 79:13.

(4) The verb DAACH means to be extinct. It is used of the end of the wicked probably in Isaiah 43:17; Psalm 118:12 and Job 6:17; and certainly in Proverbs 13:9, 20:20, 24:20; Job 18:5,6 and Job 21:17.

Before leaving these words with the underlying notion of “consume” it will be interesting to remind ourselves that the common word ACHAL occurs in Exodus 3:2 in the account of Moses at the bush, where we are told that the bush burned with fire but was not consumed.

This is exactly what many people think will be the case of the lost in hell.

We have however never heard of any argument for this doctrine based upon this incident, and with good reason, for not only does the Bible speak consistently again and again of those cast into hell being destroyed and consumed there, but the emphasis that it places upon the supernatural strangeness of the incident of the burning bush suggests that if the Holy Spirit desired us to believe that the same thing is to happen in hell He would have been at pains to make it perfectly clear to us instead of using expressions which would lead us to think that the action of hell fire is identical with the action of fire as we ordinarily know it.

Hell Fire

We now reach our final study, which is an examination of the agency by which the destruction of the wicked will be effected. This is said consistently throughout Scripture to be FIRE. We shall concentrate on the NT, but some preliminary remarks on the OT background must be made.

The ordinary Hebrew word meaning fire is ESH. It occurs about 350 times. A glance through a concordance will satisfy us that it bears the same elementary meaning as our own word “fire.” It is occasionally used in a figurative sense for something very hot or to describe the wrath of God, as in Lev. 13:24; Hab. 2:13; Psalm 39:3 or Job 31:12. It is used of God himself (Deut. 5:23), and in this connection it is important to turn to Isaiah 33:14, where the prophet asks the question, “Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burning?” Some would reply, “The lost will do so forever.” But that is a wrong answer. The next verse answers the question, “He that walks righteously, and speaks uprightly.”

The sinners and hypocrites (v:14) are afraid that they cannot do so, and rightly. When they touch the devouring fire, they will be devoured by it. Only the righteous can dwell for ever unscathed in the burning fire of God’s presence.

Hebrew ESH is used in connection with the destruction of the wicked, as in Psalm 21:9, “You shall make them as a fiery oven in the time of your anger: the Lord shall swallow them up in His wrath, and the fire shall devour them.”

There are two significant occurrences of the verb LAHAT, which means “to set on fire,” “to burn up.”

The first of these is of great importance. It is found in Malachi 4:1, “For, behold, the day comes, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yes, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble :and the day that comes shall burn them up, says the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.”

Is this not perfectly plain? How can we read into these words “burn up,” “leave neither root nor branch,” the conception of everlasting life in conscious misery? Verse 3 confirms the meaning by telling us of the result; “You shall tread down the wicked, for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, says the Lord of hosts.” The verb LAHAT is used figuratively in Psalm 57:4, though it has nothing in that passage to do with our subject. In Psalm 97:3 it speaks again of the destruction of the wicked, “A fire goes before Him, and burns up His enemies round about.”

Greek Pyr In The Nt

The original Greek word for “fire” is PYR, corresponding in meaning to Hebrew ESH, Latin IGNIS and our own FIRE. the Greek and the English both stem from the root PUR, which must have been in use four thousand years ago with the same elemental meaning....

The word occurs 20 times without reference to the second death. The references are as follows: Matt. 17:15; Mark 9:22, 49; Luke 9:54, 12:49; Acts 7:30, 28:5; James 3:5, 2 Peter 3:7; Romans 12:20; 1 Cor. 3:13, 15; Heb. 12:29; Rev. 8:7, 9:18, 17:16, 18:8, 20:9.

More than half of these refer to fire as we know and recognize it, but there are some passages among them at which we should glance.

In Mark 9:49 we have fire used as the symbol of fiery trials and persecution with which every disciple must be salted or made acceptable as a living sacrifice to God.

In Luke 12:49 fire is used as the symbol of separation between the members of families (verse 51-53) which was to result by the Gospel from the Lord's first coming.

In Luke 17:29 we are told of the rain of fire and brimstone which destroyed all the people of Sodom, described in Jude 7, as we shall see, as everlasting fire and symbolic of the eternal fire which will destroy the wicked.

The martyr Stephen in his inspired speech refers to the Angel who appeared to Moses in the burning bush (Acts 7:30). The fire here is the supernatural fire with which the bush burnt without being consumed, possibly the fire of the presence of God.

In 2 Peter 3:7 the apostle speaks of the fire which will destroy the heavens and the earth on the day of judgment. We may possibly identify this with the fire of hell or the lake of fire.

In Romans 12:20 the apostle quoting Proverbs 25:21, 22 uses fire as a symbol of feelings of shame, conviction and repentance.

In 1 Cor. 3:13, 15 the fire is symbolic either of the testing fire of judgment at the last day or of earthly tests and trials.

Hebrews 12:29 quoted from Deut. 4:24 speaks of God Himself as fire.

It remains to examine carefully the occurrences of the word PYR which relate to the destruction of the wicked. We will divide these into three:(1) those which speak of fire, or unquenchable fire, (2) those which of the fire of hell, to which we will add references to hell (Greek GEENNA) without mentioning fire, eleven in number, and (3) those which speak of the lake of fire.

Unquenchable Fire

(a) Matt. 3:10, "every tree which brings not forth good fruit, is hewn down, and cast into the fire." What do we naturally expect to happen to a tree that is thrown into the fire? And why should we not expect it in this case also?

(b) Matt. 3:12, "he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." The meaning of "burn up" is surely unmistakable. Can it by any trick of imagination be made to mean "preserve alive in everlasting misery"? But how many have felt that UNQUENCHABLE fire expresses a special

sort of fire which must go on burning for ever. Now even if it actually did so, it would not follow that the person or things cast into it would exist for ever without being burnt up. But there is no reason to suppose that it does. The idea of unquenchable fire is taken like so much else in the NT from the Scriptures of the Old.

In Jeremiah 17:27 we read that the Lord will kindle a fire in the gates of Jerusalem which will devour her palaces and **SHALL NOT BE QUENCHED**. The king of Babylon was the instrument through whom God fulfilled this threat and the palaces were devoured. But is the **FIRE BURNING NOW**? Of course not! No one in the world could quench it **TILL IT HAD FULFILLED THE PURPOSE FOR WHICH IT WAS KINDLED**, and then in the course of nature it **WENT OUT**.

In Jeremiah 7:20 the Lord says the same thing about His wrath against Jerusalem. Unquenchable fire in Scripture is thus fire that cannot be put out **UNTIL** it has totally devoured what it was kindled to burn up. Such will be the fire that will burn up the wicked.

(c) Matt. 7:19, “Every tree that brings not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire.” The Lord Jesus here repeats the solemn words of John the Baptist. See (a) above.

(d) Matt. 13:40, “As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be at the end of this world.” Again can we force “burned” into meaning “exist for ever”?

(e) Matt. 13:41, 42, “they shall gather out of His Kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire.” There is nothing to lead us to expect that those cast into the furnace will be preserved in it as Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were.

(f) Matt. 13:49, 50, “the angels shall...sever the wicked from among the just; and shall cast them into the furnace of fire.”

(g) Matt. 18:8, “It is better for you to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire.” This is the first time in the NT that we meet with the expression “everlasting fire,” which we have discussed above. The expression has been thought to infer the everlasting life of the wicked in misery, just as has the expression “unquenchable fire.” But the Bible itself explains its meaning. The apostle Jude tells us (Jude 7) that the fire which destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah was eternal fire (Greek **AIONIOS**, “everlasting,” “eternal”). It soon burnt itself out, but it was everlasting in its accomplishing of destruction from which the cities have never recovered nor ever will. It was everlasting in its **RESULTS**. Such will be the fire that destroys the wicked. The fire by the way, of Jude 7, cannot be a fire in which the **INHABITANTS** of the guilty cities are burning today in another world, because they would not in such a case be “set forth for an example.” It must have been the historical fire.

(h) Matt. 25:41, “Then shall he say unto them on the left hand, depart from me you cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.” Here we have the same everlasting fire and we learn it is prepared for the devil and his angels...

(i) Mark 9:44, “where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched.” This is the description of hell (Greek GEENA), which is mentioned at the conclusion of the preceding verse. We shall leave the whole clause till we deal shortly with the word GEENA and note meanwhile the statement that the fire is not quenched. For this see (b) above.

(j) Mark 9:46. This is identical with (i).

(k) Mark 9:48. This is identical with (i) and (j).

(l) Luke 3:9, see (a) above.

(m) Luke 3:17, see (b) above.

(n) John 15:6. “If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.” We notice that such branched are BURNED. The text does not say, “into the fire, where they are preserved forever in suffering.”

(o) James 5:3, “and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire.” This passage is clearly expressing in figurative language, but is best thought of as speaking of the fire of hell.

(p) Jude 7, “Sodom and Gomorrah...are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.” This is the fire that destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, but we include it here because it explains and illustrates the meaning of eternal (everlasting AIONIOS) fire. See (g) above.

(q) Jude 23, “others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire.” When we save sinners by the agency of the Gospel, we save them from the fire of hell.

(r) 2 Thess. 1:7, 8, “When the Lord shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flames of fire.” This seems certainly to be the fire that accompanies the presence of God. It may be identical with the fire of hell.

(s) Hebrews 10:27, “a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation (Greek PYROS ZEELOS, “indignation of fire”), which shall devour the adversaries.” Here again the apostle tells us that the adversaries of God will be DESTROYED by fire. But the scheme of natural immortality says that they never will.

(t) Revelation 14:9-11, “If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive the mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same 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 in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb; and the smoke of their torment ascended up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receives the mark of his name.”

We notice here....that it is addressed to a certain class of persons....those who have refused to receive the love of the truth that they might be saved and to whom God sends strong delusion

that they should believe the lie (2 Thess. 2:10, 11)...their torment in fire and brimstone takes place in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. This is a powerful reason - the first of two - why this cannot be everlasting suffering in hell. Hell is in "outer darkness" (Matt. 8:12). It is everlasting destruction FROM THE PRESENCE of the Lord, not torment in His presence (2 Thess. 1:9). ...we may well suppose it to be part of the "tribulation and anguish" (Rom. 2:9) which sinners will suffer on the day of judgment.

We notice that the smoke of their torment goes up for ever and ever. This is the second good reason why the torment here cannot be eternal suffering in hell. The ascent of the smoke shows that the STROKE of judgment is over (Gen. 19:24, 25, 28; Isa. 34:9, 10). The torment is the suffering that like that of the Lord Jesus had its climax in death. The ascent of the smoke for EVER AND EVER proves the judgment to be eternal destruction.

In Revelation 19:3 we find the smoke of the Babylonish whore going up for ever and ever, for the same reason and with the same meaning. There can scarcely be anyone who believes that a great city and ecclesiastical system will exist in conscious torment for ever and ever. This is not the meaning of the ascent of the smoke, but something quite different.

The torment is eternal torment in the sense of everlasting punishment (we covered earlier).

We notice that these sinners have no rest day nor night while their suffering lasts nor any restoration from the blackness of darkness for ever. This punitive destruction holds no rest for them such as the godly are pictured as having in their graves while they await glorious resurrection (Rev. 14:13; Job 3:17).

Gehenna

We saw...how the Hebrew word SH'OL and its corresponding Greek HAIDEES were often inappropriately translated "hell," when each should have been consistently translated "the grave." In the NT alone we find the word GEENNA, which if it ought to be translated at all is rightly and consistently translated "hell."

It occurs 11 times and is identical with the everlasting and unquenchable fire which we have just examined.

The word is taken from the name of the valley of Hinnom outside Jerusalem where the fires were continually kept burning to dispose of the rubbish of the city including unburied corpses.

Hinnom was an abominable place. The idolatrous kings of Judah set up in a high place called Tophet a shrine to the heathen god Moloch at which they burned their children alive in honor of the god, while drums beat loud to drown the screams of the children. The prophet Jeremiah denounced this abominable practice and foretold that Tophet would be destroyed and defiled (see 2 Kings 23:10; Jer. 31:32, 19:2, 6, 32:35; 2 Chron. 28:3, 33:6).

All references to GEENNA except the last come from the lips of the Lord Jesus Himself. They are:

(1) Matthew 5:22, “whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.” Exact interpretation of this verse is difficult, but it is clear that the Lord is saying that a murderous, angry or unforgiving spirit makes a man liable to final destruction in hell.

(2) Matthew 5:29. Here the Lord tells men to separate themselves at all costs from the sins of lust so as to avoid being cast into hell.

(3) Matthew 5:30. This is identical in meaning with the last.

(4) Matthew 10:28, “but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.” Hell means final destruction, not everlasting life in misery. We discussed this verse in our first section when studying the meaning in the NT of the Greek word PSYCHEE which corresponds to Hebrew NEPHEESH.

(5) Matthew 18:9. Here we have the expression “hell fire” (Greek TEENB GEENAN TOU PYROS). This verse says the same things as Matthew 5:29 (2 above).

(6) Matthew 23:15, “when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.” The reference is to a proselyte made by the Pharisees. A child of hell means one that is destined to go there.

(7) Matthew 23:33, “Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers! How can you escape the damnation of hell?” The Lord is addressing the scribes and Pharisees. To escape the damnation of hell means to escape being condemned to hell. The obstinate self-righteousness of the Pharisees kept them from repenting and believing in Jesus.

(8) Mark 9:43, 44. Here we find hell identified with the unquenchable fire with the added description, “where their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched.” Verse 43 is identical in meaning with Matthew 5:30.....

It has often been supposed that the words in verse 44, 46 and 48 describe an everlasting life of suffering and misery in hell. Even if they described a life of conscious suffering there, which we deny, nothing is said about its eternity. But it is often forgotten that the words are a quotation from Isaiah 66:24. There in the last verse of the great prophet’s book in a context where he is describing the world to come, we read, “ And they (that is, the redeemed) shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me; for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh.”

Surely the whole verse (Isa. 66:24) is expressed in terms describing the valley of Hinnom, of which it is a perfect picture. Fires were continually burning there to consume the rubbish of the city and all defilement. Carcasses were consumed by the flames, or, till they were reached by the flames, lay there devoured by worms.

Thus the quotation by the evangelist of the prophet’s description of Hinnom and the taking over in the NT of the name of Hinnom to express and describe hell gives us a clear picture of hell as

the bonfire and rubbish heap of creation, where everything that defiles (Rev. 21:27), including of course wicked men, is burnt up and utterly destroyed out of the existence in the flames.

Can we extract any other meaning from the prophet's words after finding that they are a direct quotation from the prophet without breaking the unity of the Old and New Testament?

(9) Mark 9:45, 46. See No:8.

(10) Mark 9:47, 48. See No:8.

(11) James 3:6, "the tongue is a fire...and it is set on fire of hell." This is the only reference to hell outside the Gospels of Matthew and Mark. Like much else in the epistle of James it is difficult...Obviously the fire is in no sense literal. If we are inclined to think that the fire of hell is burning in another world, and that somehow the tongue is in touch with it, we abandon at once the actuality of the fire of hell. It could only be symbolic. But fire as the agent of destruction of sinners is spoken of so often in Scripture that we do not get the impression that it is a symbol, and a vague symbol at that. Perhaps the most proper way of regarding the apostle's statement in this verse is to think of it as including a very fierce and dangerous fire, so fierce that it can only be compared to the fire of hell.

The Lake Of Fire

There remains 5 passages in the closing chapters of the Apocalypse in which the unquenchable and everlasting fire of hell is described as the LAKE OF FIRE. These are:

(a) Revelation 19:20 Here we read that at the great battle of the last day the beast and the false prophet were taken and cast alive both of them into the lake of fire that burns with brimstone..... It will be seen at once that the great political and ecclesiastical systems can neither suffer torment nor remain alive and conscious in the lake of fire. It is quite clear that only their utter extermination can result...We have a clear proof that the lake of fire is the agency of utter destruction. The statement here agrees with that in Daniel 7:11.

(b) Revelation 20:10, "And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night forever."

...The dependent sentence speaks of the beast and the false prophet (Rev. 19:20). Some have concluded from the word "are" that the beast and the false prophet will still be existing in the lake of fire when the devil is cast into it, which is after an interval of a thousand years (Rev. 20:2, 3, 7), but careful readers will note that the word "are" is in *ITALICS*, which shows that it does not occur in the original Greek. The preceding main clause demands that the words "had been cast" (not "are") should be supplied.

The beast and the false prophet has ceased to exist a thousand years previously. Our A.V. text continues "and shall be tormented." This conceals the fact that the Greek verb *BASANISTHEESONTAI* is plural...

Many have used this verse and Revelation 14:10 to sustain the view of eternal conscious misery for the wicked in hell. This verse is clearly connected with Revelation 14:10, which gives us the clue to its interpretation. There we read of the SMOKE of the torment going up for ever and ever and we saw from OT passages on which the words are based that the torment ends in everlasting destruction. The meaning here must clearly be the same, or we would have an intolerable inconsistency. Here it is expressed by the verb instead of the noun....

(c) Revelation 20:14. Here we find death and the grave cast into the lake of fire. This can mean nothing but their utter annihilation and proves to us the function of the lake of fire.

(d) Revelation 20:15. Here we find all the wicked cast into the lake of fire. The previous verse has shown us conclusively that this means their complete extinction.

(e) Revelation 21:8. Sinners have their part in the lake of fire, which is here and in verse 14 (c above) defined and explained as the second death....we saw that the word "death" has in Scripture its natural meaning of the extinction of life and we have seen that there is every reason to conclude that when used in this verse the word has its natural meaning.

Thus we have seen that...the wicked oppressive system, death and the grave and all wicked men will on the great day be totally destroyed out of God's creation. Indeed ALL EVIL will be destroyed...