

Cornerstone Christian Fellowship
Word of the Kingdom Conference 2010
Session Two

The Full Scope of Death and Salvation, Part I

Job 19: 25 “...And as for me, I know that my Redeemer lives, And at the last He will take His stand on the earth. 26 Even after my skin is destroyed, Yet from my flesh I shall see God; 27 Whom I myself shall behold, And whom my eyes shall see and not another...”

In the two messages that I will be giving in this conference, we will be looking at the full scope of DEATH and the full scope of Salvation. I think most of us here understand *to some degree* the overall scope of salvation, how salvation must affect all three parts of man, the spirit, the soul and the body. However, perhaps in order to more fully understand the overall scope of salvation we need a greater understanding of the overall scope of DEATH and Resurrection. And in order to begin to do that, of course, we must begin with foundational things concerning DEATH as it laid out at the beginning of Scripture.

My goal for us tonight is to grasp a more thorough understanding of the full scope of DEATH as taught in the Scriptures. Then, after grasping a better understanding of this I hope for each of us to grasp the *personal* importance of the significance of the power of Christ’s RESURRECTION, with respect to our resurrection, for the two are quite related in the overall scope of salvation!

The reason it is important for us to grasp the *personal* importance of understanding these things is so that we might not be deceived...because there exists a possibility of our being deceived about death!

Look at Paul’s concern for the Church at Corinth. In his second letter to Corinth, he says:

II Corinthians 11 2 For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for I betrothed you to one husband, that to Christ I might present you as a pure virgin. 3 But I am afraid, lest as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds should be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ.

We can be deceived in the same way Eve was deceived, and the result of this deception would have the same result as did the sin in the Garden. I am not talking about our physical death, but rather a death that we may not even be aware of its potential for us!

Foundationally, we know

- The reason for man’s creation — that to rule over the earth in Satan’s stead. We also know

- That Satan did not take well to man's created purpose. Assuredly, he listened very carefully to what God would say *about* the man, as well as *to* the man, and looked very carefully for a way to thwart God's plan concerning the man. And evidently,
- Satan realized his opportunity when he witnessed and heard the following:

Genesis 2

...7 Then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being. 8 And the LORD God planted a garden toward the east, in Eden; and there He placed the man whom He had formed. 9 And out of the ground the LORD God caused to grow every tree that is pleasing to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Then vs. 15:

...15 Then the LORD God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it. 16 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; 17 but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you shall surely die."

Subsequent to these events, the Scriptures reveal the purpose for the woman being formed, literally built. *She was to be the man's helper*. And apart from her, the man would not be able to rule, for apart from her, he was an incomplete being (since part of his body was taken out of him in order to build her). So, foundationally, we can know that man cannot fulfill his created position alone. He must have a wife to rule with him, if he is to rule at all. There must be a marriage relationship. And we can understand more about her formation by the name Adam gave to her, revealing more facts through his words:

Genesis 2

23 And the man said, "This is now bone of my bones, And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man." 24 For this cause a man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.

25 And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

God gave a very explicit command to the man, and very explicit ramifications to disobedience. Surely Adam *would have told the woman of God's command and the ramification of disobedience*. The way we can know most assuredly that Adam would have told the woman is through the antitype of this scenario. The antitype of this would be the One to Whom we are betrothed, Christ, has very explicitly given us commands that we are to obey, and has very explicitly stated the ramifications of disobeying these commands! The picture is the same! Adam and the woman, Christ and us!

In addition to all of this, we also know that man and the woman were created in God's Image and likeness. God is three parts; man is three parts. And we can learn a bit more about God's image and likeness through the pen of David:

Ps 104

1 Bless the LORD, O my soul! O LORD my God, Thou art very great; Thou art clothed with splendor and majesty, 2 Covering Thyself with light as with a cloak...

This reveals at least one aspect of what the image of God is...He is covered with glorious light, and clothed in regal garments — clothing of Splendor and Majesty. And this is also born out in:

Ps 93

1a The LORD reigns, He is clothed with majesty...

With this in mind, going back to the end of Genesis chapter two, we notice that the man and the woman were *both naked yet were not ashamed*, revealing something about the way they were originally created in God's image. First, let's consider that *implicit* within the Spirit-inspired wording here in Genesis chapter two is the fact that nakedness CAN bring about shame, yet this nakedness in Genesis chapter two, **did not** bring about shame! So we might wonder what is going on here. This Hebrew word for *naked* gives us some interesting information about the scenario in the Garden.

The meaning of this Hebrew word indicates a *partial nakedness*, **not** a *complete nakedness* — a partial nakedness, which implies that they had an inner covering, but lacked outer garments. The man and woman did in fact possess a covering of Glory, having been created in the image and likeness of God, as God is covered with light.

The man and the woman were partially naked at this point, in that they had to be proven worthy in order to be clothed with splendor and majesty, thus attaining to the position of rulership for which they were created. And acquiring the outer garments of regality would not only await their test of obedience, but **one more thing was necessary for the man and his wife to rule over the earth.**

The earth was under Satan's control. God had placed Lucifer as the anointed cherub over the earth at the creation. But Lucifer ultimately rebelled against God and lost his right to remain in that position. The events depicted in Genesis chapter one, reveals God restoring the devastated and darkened earth, and creating another who would take Satan's place. But before a change of rulership could take place over the earth, the earth needed to be REDEEMED. A *redemption* (of the earth) *had to take place* in order for a change of rulership to transpire. So two things were necessary for a change of rulership could take place:

- The man had to be tested and found worthy of this high calling, and
- The earth needed to be redeemed from the control of Satan.

So let's review these facts for a moment. We know that the man and the woman:

- were created in God's image and likeness
- were created to rule

- were created naked (partially naked) and not ashamed awaiting their testing *and awaiting the redemption of the earth.*

We know what the test was, we know the ramifications of failing the test, and we know what followed. Satan lied, and therein deceived Eve. And in her deception, (i.e., even though she was deceived) she died! And we know that she gave to her husband and he ate also.

That very day, they died. But HOW? How did they die *that very day*? What did DEATH look like at that moment? Let's read about it:

Genesis 3

4 And the serpent said to the woman, "You surely shall not die! [Lie #1] 5 For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God [Lie #2] knowing good and evil."

- Lie #1 was that she would not die, when God had explicitly said that they would die!
And
- Lie #2 was that in disobedience, she would be like God, which really brought about the exact opposite— she lost their covering of Glory — becoming unlike God!

Let's keep reading:

6 When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate. 7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings.

(The moment they ate, they became naked! And this Hebrew word implies an *utter nakedness*.)

8 And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.

9 Then the LORD God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?" 10 And he said, "I heard the sound of Thee in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid myself." 11 And He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?"

12 And the man said, "The woman whom Thou gavest to be with me, she gave me from the tree, and I ate." 13 Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" And the woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

(Isn't it interesting to note that it was at this point, after she ate and lost the glory, that she was no longer deceived?)

Anyway, here it is. Herein is the ever-so-briefly-stated sequence of events that actually places the cog in the wheel (so to speak), which began to roll out God's plan from eternity past! Though the man and the woman failed the test of obedience, this action on their part (and on Satan's part as well), put into motion *the plan of redemption* which God had decreed from before the foundation of the earth — that His Son would come in the antitype of Adam — the Second Man, the Last Adam — in the likeness of sinful flesh (flesh apart from glory) and through His death, He would not only redeem man, but would also redeem the earth! AMAZING!!!

We see that:

4 And the serpent said to the woman, "You surely shall not die! 5 For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

- Verses 4 and 5 reveal the lie of Satan, i.e., his very deception — “You surely will not die!” And “you will be like God...”

6 When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.

- Verse 6 reveals the action brought about death

7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings.

- Verse 7 reveals that their eyes were open and they knew they were naked. The inner garment — the covering of GLORY — had departed from them. Now they were *utterly naked*. It is important to note that a different Hebrew word for the English word *naked* is used here in chapter three — different than was used in Genesis chapter two when they were naked and *not* ashamed. After the sin, here in Genesis chapter three, the Hebrew word for naked implies a complete and utter nakedness! Now they had no inner covering of glory, and apart from the inner garment of glory, they could not be clothed in outer garments of Splendor and Majesty — they could not put on the clothing of regality.

It is easy to see that implicit here in chapter three *was* a shamefulness in their being utterly naked, so much so that that they sewed fig leaves together to be their covering.

8 And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.

- Verse 8 reveals something more about the ramifications of sin — a facet of death that we need to understand. Here we see that a *separation* took place due to their sin — they hid themselves from the Lord God. Whereas, *prior* to their eating the forbidden fruit, the man evidently personally conversed with God, face-to-face, so to speak. But now, they both were ashamed and sought to hide from God. Then,
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- Verse 9 reveals something of what began as *God's relentless pursuit of sinful man*, who was now separated from God because of sin. And interestingly enough, here we see God pursuing them, asking a question, which reveals *another facet of death*, which we may not have known and understood before. Let's read it again:

Genesis 3

9 Then the LORD God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?" 10 And he said, "I heard the sound of Thee in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid myself." 11 And He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?"

Let's think about this for a moment. First, remember what God said the result would be of their eating from the forbidden tree:

Genesis 2

16 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; 17 but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you shall surely die."

On the day that they would eat from the tree, they would *surely* DIE. Now let's reread what God said to the man once he ate:

Genesis 3

11 And He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?"

If eating from this tree would bring forth death... **AND**... eating from this tree caused the man to become utterly naked (he lost his covering of GLORY); can we not see that the loss of Glory is a facet of death that perhaps we should take note of? And this is no small thing since it is laid out right here in these all-important, foundational chapters of Scripture...here at the beginning.

So what can we learn about the meaning of what God said in His words — "...***in the day that you eat from the tree...you shall surely die***"?

Our first thoughts would quite naturally go to the idea of a *day* meaning a 24-hour period. And of course, it is necessary for us to see it from that perspective, because we know that God's Word is true. He said "in the day"! And He meant "in the day". But since the man and his wife did not die physically that very 24 hour-period, we need to understand just *how* they died that day in that 24-hour period.

In order to understand this we need to remember that man had been created in God's image — a three-part being, spirit, soul and body. In remembering this, we need to consider how death would affect each part — his spirit, his soul, and his body. And in considering this, we would come to a more complete understanding of the full scope of death and how the full scope of salvation is laid out in Scripture.

First, the spirit — we know from many subsequent places throughout Scripture that *spiritual death* has to do with being *separated from God*, having no ability to commune with God. This is spiritual death. *It is not that the spirit ceases to exist!* Of course, every baby ever born to a man and woman is born as a three part being. Each person born has a human spirit, a corrupted soul and of course a body. But every person ever born to a man and a woman is born DEAD — apart from God. And this is the way we need to understand death! Death never means ceasing to exist!

Paul states it pretty clearly in his letter to the Ephesians:

Ephesians 2

...12 remember that you were at that time separate from Christ [and what would that mean?], excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

We can see separation taking place the very first time in the history of mankind right there in Genesis chapter three! The man and the woman *hid themselves from the Lord God*. Evidently, they instinctively realized the separation. Herein, we can begin to understand *the death of the spirit*. Being spiritually dead is being separated from God, and being spiritually alive is having union with God. It is that simple!

But what about the other two parts of man — the soul and the body? How would death affect the soul and the body? Since the death of the body is far easier for us to grasp than the death of the soul, let's cover that next, then we will get to the death of the soul.

Did you ever think that the man did DIE physically “in the day” that he ate the fruit? Wouldn't it *have to be so*, since that is what God said would happen? Because let's remember what Moses said about God:

Numbers 23

19 "God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent [change His mind]; Has He said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?"

God said that the man would die in the day that he ate the fruit, and we would *have to see that it was true*. It had to happen just as God said it would! And it did! The man died physically the very day that he partook of the fruit. The way we can see this is to remember that God has revealed at least two different calculations of time for a “day” in Scripture. Of course, we are daily familiar with the 24-hour period day. But let's not forget the 1,000 year-period day in Scripture. Look how old he was when he died physically:

Genesis 5

5 So all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years, and he died.

So no problem there. Adam died physically within the first 1,000 year-period day. He was only 930 years old. In that sense, we can know and understand that Adam did indeed, die physically *the day* he ate the fruit.

We also understand that physical death is the separation of the spirit and the soul from the body. So in physical death, there is no longer breath in the body, and blood no longer courses through the body; the body become inanimate and returns to dust. That is physical death.

So, now let's consider the soul. How was the soul affected by Adam's sin on that day? How is it that *the soul of the man* died "in the day" that they ate the fruit? Up to this point, perhaps we have understood that the soul immediately became corrupted. But we also need to recognize that the whole of man — spirit, soul and body became ***darkened*** the moment he ate from the fruit! Isn't it true?! The man and woman *immediately* lost their covering of glory.

Let's go back to the two verses we connected a few minutes ago.

Genesis 2

17 but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you shall surely die."

And then in

Genesis 3

11 And He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?"

Perhaps herein we can see at least one facet of the death of the soul. It is the separation from Glory with resulting darkness and corruption. Loss of the Glory and corruption has to do with darkness! Of course, the soul became darkened! Hang in here with me, for a moment, as we work this out Scripturally.

So this is how death affected Adam:

- He became separated from God (Spiritual death)
- He — his entire being — lost his covering of glory (soulical death)
- His body returned to dust (physical death).

We will also remember that in Genesis chapter five Adam begets a son in *his own image* now. Procreation does not bring about children after God's image, but rather after fallen man's image. This is the lot for all of us...all who are born to a man and woman. Due to Adam's sin, we are born:

- Separated from God (spiritually dead)
- In darkness, apart from glory (soulical dead)
- Susceptible to disease and aging, eventually returning to dust, unless we are raptured (physical death).

But there is HOPE! Even though we are born dead, we can know and understand that God's restoration process (i.e., the full scope of salvation) must affect all three parts of our being in order for us to be able to step into the position for which we were created in the first place — to rule over the earth.

And we know that this process begins with the spirit — our spiritual birth.

When we are born spiritually through faith in Jesus, our human spirit is indwelt by God's Spirit, doing *away with at least one aspect of our being separated from God*. But then, at that point, a separation takes place *within our very being*! At that point, our spirit (which is now enlightened and can have communion with God) is separated from our soul, which remains in darkness. We see that separation stated succinctly in:

Hebrews 4

12a For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit...

This separation (the separation of the spirit from the soul) is the beginning of the process of salvation, the beginning of our restoration process. In a true sense at the moment of salvation, light is brought into our very being (i.e., our spirit is enlightened through the Word of God). But our soul, which is now separated from our spirit, remains in darkness.

Read what John said of Jesus at the first of his gospel:

John 1

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things came into being by Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. 4 In Him [in the One Who is the WORD] was life, and the life was the light of men. 5 And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

It is through Jesus, the VERY WORD HIMSELF that we receive spiritual life, and in that life is light! Yet darkness still exists. And this WORD (Jesus) separates the spirit and the soul, because *He is LIFE and the LIFE is the LIGHT of men, and the light shines in the darkness, but the darkness does not comprehend it*.

(Remember what we are trying to put together tonight. We are trying to understand the full scope of DEATH and by doing that we will most likely *understand more fully* the full scope of salvation.) And it is the full scope of salvation that is our goal, as expressed by Paul in:

I Thessalonians 5

23 Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Our *spiritual* life is completely brought to pass the moment of belief in Jesus, thus beginning the process of an ongoing salvation. Herein is the process of the restoration of man! It is to be *from faith to faith*, from the moment of initial faith through ongoing faith until either we die physically or our bodies are changed at the moment of the Rapture. And of course, we know that *the goal of our faith is the salvation of our souls* (I Pet. 1:9)! But once the process begins, its continuation is not guaranteed! We must participate with the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives for our faith to reach its goal.

Interestingly, we can also see the separation of light and darkness in the process of the restoration of the earth, back in Genesis chapter one. Due to Satan's sin, the earth became desecrated and darkened as described in Genesis chapter one.

Genesis 1

2 And the earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep; (Notice the darkness here! Now the restoration process begins) and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters. 3 Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. 4 And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. 5 And God called the light day, and the darkness He called night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day.

“Let there be light...” This would have to be the LIGHT OF GOD, as we know it is not the light of the sun (which did not come to shine on the earth until day four)! The light and darkness were separated in the physical realm on day one in Genesis chapter one, beginning the restoration process that would require *an additional* five days before God would REST from His work. This separation is depicted as night and day in the physical realm. So it is in the spiritual realm, depicted in the separation of the soul and the spirit. And we can see this illustrated in several NT verses, such as:

II Corinthians 4

6 For God, who said, "Light shall shine out of darkness," [we just read that in Gen. 1:3] is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. 7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the surpassing greatness of the power may be of God and not from ourselves...

Right now, the light of the Spirit of God has shown forth in our hearts in order to give the light of the knowledge of the GLORY of God in Jesus. This is the spiritual light within us— in our redeemed spirit. Yet the purpose of this light shining in us is to give us the light of the knowledge of the GLORY! There is more to be understood about the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus — which we will deal with in more detail in PART II on Friday.

For now, let's look at a few more passages illustrating light and darkness pictured in day and night, and see how this fits into the spiritual realm...our spiritual life.

The Apostle John tells us how to remain in this light, and not fall back to walking in darkness:

1 John 1

5 And this is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all. 6 If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; 7 but if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another [that is fellowship with God], and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.

But how do we keep on walking in the light and not in darkness? How can we continue in fellowship with God? This passage goes on to speak of confession of sin:

I John 1

8 If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

This is the means to walk in light; and to walk in light is to have fellowship with God, which is accomplished and maintained through ongoing confession of ongoing sins. And if we were to compare Scripture with Scripture, we would also see that it is through *repentance from sin* and *transformation by the Word of God* that we can continue to walk in the light of our redeemed spirit, which is now indwelt, by God's Holy Spirit, and not walking in the darkness of our unredeemed soul. It is our daily choice to make, isn't it?

We could keep going with several more passages to see the extent of how God uses the illustration of night and day, darkness and light, but time constrains me. We could read I Thess. 5:2-9; Col. 1:12-14; Rom. 13:12-14, to name a few.

In these passages (which we will not be reading tonight) we would be able to see how darkness and night illustrate the fleshly part of man; and light and day illustrate the spiritually-alive part of man. And things we can learn therein. (I encourage you to study them for yourself!)

In all of this we need to understand that the soul (which remains in darkness) is connected to body of flesh. We can begin to understand this a bit more when we read something that Moses wrote in OT concerning the life/soul and the body. While we are reading this passage, notice that the words *life* and *soul* are interchangeable, since both English words — life and soul — are translated from the *exact same Hebrew word*:

Le 17:11 'For the life [soul] of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls [lives]; for it is the blood by reason of the life [soul] that makes atonement.'

Again, the English words *life* and *soul* are translated from the same Hebrew word in this passage, making the English words interchangeable.

The very thing that is the life-animating force of physical body is in the BLOOD. Take that away, and DEATH of the body ensues. The *soulish-life* of man is in the blood. So we can see how the soul and the body of man are inextricably linked together.

According to this passage, in order to redeem the soul/life, there must be a blood sacrifice. In the OT Law (something, which was always and forever pointing to the Christ Who, would come and fulfill the whole Law) innocent blood had to be offered *for atonement of the soul*. This would have to do with things surrounding the Mercy Seat and the Day of Atonement, not with things surrounding the Passover. The mercy seat in the OT was God's means of offering a cleansing for the sin of His redeemed people.

But now Christ has fulfilled the Law, and there is no longer a need for daily or yearly sacrifices. His Blood is on the Mercy Seat in Heaven, and He is our High Priest, affording us a cleansing of sin. And this cleansing of sin is ongoing for each one of us, for the duration of our natural life here on this earth, as we repent, confess sins and are transformed by the Word.

Just as we had to exercise faith in the death of Jesus as Passover on the cross for our spiritual birth, we now have to exercise faith in the High Priestly ministry of Christ with His blood on the Mercy Seat in the heavens for us today, being obedient to His Command of confessing our sin. And, if we say that we have no sin, we make God to be a liar!

We *need to understand* that the salvation process is *from faith to faith*. The first moment of our faith (having to do with the death of Jesus as Passover) had to be apart from works. But thereafter — after one has received the spiritual light and life into his spirit — ongoing faith must have actions behind it in order to be brought to its goal, which remember *is the salvation of our soul*. Faith on our part in the things beyond the death of Jesus, and good works emanating out of that faith, is what is necessary in order for us to experience the salvation of our souls. Hence Paul says:

Philippians 2

12 So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling; 13 for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.

We must *choose* between life and death. And the way that we make that choice for the coming age is by making choices in the present age.

Jesus himself offered that choice to His disciples. As we read this passage, we will see here, as we saw in our verse in Leviticus that the English words for *life* and *soul* are exactly interchangeable, as they are both translated from the same Greek word:

Matthew 16

Matthew 16

24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. 25 For whoever wishes to save his life [soul] shall lose it; but whoever loses his life [soul] for My sake shall find it. 26 For what will a man be profited, if he gains the whole world, and forfeits his soul [life]? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul [life]?"

And the reason for making this choice is seen in the Lord's very next words:

27 "For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and WILL THEN RECOMPENSE EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS.

And that this is connected to the coming age and the Kingdom of that Age can be seen in the Lord's very next Words:

28 "Truly I say to you, there are some of those who are standing here who shall not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom."

Even Moses (who was a type of Christ) made this same type of offer to the redeemed Children of Israel in the wilderness when he said:

De 30:15 "See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, and death and adversity;

...19 "I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. So choose life in order that you may live, you and your descendants..."

But how do we choose life now with respect to the coming age? Or how could we forfeit our soul with respect to the coming age?

Jesus gave us the answer! We deny ourselves, take up our cross — the instrument of death — and follow Him. We forfeit our soulish-life in this age; die to our soulish-life here and now, so that we can take up our life in the coming age. It is in one or the other, not both! Either we LIVE here, or we LIVE there. Either we DIE here, or we DIE there. (More on this in Part II.)

Let's pull together several things here as we close for tonight:

What would it look like to die here, in this present world, this present age? (Remember, we are not talking about physical death.)

What would it look like to die there in the age to come, during the kingdom?

Is it possible for us...for you and me to be DEAD during the coming Age? And if it were, what would it look like?

Scripture answers these questions for us. We have already seen Paul's concern for the Church at Corinth, and by extension his concern for us. Let's read it again:

II Corinthians 11

2 For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for I betrothed you to one husband, that to Christ I might present you as a pure virgin. 3 But I am afraid, lest as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds should be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ.

If we narrowed down the lie on Satan's part to the woman in the Garden, we would see two facets of the lie:

Lie 1) "You will surely not die!" and

Lie 2) This action will even make you like God — could he be implying that even in disobedience we would still be covered in glory and eventually being clothed regal garments.

In order for Eve to have been deceived, it seems that she would not have really believed what God had told Adam about the command and the ramifications. Essentially, she was deceived into thinking that she would not die, and apparently that she would not lose the glory nor the right to rule. She even thought that the forbidden tree would make her wise! Whew!

And **interestingly enough, her being deceived did not prevent her from dying! In other words, *deception* will not be an excuse for you or me at the JSOC.**

Can we be deceived in that exact same way? "You surely will not die!" Could we possibly be deceived in the same way Eve was deceived, in spite of what the Holy Spirit clearly has said in Scripture? Look at these verses:

Romans 8

6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace,

...12 So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh-- 13 for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

James 1

14 But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. 15 Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death. 16 Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren.

Romans 6

23 For the wages of sin is death...

Galatians 6

7 Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. 8 For the one who sows to his own flesh shall from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit shall from the Spirit reap eternal [age-lasting] life.

Have you believed the lie of Satan, and thought that you — YOU — could not possible experience DEATH now that you have "eternal life"? That you will be ruling and reigning with Christ, no matter how you lived as a Christian?

Yes, we can we be deceived in the same way that Eve was deceived? Again, the sobering thing about the whole scenario in the Garden is that even in her deception, Eve died! Her having been deceived did not protect her from dying.

What would it look like to experience death in the age to come, during the kingdom? Death means separation. Death during the coming age would be separation from Christ and His glory. Separated to the outer darkness, where you will be hurt by the second death. Death would mean your not being able to partake in the LIGHT of His Glory, nor being covered in Glory and clothed in splendor and majesty, but rather *shamefully naked* finding oneself in a place that Scripture calls “the outer darkness” where there will be great remorse, which is described in Scripture as “weeping and gnashing of teeth”. Honestly, it is indescribable.

Of course, speaking about the saved individuals this separation, this death will not last *past* the coming age. Life in the ages to come (our “eternal life” as we have come to call it) is absolutely secure, but life in the age to come is something we must strive to enter.

So how do we do that?

Well, that, my friend is the subject of Part II! But for encouragement’s sake, let me close tonight with this passage from the Book of Romans:

Romans 5

8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. 10 For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

Saved by His LIFE? Sin brings about death...But the Resurrection of Jesus allows for LIFE.

We will pick up there on Friday afternoon. And be sure to pick up one of Jeanne Alley’s Bible studies on your way out, as she covers much of this in her new study.