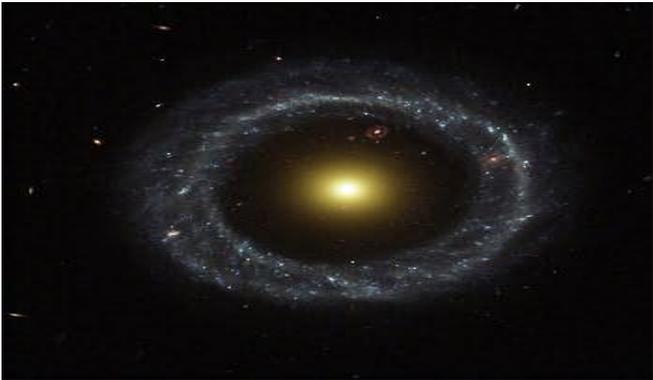


HEAVEN



And

HELL



This is a sequel to an extended series of studies on "Soul/Spirit and Angels/Demons." Heaven and Hell the eternal destiny of the righteous and the unrighteous of mankind, respectively.

I. HEAVEN.

1. Etymology.

- a. English: Akin to the word "heave," and refers to that which lifted or pushed up, hence, high, literally or figuratively.
- b. Hebrew: *Shamayim*, expanse, or heaved up things; the heights above, the upper regions – occurring 419 times in the Old Testament – in the King James Version translated "air" 21 times (Genesis 1:26,28,30; 2:19,30; 6:7; 7:3; 9:2; Deuteronomy 4:17; 28:26; 1 Samuel 17:44,46; 2 Samuel 21:10; 1 Kings 14:11; 16:4; 21:24; Job 12:7; 28:21; Psalm 8:8 Proverbs 30:19; Ecclesiastes 10:20) – but these as well as all other occurrences are translated as "heaven" or "heavens" in the American Standard Version.
- c. Greek: *Ouranos*, from a root meaning "to cover," "encompass"; and, in imitation of the Hebrew *shamayim*, properly of the heights above, or heaved up things; probably, says vine, akin to *ornumi*, to lift, to heave – occurring 278 times in the New Testament – in the King James Version translated as "air" ten times (Matthew 6:26; 8:20; 13:32; Mark 4:4,32; Luke 8:5; 9:58; 13:19; Acts 10:12; 11:6 – but these and all other occurrences are translated as "heaven," or "heavens" in the American Standard Version.

2. Distinctions.

- a. The vaulted expanse of the sky with all things in it:
 - (1) Opposite of the earth, as in expressions of "heaven and earth" (Genesis 1:1; Matthew 24:35; Hebrews 12:25-28; 2 Peter 3:10-13; Revelation 20:11; 21:1) – embracing the next two numbers.
 - (2) Aerial or atmospheric heavens, as "birds of heaven" or "clouds of heaven" (Matthew 6:26; 8:20; Acts 10:12; 11:6; James 5:18).
 - (3) Siderial heavens, the region of the "sun," "moon," and "stars" (Genesis 1:14-16; Psalm 8:3-4; Matthew 24:29,35; Mark 13:15,31; Hebrews 11:12; Revelation 6:14; 20:11).
- b. The region above the siderial heavens – the seat of things eternal and consummately perfect, where God and other heavenly beings dwell (Matthew 5:16; 12:50; Revelation 3:12; 11:13; 16:11; 20:9) –the "third heaven" (2 Corinthians 12:2) – "heaven of heavens" (1 Kings 8:27). (Cf. Ephesians 4:10, "far above all heavens," Hebrews 1:3, and Revelation 3:21-22.) REPRESENTED IN THE DIAGRAM.

II. HELL.

1. Etymology.

- a. English: An Anglo-Saxon term meaning "concealed," and therefore unseen, and used broadly as the Hebrew *sheol*, including the grave – but not properly covered by the Greek word Hades, as it is improperly translated in the King James Version in 1 Corinthians 15:55 from the Textus Receptus, where other recensions of the Greek text have *thanatos*, "death." Elsewhere in the King James Version, "grave" is from the Greek *mnema* (Revelation 11:9) and *mnemeion* (Matthew 27:52-53; Luke 11:44; John 5:28; 11:17,31,38; 12:17) – rendered "tomb" in the American Standard Version.

The King James Version translates all four of the following Hebrew and Greek words as "hell," because representing a realm unseen by the eyes of mortals. The American Standard Version leaves *Sheol* and Hades untranslated, but translates *Tartarus* and *Gehenna* as "hell" – the words *Tartarus* and *Gehenna* always being associated with punishment, but *Sheol* and Hades not always so.

- b. Hebrew: *Sheol*, the unseen state or realm – occurring 65 times in the Old Testament, in the King James Version translated "hell" 31 times, "grave" 31 times, and "pit" three times – but in American Standard Version always left untranslated but simply transliterated (that is, spelled with English letters) – and applying vaguely to either of the unseen states variously referred to by the Greek words of the New Testament mentioned below, plus *mnemeion* as mentioned above.

c. Greek:

- (1) Hades, the unseen state or realm, and used of the place of the spirits of the dead between death and the resurrection (see Luke 16:22-23,27-31). The soul of both the righteous and the wicked go there at the death of the body (see Acts 2:27,31; Luke 16:23) – but are separated by a "great gulf" (Luke 16:26).

NOTE: The body without the spirit or soul, but not the spirit without the body, is said to be "dead" (James 2:26; cf. Genesis 35:18). "It is the spirit that giveth life; the flesh profiteth nothing" (John 6:63). That is, the spirit gives life to the flesh, or body; the body does not give life to the spirit. The faculties of the spirit are not lost upon leaving the body (cf. Luke 16:19-31). So there is a sense in which the dead are still alive (cf. 2 Cor. 4:16; Matthew 22:31-32 – fundamental to the concept and fact of the resurrection).

The place in Hades where the righteous go is referred to by Christ as "Paradise" (Luke 23:43) – *Paradeisos*, a garden or park. Evidently that is where Abraham was when Lazarus borne by angels to Abraham's bosom" at the death of the body of Lazarus on earth (Luke 16:22). For the place in Hades where the wicked go at death, see (2) below.

NOTE: (a) "Jehovah god planted a garden (GE. *Paradeisos*) eastward in Eden; and there he put man whom he had formed" (Genesis 2:8), which was forfeited when he sinned (3:22-24). (b) In Hades there is a Paradise for the righteous between death and the resurrection (Luke 23:43). And (c) in eternity, there will be a Paradise in heaven for the redeemed (Revelation 2:7; 22:2).

- (2) Tartarus is a term found in 2 Peter 2:4 as being the place where sinful angels have been cast down, "to be reserved unto judgment" – "unto the judgment of the great day" (Jude 6) – evidently the judgment of Acts 17:31 and Matthew 25:31-46 at the second coming of Christ – likely when we "shall judge angels" (1 Corinthians 6:3). "The Greeks used the word *Tartarus* to refer to a lower realm of Hades where departed spirits were punished." (Raymond C. Kelcy, "The Letters of Peter and Jude," in the Living Word Commentary (1972). This would make it the part of Hades in which the rich man of Luke 16:19-31 was consigned at death, which seems probable.

- (3) Gehenna in its literal sense was the Valley of Hinnom on the south and east of Jerusalem, which had been used during days of apostasy as a place of offering a child sacrifice by fire, and after the reform of King Josiah (2 Kings 23:10) was used as a city dump site for all kinds of refuse, including the dead bodies of animals and of criminals not buried. It is said that fire was kept burning continually, and that worms infested the edges where fire had not consumed. The term was used figuratively 11 times by our Lord of the place of eternal punishment of the wicked (Matthew 5:22,29,30; 10:28; 18:9; 23:15,33; Mark 9:43,45,47; Luke 2:5), and once by James (in 3:6) – with some imagery furnished by characteristics of the eternal Gehenna, as the following: "Whole body ... cast in hell" (Matthew 5:29); "unquenchable fire" (Mark 9:43), "where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched" (v.48). **THIS IS THE HELL REPRESENTED IN THE DIAGRAM.**

Other descriptions include the following: "furnace of fire; [where] there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matthew 13:42); "the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matthew 25:41); "perdition," that is, destruction (not of being, but of well-being. Philippians 3:19); "eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might" (2 Thessalonians 1:9); "the second death" (Revelation 2:11); "cast alive into the lake of fire and brimstone, ... tormented day and night for ever and ever" (Revelation 20:10); "lake that burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death" (Revelation 21:8).

III. JUDGMENT.

Universal judgment prior to eternal destiny has already been noted in Matthew 25:31-46 ("all the nations"); 2 Peter 2:4; and Jude 6 (the angels that sinned). It is likewise evident from Revelation 20:11-15 ("the dead, the great and the small"). It will be a judgment of "the world," in regard to "righteousness" (Acts 17:30-31), and according to each individual's works (Revelation 20:13). "For we must all be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ; that each one may receive [for] things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Corinthians 5:19).

According to Acts 17:30-31, God will do the judging, but do it by Jesus Christ; and in Matthew 25:31-46, we learn that universal judgment will take place at the second coming of Christ, at which time "all that are in the tombs shall hear his voice, and shall come forth: they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life [eternal life]; and they that have done

evil, unto the resurrection of judgment [eternal punishment]" (John 5:28-29). But prior to their respective assignments, they will be gathered before him as he sits "on the throne of his glory," and shall be separated one from the other, "the sheep" on the right hand, and "the goats" on the left (Matthew 25:31-32).

IV. RESURRECTION.

A universal resurrection is seen not only from the proceeding, but also from Revelation 20:11-15, for the Apostle John "saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne; and books opened" ... and the dead were judged out of things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead that were in it; and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them [another way of saying they were raised from the dead, the word "resurrection" being *anastasis*, a standing or rising up]: and they were judged every man according to their works."

The dead also rise with a body suited to whichever destiny awaits. Though the wicked shall be "destroy[ed] both soul and body in "hell" (Matthew 10:28), it is not a destruction of the being of either but of the well-being of both – otherwise there would be no "eternal punishment" – no "torment day and night for ever and ever." If the fire should be literal, the Lord could still provide a body that would not be consumed, just as he appeared to Moses at Sinai in the bush that "burned with fire, and ... was not consumed" (Exodus 3:2).

"It is not yet made manifest [in complete detail] what we shall be. [But] We know that if he [Christ] shall be manifest, we shall be like him; for we shall see him even as he is" (1 John 3:2). And he "shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that we may be conformed to the body of his glory" (Philippines 3:21).

In 1 Corinthians 15:35-54, the apostle Paul does describe the bodies of the saints as far surpassing their earthly bodies in numerous respects, and assuring that the saints living when Christ comes will undergo a comparable change without having to experience death – "corruptible" bodies putting on "incorruption" (not any longer subject to dissolution), and "mortal" bodies putting on "immortality" (not any longer subject to death) – these changes being necessary to "inherit the kingdom of God" (verses 50-54).

NEW HEAVENS AND A NEW EARTH

The first mention of "new heavens and a new earth" is found in Isaiah 65:17 and is repeated and its discussion climaxed in Chapter 66:22-24. This seems to be figurative language referring primarily to a new order that is not other-worldly, with reference to Jerusalem and Israel after the exile and into the Messianic age. But part of it; language is employed in 2 Peter 3:1-13 and given a higher and seemingly literal application, "according to promise," to "new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness" after the destruction of the present physical earth and its surrounding elements by fire, just as the world of mankind perished by the waters of the flood in Noah's day.

Then, however, it was mostly the surface of the earth and its inhabitants that were affected rather than the earth itself being removed, whereas the future destruction Peter was foretelling will be much more extensive and pervasive. "The heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are therein shall [be] burned up" – and, the heavens being on fire, shall be dissolved and the elements shall melt with fervent heat."

NOTE" Some have thought "the elements" of the preceding verses (10 and 12) refer to the "heavenly bodies," so that the margin of the American Standard Version gives that as an alternate reading. But this is disputed, and actually is not crucial. Reference may simply be to the elements of our earthly atmosphere, but, more probably, to the elements of the entire cosmos – the earth and the aerial and sidereal heavens visible from it – not the third heaven. (Cf. Hebrews 1:10-12; Revelation 20:13.)

In Revelation 20:11, reference is made to "the earth and the heavens" fleeing away from the face of him sitting upon the "great white throne," before which the dead stand to be judged at the end of history on the present earth. And, in Chapter 21:1-5, the writer (John) further states: "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth are passed away; and the sea is no more. And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of the throne saying, "Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he shall dwell with them, and they shall be his peoples, and God himself shall dwell with them, and be

their God: and he shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death shall be no more; neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain, any more. And he that sitteth on the throne said, behold, I make all things new. And he saith, Write: for these words are faithful and true.'"

Also, in Revelation 22:1-5 John climaxes by saying, "And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb, in the midst of the street thereof. And on this side of the river and on that was the tree of life, bearing twelve manner of fruits, yielding its fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no curse any more: and the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be therein: and his servants shall serve him; and they shall see his face; and his name shall be on their foreheads. And there shall be night no more; and they need no light of lamp, neither light of sun; for the Lord God shall give them light; and they shall reign forever and ever."

The Pulpit Commentary has the following comment on 2 Peter 3:13, with which we conclude: "St. John, like St. Peter, speaks of a new earth, and tells us that the new earth will be the dwelling place of the blessed. He saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven; the throne of God and of the Lamb (he tells us) shall be in it. 'The tabernacle of God is with men, and he shall dwell with them.' The holy city, Jerusalem, which is above, is in heaven (Phil.111,20). But heaven will come down to earth; the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be there; there his servants shall serve him. The distinction between heaven and earth shall be abolished: for where God is, there is heaven."

ADDENDUM

(Cognates of *ouranos*, "heaven")

1. *Ouranious*, heavenly, that is:
 - a. Dwelling in heaven (Matthew 5:48; 6:14,26,32; 15:13; 15:35; 23:9; Luke 2:13);
 - b. Coming from heaven (Acts 26:19).
2. *Epouranious*, in or above heaven, heavenly:
 - a. Adjective; Existing on heaven:
 - (1) God (Matthew 18:35);
 - (2) angels (Philippians 2:10);
 - (3) kingdom (2 Timothy 4:18);
 - (4) country (Hebrews 11:16);
 - (5) calling (Hebrews 3:1);
 - (6) things (John 3:12);
 - b. Plural adjective used as a noun:
 - (1) heavenly places (Ephesians 1:3,20; 2:6; 3:10; 6:12);
 - (2) heavenly things (Hebrews 8:5; 9:23);
 - (3) bodies (1 Corinthians 15:40) and persons (1 Corinthians 15:48-49) of heavenly origin or nature.
3. *Ouranothen*, a verb, "from heaven" (Acts 14:17; 26:13).

Selected Supplementary Topics

1. Purgatory.

That word does not occur in the scriptures, but suggest the idea of a place of purgation or purification. Webster defines it as follow:

"An intermediate state after death for expiatory purification. The Roman Catholic Church teaches, as defined in the councils of Florence and Trent, that purgatory is a place or state of punishment wherein the souls of those who die in God's grace may expiate venial sins, or satisfy divine justice for temporal punishment still due remitted mortal sins."

That is confirmed by James Cardinal Gibbons, Archbishop of Baltimore, in his Question Box (1929 Edition), pages 393-94, in the following paragraph:

"The Catholic Church has defined the existence of Purgatory in the Decree of Union drawn up at the Council of Florence in 1439, and again in the Council of Trent (Sess. xxv.) which says: 'The Catholic Church instructed by the Holy Ghost, has from Sacred Scriptures and the ancient traditions of the Fathers, taught in Sacred Councils, and very recently in the Ecumenical Synod (Sess. Vi., can.30; Sess. xxii., chs.2,3), that there is a Purgatory, and that the souls therein detained are helped by suffrages of the faithful, but principally by the office of the altar."

"The same Council taught (Sess. xiv., can. 12), in accordance with the Scriptures (Num. xx. 12; 2 Kings xii, 13, 14) that God does not always remit all the temporal punishment due to forgiven sin. The Scriptures teach that nothing defiled can enter heaven (Wisd. Vii. 25; Isa. xxv. 8; Hab. I. 13; Apoc. xxi. 7), and that Christians often die with venial sins upon their souls. All, therefore, who die in venial sins, or with temporal punishment of their sins still unpaid must atone for them in Purgatory."

OBSERVATION: But such does not accord with the statements of scripture that (a) "the blood of Jesus his son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7) and that (b) we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, "that each one may receive [for] the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Corinthians 5:10).

2. Limbo.

This is another word not found in scripture. And Webster says it literally means "in or on the border," before giving the following definitions:

1. In some Christian theologies, a region bordering on hell, the abode of the souls of good men who lived before the coming of Christ and the souls of unbaptized babies.
2. A prison or imprisonment.
3. A place or condition of neglect or oblivion to which unwanted things or persons are relegated."

Again, Cardinal Gibbons, in his Question Box (pages 390-91), in which he distinguishes "Limbo of the Fathers" and "Limbo of the Children, corroborates as follows"

"Our Lord himself frequently refers to the Limbo of the Fathers, where the just were detained until Ascension Day, under the figure of a banquet (Matt. viii. 43), or of a marriage feast (Matt. xxv. 10). He also calls it Abraham's bosom ... (Luke xvi. 22), and 'paradise' ... (Luke xxiii.43). Once Christ appeared, the just souls began to enjoy the Beatific Vision, and Limbo was at once changed into heaven.

"The Limbo of Children means the state of natural happiness enjoyed by all those who die in original sin, without ever having been guilty of grievous personal sin. St. Thomas holds that these enjoy a positive happiness, being united to God by a knowledge and love proportionate to their capacity (De Malo, art. iii.)."

OBSERVATION: Again, the scriptures do not accord with the concept that the place of departed spirits of the righteous before the ascension of Christ became heaven either then or afterward, the apostle Peter saying on Pentecost the days after Ascension Day that "David ascended not into the heavens" (Acts 2:34) – equivalent to saying he was not yet in heaven. Moreover, the "Paradise" where our Lord's soul went at the death of his body was in Hades (Acts 2:27,31), and Hades was not to be done away with (cast into the "lake of fire") until after the general resurrection, when physical death would be no more (Revelation 20:11-15) – that being a resurrection of both the just and unjust (John 5:28-29; Acts 24:15) at the second coming of Christ and the end of earthly history (1 Corinthians 15:20-28).

Moreover, the souls of children are not charged with sin, either "original" (the sin of Adam) or personal, so as to remain in "Limbo" in eternity. For, from Hebrews 12:9 it would seem that our souls (spirits) do not come through Adam as do our bodies. And Jesus said "Verily, I say unto you, Except ye turn, and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 18:3). And, again: Suffer the little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for to such [as they are] belongeth the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 19:14).

"Limbo" is therefore a human fiction, not a biblical doctrine.

3. Duration of Eternal Punishment.

In Matthew 25:46, Christ says of the wicked that "these shall go away into eternal punishment; but the righteous into eternal life," after having stated that he will say to the wicked, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels" (v.41) – hence, "eternal fire" for "eternal punishment," the duration of which is to be the same as "eternal life" for the righteous – which is everlasting of never-ending.

But such a conclusion is challenged on the grounds (a) that "eternal" or "everlasting" does not necessarily mean "never-ending," with Sodom and Gomorrah "suffering the punishment of eternal fire" (Jude 7) being a case in point; (b) that "destruction" and "perishing" are descriptive of the punishment of the wicked in eternity, and these mean annihilation or ceasing to exist; and (c) that "death" ("the second death") is likewise descriptive of said punishment, which is the opposite of (d) "life." And thus means a cessation of conscious existence – for which reasons "eternal punishment" simply means punishment that reduces the wicked to a permanent state of unconsciousness and non-existence.

However convincing such may sound at first, we submit that neither argument will stand the test of comprehensive examination.

(a) The argument from Jude 7 is inconclusive. That passage states that Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities about them "are set forth as an example, suffering the punishment of eternal fire." And we do not know that those cities are not still visibly burning as described in Genesis 19. But Jude could have had reference to the punishment of their inhabitants after death – in the "lake of fire and brimstone, ... tormented day and night for ever and ever" (Revelation 20:10). Or he could have had reference to the fact that the fire that destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah was like the "eternal fire" is described in which the wicked are punished – namely "brimstone and fire" (Genesis 19:24) – which is more probable. In either event, Jude 7 cannot legitimately be used to prove that the eternal punishment of the wicked is not unending punishment!

It is true, however, that the New Testament Greek noun *aion* and adjective *aionios*, the principle words for "eternal" in English translation, and their corresponding Old Testament Hebrew terms, may, and sometimes do, refer to an age or to age-lasting without designating the duration of the age. Also, the King James Version translates the adjective as "everlasting" 25 times and "eternal" 41 times, using them interchangeably and without distinction, whereas the American Standard Version always translates it "eternal," which will usually be done in this study.

In the New Testament, the noun in its plural form is employed in the phrases "eternal purpose," literally, "purpose of the ages" (Ephesians 3:11) and "King eternal," literally "King of the ages" (1 Timothy 1:17) – indicating totality of the ages under consideration, which may either be (a) past (before the foundation of the world), (b) present (during the existence of the world), (c) future (after the end of the world), or else all combined ("from everlasting to everlasting," Psalm 90:2), said of God, "king of the ages," as per above, depending on context.

The adjective is likewise used to describe duration – EITHER UNDEFINED but not endless (as in Romans 16:25, "kept in silence through times eternal"; 2 Timothy 1:9, "his own purpose and grace, which was given to us in Christ Jesus before times eternal"; and Titus 1:2, "in hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before times eternal) – OR UNDEFINED because endless (as in Romans 16:26, "the commandment of the eternal God," and 66 OTHER PLACES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT -- the 25 and 41 times mentioned in the second paragraph above) – ITS PREDOMINANT MEANING.

The predominant meaning of *aionios* is seen in 2 Corinthians 4:18, where it is contrast with *proskairos*, literally, "for a season," and is translated "temporal": "the things which are seen as temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." It is used of persons or things which are in their nature endless, as "the eternal God" (Romans 16:26), his "honor and power eternal" (1 Timothy 5:16), and "his eternal glory" (1 Peter 5:10); of the Holy Spirit, "the eternal Spirit" (Hebrews 9:14); of the "eternal redemption" Christ achieved for us (Hebrews 9:12), and therefore "eternal salvation" (Hebrews 5:9), upon entrance "into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 1:11), of which "THERE SHALL BE NO END" (Luke 1:33).

Consequently, it is said that God "gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:16). Calling the resurrection body of the saints a house not made with hands, it is said to be "eternal, in the heavens" (2 Corinthians 5:1) – to be "incorruptible" and "immortal" (1 Corinthians 15:50-55) – that is, not subject to dissolution or death.

As explained by our Lord, "eternal life" is in "the worlds (age) to come" as distinguished from "this time," or "this world (age)." He promised his apostles for their sacrifices in serving him "a hundred-fold now in this time . . .; and in the world to come eternal Life" (Mark 10:30). He also explained that these two times or worlds (ages) are separated by the resurrection of the dead, as follows: "The sons of this world [age] marry, and are given in marriage; but they [the righteous] that are accounted worthy to attain to that world [age], and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: for neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection" (Luke 20:34-36) – that is, the resurrection of the righteous – for there shall be a "resurrection of the just and the unjust" (Acts 24:15), and of the latter being unto "damnation" (John 5:28-29; King James Version).

- (b) It is also true that "destruction" and "perishing" are descriptive of the punishment of the wicked in eternity. But these terms do not necessarily mean annihilation or ceasing to exist – so that nonexistence rather than conscious existence and suffering is the eternal aspect of their punishment. But does it not seem incongruous to think of that which no longer exists as still being punished? How can that be? (But even the argument that eternal punishment means annihilation and nonexistence forever, is a tacit admission that the word "eternal" in this context means "unending"!)

The principle New Testament Greek word for "destroy" is *apollumi* in the active voice, translated "destroy" 23 times and "lose" 28 times, and for "perish" it is the same word in the middle voice, translated be "destroyed" 3 times, be "lost" 3 times, be "marred" 1 time, "die" 1 time and "perish" 33 times.

From these facts it can be seen why W. E. Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words says of the above, "the idea is not extinction but ruin, loss, not of being, but of well-being." That will also explain how Job could say, "He hath destroyed me on every side" 19:10 King James Version), or, "He hath broken me down on every side," American Standard Version), and still be alive to speak of it. Also, the servants of Pharaoh implored him, saying with reference to the plagues upon Egypt because he would not let the Israelites leave to sacrifice to Jehovah, as Moses was insisting: "How long shall this man be a snare unto us? Let the men go, that they may serve Jehovah their God; knowest thou not yet that Egypt is destroyed? -- not annihilated, however!

One other word for "destruction" that is appropriate for our study is *olethros* in 2 Thessalonians 1:9. "who shall suffer punishment, even eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might." Of this word, Thayer's Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament says it means "ruin, destruction, death," and that in 2 Thessalonians 1:9 it is "the loss of life of blessedness after death, future misery, *ainios* [i.e., eternal future misery]." Also the "destruction" of this passage is said to be "eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and the glory of his might" – that is ultimate and eternal separation from the Lord, with its miseries.

- (c) A similar argument is that "death" (or, second death) is likewise descriptive of punishment that reduces the wicked to a state of unconsciousness and nonexistence, because it is the opposite of life – and "the dead know not anything" (Ecclesiastes 9:5; see also v.9, King James Version). But this fails to take into account the fact that death is used in more senses than that of the body, and that it always involves a separation of one sort or another. Consider the following:

- (1) It is said that the body without the spirit is dead and that in death the soul departs (James 2:26; Genesis 35: 18), but nowhere do the scriptures say the soul, or spirit, without the body is dead. To the contrary, in Matthew 20:32 Jesus called attention to the fact that long after the death of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, God said, "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob," and added that "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living" – which means that though their bodies were dead, their spirits were alive.

Also, though we read of the death and burial of Moses at 120 years of age in Deuteronomy 34:5-7, he and Elijah (who had been taken to heaven without experiencing death, 2 Kings 2:1-11) appeared at the transfiguration of Jesus (Matthew 17:1-7; Mark 9:2-8; Luke 9:28-36) – without there being any evidence that Moses' body had been raised from the dead. (David's had not, Acts 2:29,34.) And the apostle Paul spoke of knowing a man in Christ fourteen years previous, caught up to the third heaven, "whether in the body, or apart from the body, I know not; God knoweth), . . . and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter" (2 Corinthians 12:2-4) – that is, still having his faculties in event he was "apart from the body."

Likewise, in Jesus' account of the Rich Man and Lazarus, after death had ended their lives on earth (and the Rich Man was said specifically to have been buried), they still had conscious existence in another realm – one in comfort and the other in misery (Luke 16:19-31).

- (2) The prodigal son, estranged from his family and living a sinful life, later repented, returned home, and was reconciled to his father, who then said of him that he "was dead and is alive again; and was lost, and is found" (Luke 15:11-32. He had not been dead physically, and evidently not lost physically – for his elder brother knew how he had been living.
- (3) The apostle Paul said a widow "that giveth herself to pleasure [self-indulgence] is dead while she liveth" (1 Timothy 5:6). She was spiritually dead while physically alive – what Paul called "dead through your trespasses and sins" (Ephesians 2:1), and what Isaiah spoke of as estrangement from God, saying "your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, so that he will not hear you" (59:2).

From the foregoing considerations, it becomes obvious that Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament is correct in its definitions of the Greek word *thanatos*, translated "death," as follows (for the most part omitting his supporting evidences):

- (1) Properly, the death of the body, i.e. that separation (whether natural or violent) of the soul from the body by which this life on earth is ended.

(This is the implied "first death" when reference is made to "the second death," as mentioned in c) below – one being the separation of the soul from the body, as just stated, which is not for ever, due to the resurrection; the other being the separation of both soul and body from the presence of the Lord in the lake of fire and brimstone, after the resurrection, which is for ever or eternal).

- (2) Metaphorically, the loss of that which alone is worthy of the name, i.e. the misery of the soul arising from sin, which begins on earth but lasts and increases after the death of the body.
- (3) The miserable state of the wicked dead in hell is called—now simply *thanatos*, Romans 1:32, distinguished from the death of the body, and called "the second death" (Revelation 2:11; 20:6,14; 21:8) as opposed to the former death, by which life on earth is ended.
- (4) In the widest sense, death comprises all the miseries arising from sin, as well physical death as the loss of a life consecrated to God and blessed in him on earth, to be followed by wretchedness in the lower world (opposed to eternal life). [That world includes Hades after physical death and Gehenna after the resurrection and judgment.]

(Thayer states that *thanatos* seems to be used in Romans 5:12; (6:16, 21, 23; 7:24; 8:2, 6; and that death in this sense is personified in Romans 5:14, 17, 21; 7:5. Others, however, he says, in all these passages, as well as those cited under definition a), understand physical death – to which we believe most of them are not limited, though Romans 5:12 may be, and some way may not include it.)

- (d) Finally, we note three New Testament Greek words translated "life" that need to be considered: *pseuche*, 40 times (also translated "soul" 56 times, "mind" 3 times and "heart" once; *zoe*, 133 times; and *bios*, 5 times (also "living," 5 times, and "goods," or "good" in King James Version, once).

- (1) *Pseuche* is the inward entity, often used interchangeably with *pneuma* (spirit), referring to the "inward man" of 2 Corinthians 4:16 as contrasted with the "outward man" or body. It is referred to by Jesus in Matthew 10:28, saying, "And be not afraid of them that kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: But rather fear him who is able to destroy soul and body in hell" – that is, *gehenna*, which he will do in regard to the unrighteous after the resurrection and judgment.
- (2) *Bios* is used in three respects: (a) of the period or duration of the life on earth, while body and soul or spirit are together (1 Peter 4:3, King James Version; Luke 8:14; 2 Timothy 2:4; (b) of the manner of life, in regard to moral conduct (1 Timothy 2:2; 1 John 2:16; and (c) of the means of life, livelihood, living (Mark 12:44; Luke 8:43; 1 John 3:17, where it is translated "goods" "American Standard Version), and "good" (King James Version).
- (3) *Zoe*, while frequently used interchangeably with *pseuche*, also has moral associations what are inseparable from it, as holiness and righteousness. Or, more precisely, while *pseuche* is the individual life or inward being, generally

speaking *zoe* is the nobler term. In Acts 5:20 it is used in the expression "this Life" in reference to the quality of life produced by the preaching of the gospel, which begins in our lifetime on earth. And if pursued till the end of life on earth, it results in "eternal life" in the world to come" (Mark 10:30).

It is always *zoe* that is used in the phrase "eternal life" (Matthew 19:16; 25:46; Mark 10:17,30; Luke 10:25; 189:18; John 3:15; 4:36,39; 6:54,68; 10:28; 12:25; 17:2,3; Acts 13:48; Romans 2:7; 5:21; 6:23; 1 Timothy 6:12; Titus 1:2; 3:7; I John 1:2; 2:25; 3:15; 5:11,13,20; Jude 21, (29 in number in the King James Version in common with the American Standard Version), besides the following in the American Standard Version where the King James Version has "everlasting life": Matthew 19:29; Luke 18:30; John 3:16,26; 4:14;5:24;6:27,40, 47: 12:50; 13:46 Romans 6:22 Galatians 6:8; 1 Timothy 1:16 (15 in number), making a total of 44 times).

Sometimes reference is to "eternal life," or what eventuates in it, when only the word "life" is used. And again it is always *zoe* in such cases, as the following: Matthew 7:14; 18:18; 19:17; Mark 9:43,45; John 3:36b; 5:24c; 5:40; 10:10; 20:31.

Interestingly, where the King James Version has "eternal Life" in 1 Timothy 6:19, the American Standard Version has "life which is life indeed," Based on a better attested Greek text, which has the word *ontos*, which means actually or really, and reads literally, "that they may lay hold on the really life" – the word for "life" being *zoe*.

Another interesting and pertinent passage is John 11:25-26, quoting James as saying: "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth on me, though he die, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die." – literally, the last phrase is "shall not die into the age" (*eis ton aiona*) – that is, the eternal age, or age to come – hence, not die for ever. While "never" is the usual rendering in such a grammatical construction, some prefer the other in this context.

If Jesus meant "shall never die," he had reference to dying spiritually. But if he had reference to dying physically, he was saying he would not stay dead but be raised from the dead (which the wicked will also be, but their resurrection is not under consideration since it will be to "damnation" or "second death"). And this alternate sense (of not dying for ever) harmonizes beautifully with the context. But whichever the Lord meant, the words "life" and "living" which occur in this text are the noun and verb forms of *zoe*, and if said *zoe* is not interrupted before physical death it eventuates in eternal life in the world to come, as previously indicated.

By the same token, spiritual death in this world not interrupted by obedience to the gospel of Christ while the soul is still in the body (see 2 Corinthians 5:10), will result in the "second death" – in the lake of fire burning with brimstone, as already discussed – in which those cast "shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever" (*eis tous ainoas ton aionon*) (Revelation 20:10; cf. 14:11). THIS IS THE "ETERNAL PUNISHMENT" OF MATTHEW 25:46, WHICH IS DESCRIBED AS BEING OF THE SAME DURATION AS THE LIFE OF THE RIGHTEOUS – namely "ETERNAL".

4. Degrees of reward and punishment.

As to the difference of reward for the righteous, it would seem at first glance that Matthew 20:1-16 indicates the same reward for all who receive eternal life in the world to come, which had been the closing topic of Matthew 19:23-30 and Mark 10:23-31. But on closer examination it will be noted that at the close of Matthew 20:1-16 it is stated, "So the last shall be first, and the first last," which is slightly different from the close of 19:23-30, namely: "But many shall be last that are first, and first that are last." Yet the second seems to have a relation to the first, by immediately following it and being introduced by "for" though not duplicated in Mark.

The situation in the first is related to the men chosen by the Christ to be his apostles to the world after he returns to heaven, who were keenly rank conscious, each seeming to want to be first or as nearly so as possible in his coming kingdom (see Matthew 18:1-4; 20:28; Mark 9:33-35; 10:35-45; Luke 9:46-48). So, on numerous occasions he taught them that is not rank but service that makes men great in heaven's sight. (See Matthew 23:1-12 for a public discourse also along this line in the temple in Jerusalem on Tuesday of crucifixion week, and John 13:1-17 for an object lesson along this same line to the apostles the last night with them before his crucifixion the next day.) And Matthew 19:23-30; Mark 10:23-31, mentioned in the foregoing paragraph, represents a previous effort to emphasize to the apostles that one might think himself, or be thought

by others in this world, to be first in his class, yet not necessarily be such in the world to come. He might even be last. But the purpose could hardly have been to say that the apostles, all or them, would be last, or all of necessarily equal reward.

But, if Matthew 19:30 is not intended to say that all the apostles would be last, or all receive the same reward, in the world to come, how could 20:16 have any relation to the preceding?

Some would apply 19:30 to the apostles (who were Jews), as indicting that their being among Christ's earliest disciples even among the Jews would not within itself give them a higher standing in the eternal phase of the kingdom of heaven (which surely is true). And in like manner they would apply 20:16 to all Jews as a class, as indicating that their being called into the kingdom before the Gentiles (see Romans 1:16) would not within itself prevent the latter from enjoying equal standing and reward in the kingdom (which is surely also true) – which by the Jews might be thought to be preferential treatment – and on earth did actually come to make them first in the sense of becoming more numerous in the kingdom than the Jews and thus occupy a place of comparative prominence because of disbelief in Christ on the part of all but a remnant of the Jews, as per Romans 9:11.

But granting such as representing said group situations factually in no wise destroys the foregoing application of Matthew 19:30 to individual situations inherent in "many" being last in the world to come that are first in this world, and first that are last. By the same token, whether Jews or Gentiles, will be equally rewarded in every respect, as will now be noted.

For example, the apostle Paul who said of himself, "we are hard pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not destroyed – always carrying about in our body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our mortal flesh" (2 Corinthians 4:8-11, New King James Version), also said: "Therefore we do not loose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed from day to day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal" (vs.16-18).

One would think that if Paul had died immediately after conversion to Christ, he would have had eternal glory in the world to come. But he believed what he was doing and suffering for Christ was working for him much greater glory, which would hardly seem likely if there is no difference in degrees of reward. Christ had said, "Blessed are ye when men shall reproach you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets that were before you" (Matthew 5:11-12).

In Revelation 15:2-3, John describes a scene he beheld in heaven as being of "them that come off victorious from the beast, and from his image, and from the number of his name, standing by the sea of glass, having harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb." Does that not indicate an aspect of glory for Moses and the Lamb (Christ) that the rest of us do not, or will not have?

And in Revelation 21:14, John again describes a part of the vision he was given of the eternal city, New Jerusalem, thus: "And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb." Does that not also indicate an aspect of glory for the apostles that none of the rest of us will have?

Some of Jesus' judgment parables also seem to suggest different degrees of reward. In the parable of the Talents, the faithful five-talent and two-talent servants who doubled their lord's money in his absence seems to have allowed to remain in charge of their entire respective amounts (which were not the same but more than to begin with in both instances) besides entrance for both otherwise, it would seem, into the "joys" of their lord; and the now ten-talent man, was given the talent taken from the unfaithful one-talent man, "For," said Jesus, unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not, even that which he hath shall be taken away" (Matthew 25:14-30). In eternity "his servants shall serve him" (Revelation 22:3), and "reign for ever and ever" (v.5), but have varying scopes of responsibility and service –as indicated by the following.

And in Luke 19:11-27 is another parable, uttered for a different purpose but containing as element similar to that in the foregoing. In this instance a nobleman upon making a journey into a far country delivered ten pounds (or *minas*, said to be equal to about three month's salary) to ten of his servants to trade with in his absence. Upon his return, one had gained ten

pounds more, another had gained five pounds more, and one had just kept his pound without attempting to gain more. In this case, the first was rewarded by being placed over ten cities, the second by being placed over five cities, and the third had his one talent taken away and given to the servant that had the ten pounds. But the two that were rewarded were promoted, not equally, but equitably.

And such seemingly will be true of the righteous in the world to come – rewarding according to their works. "He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophets reward: and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward. And whosoever shall give a drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you he shall in no wise lose his reward for his deed" – an emphatic way of saying he would certainly be rewarded for such (Matthew 11:40-42). Quantity alone is not all that will count. Mark tell that on one occasion Jesus "sat down over against the treasury, and beheld how the multitudes cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much. And there came a poor widow, and she cast in two mites, which make a farthing. And he called unto him his disciples, and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, This poor widow cast in more than all they that are casting into the treasury: for they all did cast in of their superfluity; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living" (12:41-41).

As for the unrighteous, some will "receive greater damnation" (Matthew 23:14; Mark 12:40; Luke 20"47, King James Version). Some will be beaten, as it were, "with many stripes," and others "with few stripes," according to degree of culpability (Luke 12:41-48). Again, some will suffer "sorer punishment" than others because of the nature of their sin (Hebrews 10:28-29). And for some it will be "more tolerable" in the judgment than for others because in the difference in opportunity (Matthew 11:20-24; Luke 10:13-15). So punishment will not all be equal, but equitable.

5. Preaching to "Spirits in Prison" – "To the Dead."

1 Peter 3:18-19: "Because Christ also suffered for our sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God being put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit; for which he went and preached unto the spirits in prison, that aforetime were disobedient, when the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is eight souls were saved through water."

1 Peter 4:5-6: "Who [former companions in sin] shall give an account to him that is ready to judge the living and the dead. For unto this end was the gospel preached even to the dead, that they might be judged indeed according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit."

Some believe these passages to teach that the lost have the gospel preached to their spirits after death, giving them a second chance at salvation if they are willing to accept it – which at first glance appears plausible. But Hebrews 9:27 seems to leave no room for such, saying that "it is appointed unto man once to die, but after this the judgment" (King James Version). And the apostle Paul's declaration in 2 Corinthians 5:10 is explicitly that "we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each may receive [for] the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad" (New King James Version). Moreover, we know of no other passage that seems to hint of a chance to change status after death. And our Lord's account of the Rich Man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-30) seems definitely to rule out such. So, if we look for an explanation that does not involve contradiction within the scriptures, it will have to be that the preaching under consideration was done to those dead when the above was written but still alive in the flesh at the time said preaching was done – which we believe in not farfetched.

If such was not the case with reference to those who lived during the days of Noah while the ark was being prepared, why did Christ single them out and not preach to others in Hades who had been disobedient prior to his own death for sins? Would he not have to have done such in order not to be a respecter of persons?

Also, would Christ have had to do the preaching in person in order to fulfill the description of having gone and preached to the antediluvians of Noah's day whose spirits had likely been imprisoned in the Tartarus section of Hades since their death? In Ephesians 2:17-18 it is said that "he came and preached peace to you that were far off, and peace to them that were nigh: for through him we both have access in one spirit unto the Father." His "coming" was not in person but through the Holy Spirit who inspired his apostles to preach of righteousness" (2 Peter 2:5). Furthermore, that was before Christ, a member of the Godhead, "became flesh" (John 1:14), so that what he did then he did "in the spirit" (in or by his spirit) and not "in the flesh." And that just about makes all the pieces fall together quite beautifully, doesn't it? -- accounting even for mentioning the disobedient or the days while the ark was in preparation instead of all the disobedient dead prior to the death of Christ.

As for the other "dead" spoken of in 1 Peter 4:6, who had had the "gospel" ("the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." Romans 1:16) preached to them, there is no good reason for not believing they were also still living when they heard it. And, of course, its acceptance would have prepared them for acceptance by Christ when he judges "the living and the dead" (v. 5) . But it also subjected them to another "judgment" – the condemnation of sinful men, "speaking evil" of them because they did not continue with them in abominable living, as in the case of Peter's readers (vs. 3-4). So Peter could, and did write saying: " To this end [that is, it would result in this, and the Lord knew it would] was the gospel preached even to the dead, that [though] they might be judged [condemned] according to [the standard of] God in the spirit."

In the words of Guy N. Woods' summary of this passage and its context in his commentary on Peter, John and Jude (Gospel Advocate Company 1954): "That which was preached was the 'gospel,' God's power to save (Rom. 1:16); and the preaching thereof was to 'the dead,' dead and in the spirit land when Peter wrote, but alive in the world when the gospel was preached to them. As a result of having heard this preaching, they obeyed the gospel and became Christians; but they had since died, and were thus dead when the epistle was written. While they lived they too were subject to evil speaking which Peter's readers were then suffering; and they, although judged and condemned by 'men in the flesh' because of their faithfulness and fidelity to the cause. Lived according to God in the spirit, i.e., in the higher and nobler life of the spirit."

He added: "Such we conceive to be the meaning of what is doubtless one of the most controversial and difficult passages in the Bible." And, if such is not its meaning, I confess to being at a loss to present a more likely one.

6. Why a Day of Judgment if Destiny is Determined at Death?

It is not to determine whether we are to go to heaven or to hell, for God knows at any given time what our destiny would be were we to die then. But, aside from whatever other reasons there may be, it is to assign publicly, as it were, the respective destinies and to vindicate the justice of the divine judgment announced, whether favorable or unfavorable.

Even in human courts of law, sentencing of those found guilty may be deferred for week or months, when reasons are given for the sentence announced.

In Matthew 7:21-23, Jesus states: "not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my father who is in heaven. Many will say unto me in that day [evidently judgment day], Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in thy name, and by thy name cast out demons, and by thy name do many mighty works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me ye that work iniquity."

In Matthew 25:31-46, he states why he will say to those on his right hand, "Come, ye blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundations of the world." And tell why; and likewise say to them on his left. "Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels," and tell why – including answers to questions asked as to why on the grounds stated.

In Romans 3:4 is the following: "Let God be found true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy words. And mightest prevail when thou comest into judgment," the latter being an adaptation of Psalm 51:4, which reads: "That thou mayest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest" (American Standard Version). And Certainly there is a human tendency to judge God rather than accept his judgment of us and of what we should be and do.

It should be noted also that we are to be judged and rewarded on the basis of deeds and not simply on our profession – on something objective and not on our subjective claims. We are to receive for "things done in the body" (2 Corinthians 5:10), and according to our "works" rather than our "profession," for there are some "who profess that they know God; but by their works they deny that they know him, being abominable, and disobedient, and to every good work reprobate" Titus 1:16).

See Jesus' scathing denunciation of the scribes and Pharisees of his day that he described as "hypocrites" and stated why (Matthew 23:1-36). And consider some of the televangelist of our decade now doing time in human prisons, not for righteousness' sake, but otherwise.

7. Relation of Gentiles to God Between Moses and Christ.

So far as I am able to ascertain, it was the same as that of all mankind before the Mosaic period, which was more or less of a patriarchal religion – with God communicating through certain chosen individuals. For example, Abraham originally from Ur of the Chaldees, was a prophet (Genesis 20:7). Melchisedek, king of Salem (later Jerusalem), "as priest of God Most High," to whom Abraham paid tithes (Genesis 14:20 and was a type of the high priesthood of Christ (see Psalm 110:4; Hebrews 5:5-6, 10; 6:20; 7:17,21; 7:1,10,11,15). Job, in the land of Uz, east of the sea of Galilee, functioned as a priest (see Job 1:5; 42:7-9). Jethro (also called Reuel) was priest of Median and father-in-law of Moses (Exodus 2:15-3:1; 4:18; 18:1-27). And Balaam, of Pethor, east of the Euphrates River, was a prophet (2 Peter 2:15-16; see numbers 22:24; 31:1-8).

Also, between the time of Moses and Christ, God still dealt with Gentiles to the extent that he reasonably could. For instance, he sent Jonah to Nineveh to preach, resulting in wholesale repentance (see Jonah 1 - 4; Matthew 12:41). Daniel, who became a prophet, was used mightily in Babylon under the reigns of Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar, the of Darius the Mede, and finally, of Cyrus the Persian (Daniel 1 - 12). These are notable examples, but by no means exhaustive. Yet the time did come when the Gentiles had so greatly rejected God that he gave them up (Romans 1:18-32), ceasing to send messengers to them until after the beginning of the Christian era (see Acts 10:1 -11:16; 15:1-29; 17:16-34).

But any time individual Gentiles wished to adopt the religion of the Hebrews, they could be circumcised and do so (see Exodus 12:49), thus coming into covenant relation with Israel's God (see Isaiah 56:1-8 in contrast with Ezekiel 44:7-8). On the day of Pentecost, when Christianity had its formal beginning in Jerusalem, "sojourners from Rome, both Jews and proselytes" were present (Acts 2:10). Cornelius, the first known Gentile convert to Christianity was "a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house" (Acts 10:1-2). And when Paul and Barnabas were in Antioch of Pisidia on their first missionary journey and invited to speak in a Jewish synagogue, Paul addressed his hearers as "Men of Israel, and ye that fear God" (Acts 13:16) – that is, Gentiles who are God-fearers – and it is said that "when the synagogue broke up, many of the Jews and of the devout proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas" (v.43).

But aside from full-fledged converts to Judaism and formal covenant relationship with God, the following scripture may indicate the salvation of some Gentiles even before and without their knowing about Christ (though it would still be through the efficacy of his blood, just as would the salvation of those in covenant relation with God prior to the death of Christ, per Hebrews 9:15):

"... in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; [he] will render to every man according to his works: to them that practice in well-doing seek for glory and honor and incorruption, eternal life: but unto them that are factious, and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness, shall be wrath and indignation, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that worketh evil; and also to the Greek: for there is no respect of persons with God. For as many as have sinned without the law [Gentiles] shall also perish without the law [Moses]; and as many have sinned under the law shall be judged by the law; for not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified: (for when Gentiles that have not the law do by nature the things of the law, these, not having the law, are the law unto themselves: in that they show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness therewith, and their thoughts one with another accusing or else excusing them;) in the day when God with shall judge the secrets of men, according to my gospel, by Jesus Christ" (Romans 2:5-16; cf. Acts 17:30-31 for God judging the secrets of men by Jesus Christ).

8. Shall We Know One Another in Heaven?

The scriptures do not answer that question directly. But indirectly they make it most probable that we shall.

That its spirit's being out of the body does not destroy its personality and identity, is quite evident. When Saul heard the woman of Endor with a "familiar spirit" describe the person she succeeded in calling up for him to communicate with, he "perceived that it was Samuel" (1 Samuel 28:3-15). When the Rich Man and Lazarus of one of Jesus's narratives died, they were identified in the spirit world (Luke 16:19-31). When Moses, who had been dead for centuries and his body not yet raised from the dead so far as we know, and Elijah, who had been taken to heaven without experiencing death, appeared on the occasion of Jesus' transfiguration, they were not without recognition (Luke 17:1-8). When the apostle Paul knew an man in Christ caught up in the third heaven, he did not know whether he was in the body of part of the body (2 Corinthians 12:1-5), which would seem to make no difference as to identifying him. And if there is personal identity and recognition in Hades, as already noted, surely there will be such in heaven. Also, if Moses and Elijah were distinguishable and identifiable at the transfiguration of Christ, surely they will be no less in heaven. And by the same token, surely the same will be true of all occupants of heaven. Also, by the way, Jesus was recognizable in his resurrection body except when he willed it otherwise (See in particular his recognition by "doubting Thomas" (John 20:24-29). And Jesus said that "many shall come

from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in his kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 8:11) – which surely implies their being identified and known then, and there being camaraderie in heaven.

There seems to be nothing in the scripture to imply other than that there will be identity in the worlds to come the same as now.

RESURRECTION OF CHRIST AFTER CRUCIFIXION Analytical Notes On Matthew 27:52-53 And Ephesians 4:8

I. MATTHEW 27:52-53 (American Standard Version)

"And the tombs were opened; and many bodies of the saints that had fallen asleep were raised; and coming forth out of the tombs after his resurrection they entered into the holy city, and appeared unto many."

1. There is nothing said in the scripture as to what happened to the foregoing afterwards, which should preclude dogmatism in connection with any of the possibilities, which seem to be no more than three, as follows:

(a) That they died again, as we suppose from Colossians 1:18 that others did that had been raised back to life, as the widow's son at Nain, Jairus' daughter, and Lazarus. An example of that view:

"They were subject to death a second time, as was Lazarus, presumably" (James Burton Coffman, Commentary on Matthew).

(b) That they remained on earth without dying again:

This seems most unlikely, and nobody is on record either as claiming to be such individuals, or as claiming to have seen such, or of even believing such, so far as I have either heard or read.

(c) That they were received up into heaven. Examples of that view:

"We have no positive information, but the natural supposition is that they ascended into heaven" (McGarvey, Commentary on Matthew; McGarvey and Pendleton, Fourfold Gospel).

"We are not told what happened to the saints between the Lord's death and his resurrection, nor what happened to them afterwards. Presumably their graves remained empty and they were translated to heaven." (The New Bible Commentary, by Davidson, Stibbs, and Kevan.)

"We do not know which saints arose (the account says many), nor do we know whether they continued in resurrection as bodies and eventually died again and were buried. Verse 53 makes it appear that they came out of the graves after the resurrection of Christ and entered into the city of Jerusalem where they appeared to many people. Matthew Henry suggest that these resurrected saints ascended with Christ to glory, although this is simply an inference." (Annotation of Harold Linsell, in Harper's Bible Study, Revised Standard Version.)

Matthew Henry's precise words are: "But it is more agreeable, both to Christ's honor and theirs, to suppose, though we cannot prove, that they arose as Christ did, to die no more, and therefore ascended with him to glory. ... These saints that arose, were the present trophies of the victory of Christ's cross over the powers of death, which he thus made a show openly. Having by death destroyed him that had the power of death, he thus led captivity captive, and glorified in these re-taken prizes, in them fulfilling the scriptures, I will ransom them from the power of the grave." (See Hosea 13:14.)

2. It is obvious that Matthew Henry and maybe others of the foregoing in (c) think in terms of "leading captivity captive" in Ephesians 4:8. The latter passage will now be noted in regard to possible if not probable relevance to the saints raised after Christ resurrection.

II. EPHESIANS 4:8 (AMERICAN STANDARD VERSION).

"Wherefore he saith, When he ascended on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." The King James Version reads exactly the same way, but has a note, saying, "or, a multitude of captives" instead of "captivity captive."

1. Other translations:

- (a) New International Version: "When he ascended on high, he led captives in his train, and gave gifts to men."
- (b) New English Bible: "He ascended into the heights with captives in his train; he gave gifts to men."
- (c) Revised English Bible: "He ascended into the heights; he took captives into captivity; he gave gifts to men."
- (d) Revised Standard Version: "When he ascended on high he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men."
- (e) New Revised Standard Version: "When he ascended on high he made captivity itself a captive; he gave gifts to his people."
- (f) New American Bible: "When he ascended on high, he took a host of captives and gave gifts to men."
- (g) Berkley Version: "As he ascended oh high, He led the captives away in captivity; He gave gifts to men."
- (h) Goodspeed: "When he went up on high, he led a host of captives, And gave gifts to mankind."
- (i) Williams: "He led a host of captives, when He went up on high, And granted gifts to men."
- (j) Moffatt: "When he ascended on high he led a host of captives and granted gifts to men."
- (k) Barclay: "He ascended on high, after he had taken his prisoners captive, and gave gifts to men."

2. Lexical Notes on "he led captivity captive"

- (a) In the Greek text, "he led captive" is one word, *echmaloteusen*, 3rd person singular, aorist 1. indicative, of the verb *aichmaloteou*; and "captivity" is another word, *aichmalosian*, accusative singular of the noun *airchmalosia*. The latter may be used either abstractly or concretely. When employed abstractly, it means the state of captivity or of being captive; but when used concretely, as in Ephesians 4:8, it means persons in a state of captivity. In English translation, however, we have to insert the noun "captivity in the midst of the verb "led captivity," so that it reads "led captivity captive." But remember that the abstract noun "captivity" is used concretely of persons in a state of captivity, hence in the sense of being "captivity."
- (b) Accordingly, in Hapers' Analytical Greek Lexicon we have for the noun, "captive multitudes"; in Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, the statement that in Ephesians 4:8 we have the abstract for the concrete; and Arndt & Gingrich, Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature, "prisoners of war"; in Liddell and Scott, Greek-English Lexicon, "a body of captives"; W. E. Vine, Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, gives the alternate rendering in the King James Version, "a multitude of captives," as an example of the noun being used in the concrete sense.
- (c) Incidentally, the Greek language has also a cognate (or, related) noun, *aichmalotos*, literally one taken by the spear (from *aichme*, a spear, and *halotos*, a verbal adjective, from *halonia*, to be captured), hence denotes a captive, Luke 4:18. (Vine.) This is being mentioned to give something more of the flavor of the word family involved, which is taken into account by lexicons and commentaries.

3. Commentaries:

- (a) A. E. Harvey, The New English Bible, Companion to the New Testament: "Psalm 68:18 [referred to in Ephesians 4:8] runs, in both the Greek and Hebrew versions: 'Thou didst ascend into the heights / with captives in thy train / having

received gifts among men.' These words were doubtless addressed originally to the victorious king returning to Jerusalem."

(NOTE: The Hebrew word rendered above as "received" is translated in the Old Testament either as "receive" or "give," depending on context. And Ephesians 4:8 in the New Testament quotes it as 'give,' which the context there requires.)

(b) The Cambridge Bible Commentary on the New English Bible: "Paul quotes the passage [Psalm 68:18] with slight alterations, which may mean he is following a Jewish paraphrase. ... Originally the Psalm described the Jewish King's triumphal procession to the newly conquered hill of Jerusalem; he is accompanied by his spoil and receives gifts as tribute. The ascent into the high mount now refers to Jesus triumphal return to his heavenly glory when his work is completed (see also John 17:4; Acts 1:9). The captives are now the powers and forces opposed to God, which Jesus had defeated (see below on Col. 2:15). Instead of receiving gifts as tributes from men the conqueror distributes gifts among men."

(c) Pulpit Commentary: "As in a literal triumph, the chiefs of the enemies' army are led captive, so the powers of darkness are led captive by Christ (captivity, *aichmalosia*, denotes prisoners); and as on occasion of a triumph the spoils of the enemy are made over to the conqueror, who again gives them away to the soldiers and people, so gifts were given to Christ after his triumph to be given by him to his church. We must not force the analogy too far; the point is simply this -- as a conqueror at a triumph gets gifts to distribute, so Christ, on his resurrection and ascension, got the Holy Spirit to bestow on his Church."

(d) David Lipscomb, Commentary of Ephesians: "Captivity refers to death, as death had held dominion over every living thing on earth. Jesus went down into death's inner prison, and struggled with the powers of death ad hell; bursting asunder the bars of death, and roes a triumphal victor over the power of death and hell. In his triumph he secured man's resurrection, and won his crown as King of kings and Lord of lords. By virtue of his victory over death, his angelic convey, as it approached the city of God cried: "Lift up your heads, o ye gates; and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory will come in.' (Psalm 24:7-11.) In his glorious ascension, convoyed by an angelic host, he led death a captive, a conquered captive, in his train."

NOTE: While each of the above has something good to contribute, it seems to me that the Cambridge Bible, Pulpit Commentary, and David Lipscomb miss the point about Jesus "leading captivity captive." The first says "the captives are now the powers and forces opposed to God, which Jesus had defeated"; the next, that they are "the chiefs of the enemies' army" and the last, that "captivity refers to death."

But is it likely that our Lord led any or all these to heaven in his **train**? And, of course, the "convoy of angels" mentioned by Lipscomb are not a part of the imagery of our text. To me, the next two expositors are more to the point, with one possible exception to be mentioned afterward, perhaps in concluding remarks.

(d) Albert Barnes, Notes on the New Testament: It is language derived from a conqueror, who not only makes captives, but who makes captives of those who were then prisoners, and who conducts them as a part of his triumphal procession. He not only subdues his enemy, but he leads his captives in triumph. The allusion is to the public triumphs of conquerors, especially as celebrated among the Romans, in which captives were led in chains (Tacitus, Ann. xii.38), and to the custom in such triumphs of distributing presents among the soldiers; comp. also Judg. 5:30, where it appears that this was also an early custom among other nations (...) [Adam Clarke also states that 'at such times the conqueror was wont to throw money among the crowd' -- that is , along the line of parade.] When Christ ascended to heaven he triumphed over all his foes. It was a complete victory over the malice of the great enemy of God, and over those who had sought his life. But he did more [emphasis added]. He rescued those who were the captives of Satan as a prisoner. His chains were around him. Christ rescued the captive prisoner, and designed to make him a part of his triumphal procession with the attending host of those who had been the captives of Satan, now rescued and redeemed."

(e) W.E. Vine, Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words:

"... the concrete [use of captivity'] is found in ... Eph.4:8, where 'He led captivity captive (mage., 'a multitude of captives) seems to be an allusion to the triumphal procession by which a victory was celebrated, the captives taken forming part of the procession. See Judg.5:12. The quotation is from Psa. 68:18, and probably is a forceful expression for Christ's victory, through his Death, over the hostile powers of darkness. An alternative suggestion is that at his ascension Christ transferred the redeemed Old Testament saints from *Sheol* to his own presence in glory."

III. CONCLUDING PERSONAL OBSERVATIONS.

1. In principle, it seems that Barnes, and Vine (in his "alternate suggestion"), must be correct. But should they mean all the Old Testament worthies redeemed by the blood of Jesus (see Hebrews 9:15) were led in his train to the heavenly Jerusalem, that must be a mistake -- the "possible exception" referred to above. For according to Peter on Pentecost after Christ's ascension, David had "ascended not into heavens" (Acts 2:34); and, according to Hebrews 11:39-40, none of the Old Testament worthies mentioned in that chapter (including David, v.33) would receive the "promise" (of eternal inheritance, 9:15) before we Christians do, "God having provided some better thing concerning us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect."

That being the case, they were not to go to heaven before we do; and likely the same would be true of Old Testament saints general, though there might well be (a) an exception of the smaller number of Matthew 27:52-53, just as (b) Enoch and Elijah were individual exceptions to the rule that it is appointed unto men[in the sense of mankind] once to die and after that the judgment -- and salvation also for the redeemed (Hebrews 9:27-28).

2. Moreover, leading a smaller number to heaven by Christ at his ascension would not in any way conflict with the fact that his own resurrection and ascension were a powerful exhibition of his victory over the hostile powers of darkness, as Vine and Lipscomb appropriately suggest, but would actually enhance it -- not only escaping from their clutches himself, but also snatching from them a select group of saints, and thus demonstrating all the more his ability to fulfill his promise of a general resurrection and the eternal salvation of the redeemed at his second coming.

3. Finally, (a) the foregoing represents what occurs to me as not only a possibility, but also as most likely what happened to the "many bodies of the saints that had fallen asleep [but] were raised; and coming forth out of the tombs after [Christ's] resurrection ... entered into the holy city and appeared unto many" (Matthew 27:52-53) -- namely, that they were taken to heaven as a part of the triumphal procession of our Lord upon his ascension there, referred to in Ephesians 4:8 -- but (b), in the absence of more explicit supporting evidence, it is neither a necessary inference nor a matter crucial to our faith, and should not be regarded as such, however plausible it may appear.

Had more explicit information about those saints been necessary for our obedience of faith, and therefore our salvation, it surely would have been supplied as was the fact of Christ's own ascension as well as his resurrection. But, not being thus necessary, to have equally elaborated of "leading captivity captive" would have detracted from rather than contributing to highlighting the bestowal of spiritual gifts within the church in connection with Christ's "ascension on high," which was the contextual emphasis.

Stated another way: (a) Whereas the appearance of those saints to many in Jerusalem after the resurrection of Christ (the decease of whom may have been recent enough for them still to be recognized by friends and acquaintances) would surely make all the more credible the proclamation of the Lord's resurrection by chosen witnesses, and therefore serve a useful purpose in Matthew's account, (b) their being a part of the triumphal procession of our Lord when ascending on high would not have a similar bearing on or relation to his bestowal of spiritual gifts within his church on earth.

Therefore, elaborating upon the former would have served no particular purpose in the context of Paul's discussion of the latter, and its omission says nothing one way or another as to the meaning of Christ's "leading captivity captive" when "ascending on high." It can therefore be only a matter of unconfirmed inference, however probable of otherwise.