

Sunday, September 30, 2012
The What, When and Where of Salvation
Part III of III

In the past two weeks we have been looking at our salvation as it relates to the creation of man. We have seen that we cannot understand the full scope of our salvation *unless* and *until* we understand that:

- **The purpose for which God created man is the same for which God is saving man — to rule over the earth in Satan’s stead.**
- **The man was created in God’s image and likeness:**
 - **Made in three parts:**
 - **spirit — the God-conscience part of man (God breathed His Breath (His Spirit) into the man**
 - **soul — the man-conscience (or the self-conscience) part of man (the seat of his emotions, feelings and desires)**
 - **body — the flesh, bones and blood part of man (that which houses both the spirit and soul).**
 - **Covered in glory, awaiting the reception of the garments of splendor and majesty.**
- **Adam’s sin brought about his death as it relates to all three part.**
- **Every individual ever born to a man and a woman is born in the image and likeness of Adam, dead in trespasses and sin.**
- **Salvation must address all three parts of man — the spirit and the soul and the body.**

Salvation must begin with the spirit — the God-conscience part of man. Spiritual birth is a work that only God can do, and the only thing that an individual can do is believe what God says about it — Jesus died on the cross of our sins. And in believing what God says about the death and shed blood of Jesus as Passover, a person passes out of death into life; this is their *spiritual birth*.

This birth is the beginning point of the life-long process in our being *preserved entirely* at the coming of the Lord. Remember Paul wrote in **I Thess. 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.** Just as our physical birth places us within a particular family on earth, so our spiritual birth places us within the family of God. **Ro 8:16 The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God...** Apart from our spirit *being born from above*, we could not receive the witness from God’s Spirit that we are His child.

But there is more to salvation than just our spiritual birth, though so many Christians think that salvation begins and ends there. Our being a Child of God makes us an heir to God! **Romans 8:16 The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, heirs also, heirs of God...** This becomes imperative to grasp in the light of the ongoing process of our salvation! Being placed in the family of God (through our

spiritual birth), places us as an heir of God. Inheritance is a family matter — only children in the family are heirs. Then, from a Scriptural standpoint, there is a status within the family that is greater than simply being an heir — it is the status of the firstborn son. We know that Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son, the Firstborn of God, and as such He is the One who will receive the Firstborn Son's inheritance! And though we are not firstborn sons through our spiritual birth, there is something that *we can do* to become a co-heir with Jesus. The condition is stated clearly in the last half of v. **17...and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him.** As a Child of God, we are not counted as a firstborn son — a fellow heir with Christ — *unless we are willing to suffer with Him!* (Here is where we get the phrase “suffering always precedes glory.”) We will look to see what it means to suffer with Him a bit later, but for now let's look at what the Firstborn Son within the Family of God receives!

Look at **Hebrews 1:2 in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.** Here it states that Jesus is the heir of *all things*. With respect to this, at some point in eternity past, God the Father has told the Son: **Psalm 2:8 'Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Thine inheritance, And the very ends of the earth as Thy possession...** This passage reveals that Jesus' inheritance has to do with this world, the inhabited earth. So then, the co-heirs with Christ will receive the exact same inheritance as Jesus receives!

So what “in the world” does all of this have to do with us? It has much to do with us in every respect, because all of this has to do with the full scope of our salvation. Even though man was created to rule over the earth, the Federal head of mankind, Adam, forfeited man's right to rule. Sin brought forth death. But remember, God's plans and purposes for man will not be thwarted!

With all of this in mind, let's go back to a passage we looked at last week. **Ephesians 2:8 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; 9 not as a result of works, that no one should boast.** If faith alone is what it takes to have spiritual birth, thereby placing us within the Family of God as an heir of God then what does it take to realize the *salvation and the soul* and the *redemption of the body*? And would the salvation of the soul and the redemption of the body have to do with becoming a co-heir with Christ, as a firstborn son? We should note that vv. 7, 8 in Ephesians are followed by v **10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.**

Remember when God put Adam into a deep sleep, and opened up his side in order to form the woman. In a literal sense, she had been created in Adam, and later removed from his body in order to be built into his wife. Adam is a type of Christ. After Christ died — the antitype to Adam's *deep sleep* — His side was opened up and out flowed blood and water — the two elements that would be used to build the Bride for Christ. It is through our spiritual birth that we have been *created in Christ Jesus*. And just as it was in the type, so it will be in the Antitype! The bride will be taken out of the body and will be built into a wife. Individuals who have been created in Christ Jesus, and who

presently take advantage of the blood and water which flowed from His side after His death as Passover will be built into His Bride. These will individuals who will, through regular confession, be cleansed from their sins; they will be those who, through diligent study of God's Word, will be continually washed by the water of the Word. This mystery is great! But I speak of Christ and the Church.

It is what *follows* our spiritual birth that each of us must be concerned with if we are to realize the salvation of our soul and the redemption of our body. Our spiritual birth was gained by grace through faith *apart from our own works*, but now, after we have been born spiritually, there is a Scriptural expectation of works on our part. 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...** Here we see that *working out of our own salvation in fear and trembling* has to do with obedience! (Remember the test of obedience to the command of God in the Garden for Adam and the woman? All of this begins to come together!) And we can easily see in this passage in Philippians, that God does not leave us to our own devices to do this work of obedience, as we read in the next verse: **13 for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.** God is *in* us (through His indwelling Holy Spirit), which He breathed into us at our spiritual birth, and through His Spirit, He is at work *in* us *both to will and to work for His good pleasure*? Yet, still, all of this has to emanate from faith! The ongoing process of salvation (i.e., the saving of the soul and the redemption of the body) must be born out of faith. Paul said: **Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. 17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "BUT THE RIGHTEOUS man SHALL LIVE BY FAITH."** If the righteous man is to live by faith — living from faith to faith — then we must grasp what it is that we are to believe, so that we will live by that! A good definition of faith is *simply believing what God says about something*. And God has told us a whole lot more in His Word than just about His Son's death! Our faith is not to stop at the death of Jesus as our Passover. (If that were the case, then what is the whole deal with His side being opened up after He died? If His death was all that is important, then why is He now in heaven as our High priest? We are to believe in the death of Jesus as our Passover, but then we are to keep believing what God has said about things beyond His death! It would be these things (things beyond His death as Passover) that surround the salvation of the soul and redemption of the body.

So now let's set down a few facts *about the separation of the spirit and the soul* as it is presented in Scripture, because so many Christians have been taught to believe that the spirit and the soul are one and the same. They are not!

The Salvation of the Soul

We want to look at some of the specific passages that *explicitly* use the phrase *salvation of the soul*. First we will look at: **James 1:21 Therefore putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls. 22 But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely**

hearers who delude themselves. (NASB) The salvation of the soul that has to do with our being *doers* of the Word and not merely hearers! The Epistle of James is a book that draws specific attention to the work expected of saved individuals and this work is seen within the context of the salvation of the soul. Notice the inward work that a saved individual must do: *put aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness*, as he works in conjunction with the indwelling Holy Spirit. It is important to hear the Word (because faith comes by hearing [Rom. 10:17]) but it is also important to “do” the word as we see that “doing” (the obedience part) will result in the saving of the soul! But the doing must be based upon faith!

There is another passage which explicitly uses the term *the salvation of the soul*. It is found in **I Peter 1:9 obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls**. Of course this phrase is used within a larger context that explains *what* the salvation of the soul has to do with. Let’s read v. 9 in its larger context **I Peter 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. 6 In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, 7 that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ; 8 and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, 9 obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls.**

In this passage, our *hope* is seen in connection to a *heavenly inheritance* for those who *through faith* are *protected by the power of God* unto a *salvation* which will be revealed at the *revelation of Jesus Christ*, which is in the last time. The text reveals that this salvation is obtained as the goal, the outcome of our faith — the salvation of our soul. It is this salvation which addresses the death of the soul; it is this salvation that is the inheritance as a co-heir with Christ, which we will remember from Romans 8:17 will only be the lot of those who are willing to suffer with Him. And to the degree that we are willing to suffer, we will share in His glory! **I Peter 4:12 Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; 13 but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing; so that also at the revelation of His glory, you may rejoice with exultation**. Let’s be clear what it means to “suffer with Christ.” The whole book of I Peter lays out exactly what suffering with Christ has to do with! Christ died *in* the flesh, leaving us an example of how we are to die *to* the flesh!

This inheritance is not the inheritance as a child of God; this is the inheritance as a firstborn son of God! This inheritance affords an individual the ability to equally share in Christ’s glory and honor at His revelation — which is the coming of the Lord. This is *the goal of our faith*, it is from faith to faith, from faith in the death and shed blood of Jesus

as our Passover, to faith in things beyond His death as Passover — things concerning His inheritance as the Firstborn Son. The individuals attaining to the salvation of the soul will share in and be covered with the glory of Christ! Do you remember that *life*, as it is initially presented in Scripture, had not only to do with the in-breathing of God's into the man, but also with his being covered with glory awaiting the royal garments? Then do you remember death, as it is initially presented in Scripture, had to do not only with being separated from God spiritually, but also with the loss of the covering of glory, thereby the loss the right to the future reception of royal garments which portended rulership? Well if the spiritual birth is all that salvation has to do with, then what about our nakedness? What about our royal robes? What about our fulfilling God's created purpose? How does salvation deal with this part of life and death? Our covering of glory awaits our test of obedience.

And to see that there is *a future salvation that is yet to be inherited* we would only have to go down a few verses from the one we looked at a few minutes ago Hebrews chapter one. We looked at Jesus being the heir of all things in v 2. Related to that contextually would be an inherited salvation: **Heb 1:13 But to which of the angels has He ever said, "SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, UNTIL I MAKE THINE ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR THY FEET"? 14 Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation?** And to see that this salvation is yet future, you only need to turn to **Heb 9:27 And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment, 28 so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, shall appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him.**

It is this salvation that we must strive to attain! Paul spoke of striving for this goal in **Philippians 3:12 Not that I have already obtained it, or have already become perfect, but I press on in order that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. 13 Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus...**It is easy to see here in Paul's words that he is pressing for something beyond the free gift. He is pressing toward something he has not yet attained, the *goal of the prize*...the reward of the upward call, which is the salvation of the soul!

And concerning the trials and testing of everyday life, God has said: **Heb 10:36 For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God [that would be walking in obedience in the midst life's trials], you may receive the promise: 37 "For yet a little while, And He who is coming will come and will not tarry. 38 Now the just shall live by faith; But if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him" 39 But we are not of those who draw back to perdition [Lit. loss], but of those who believe to the saving of the soul.** (NKJV) Suffering always precedes glory. And the suffering that God is speaking about in His Word is dying to the soul's fleshly desires! We all know what those fleshly desires are!

In all these passages, which we have seen this morning wherein the term salvation of the soul is explicitly used, the English word for *soul* comes from the Greek word *psuche*. (That some translators chose to drop this Greek word *psuche*, even when it appears in the text of the original language is a conundrum. For example, the NIV translators completely dropped the word *soul* in James 1:21.) So let's compare the words *spirit* and *soul*, to see the distinctions.

- **The word spirit is from the Greek word pneuma and is used 350 times in the NT, being translated *spirit* 349 times; and *breath* one time. *Pneuma* is never translated *soul*.**
- **The word soul is from the Greek word psuche and is used 95 times in the NT, being translated 88 times either *soul* or *life* — the two words being used interchangeably. *Psuche* is never translated *spirit*.**

Remember that salvation is depicted in Scripture as not *only being delivered out of something*, but also being delivered into something else. With that in mind, we must understand that the spiritual birth and the salvation of the soul are two separate and distinct facets of salvation as it is presented in Scripture:

- **Our spiritual birth is a free gift based upon faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ, and once gained, cannot be lost. This salvation *delivers us out of eternal spiritual separation* from God and *delivers us into eternal union* with God. This is a present condition and will last into all eternity.**
- **The salvation of the soul/life is a reward based upon our own work as we work in conjunction with the Holy Spirit and will be either gained or lost at the JSOC. The gain of this salvation *delivers us out of being separated with Christ's and His glory*, and *delivers us into union with Christ in His glory* when He comes for a salvation yet to be revealed; the loss of this salvation is the continued separation from His glory. The ramifications of either the gain or the loss are realized in the Coming Age and have nothing to do with the eternity future.**

The 1,000 year Messianic Kingdom is still in time and space, and still has to do with this present earth. In no way shape or form is it part of eternity future. It is still calibrated in time as we know it, and is referred to in Scripture as the Coming Age, the Day of the Lord, the Age of the Ages, among other names. It is only after the 1,000 years that God does away with this present earth, and creates a new earth, with the heavenly city resting upon the new earth

We are all familiar with this passage: **I Corinthians 3:10 ...But let each man be careful how he builds upon it. 11 For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 Now if any man builds upon the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, 13 each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it, because it is to be revealed with fire; and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. 14 If any man's work which he has built upon it remains, he shall receive a reward. 15 If any man's work is burned up, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as through fire.** Of course this passage is dealing with the Judgment Seat of Christ, at which all of us will stand

before Jesus as our Judge. All judgment has been given to Him, and He will be the righteous Judge, Who will judge without partiality. We can see that in: **Colossians 3:23 Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men; 24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve. 25 For he who does wrong will receive the consequences of the wrong which he has done, and that without partiality.**

All of this has to do with the gain or loss of our soul/life in the Coming Age. Herein is the reason for each of us to stand at the Judgment Seat of Christ. It is *not* for the purpose of determining our eternal destiny — heaven or hell. That was determined at our spiritual birth, when we became a Child of God. No! We will be judged to see *how we lived our life after becoming a Child of God*. There are a plethora of passages both in the Old and New Testaments which attest to the fact that we will be judged according to what we have done! Here is one out of the many: **II Corinthians 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.**

But thankfully we are still breathing earth's air! And until we take our last breath of earth's air, we can know that Jesus Christ is presently our High Priest in the heavens. He is not Judge yet! **I John 1:9 says: If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.** Right now, thankfully, Jesus offers us a cleansing through the blood and water which flowed from His side after His death.

The salvation of the soul should be the focus of our lives now. And everything else in our lives should pale in comparison to our working out our own salvation. The reason that this should be our focus is that it is only through the saving of our soul that we will become a co-heir with Christ as a firstborn son. Apart from the salvation of the soul (even though we would remain a Child of God for all of eternity), we would not become a co-heir with Christ. And the differentiating factor in either being an heir of God or a co-heir with Christ as a firstborn son is our willingness to suffer with Him. Let's look again at the passage that we have already looked at this morning: **Romans 8:16 The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him.** But now look what Paul says in the very next couple of verses! **18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us. 19 For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God.** This "revealing of the sons of God" has to do with *adoption*. From a biblical perspective, adoption is *taking a child within a family and placing him as a firstborn*; with taking an heir within the family and giving him the status of a firstborn son. The Greek word literally means *child-placement* — placing a child who is already in the family! So now, let's spend the remainder of our time tying together the salvation of the soul with the Redemption of the body. It should be very easy to see now.

The Redemption of the Body

Let's look at the passage in the NT that spells out exactly what the redemption of the body is! **Romans 8:23** **And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.** And just by looking at the context of this verse (which we have seen several times already today), it will be easy to see how this adoption is connected to the salvation of the soul. We'll read it again: **Romans 8:16** **The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him.** But now look what Paul says in the very next couple of verses! **18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us. 19 For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. ...23 And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.**

Let's remember what we learned in the first part of this series when we looked at how life and death are initially presented in Scripture.

- ***Life* is having God's Spirit within.**
- ***Life* is being covered with God's glory, while awaiting the reception of royal robes (garments of splendor and majesty), reflecting the image and likeness of God!**
- ***Life* is being able to fulfill the purpose for which man was created, that to rule over the earth.**

And,

- ***Death* takes God's Spirit away.**
- ***Death* removes the covering of glory (thereby making it impossible to receive the royal robes, (garments of splendor and majesty), thereby *not* reflecting God's image and likeness.**
- ***Death* is not being able to fulfill our created purpose, that to rule over the earth.**

This is the way that we would need to understand life and death, because this is the way God gave it! Think about it! Even now, you are sitting there with a completely redeemed spirit (Thanks be to God!), but what about your soul and your body? Are we yet covered in glory? Are we yet able to receive the garments of splendor and majesty? Are we yet prepared to step into the position of rulership over the earth? The answers to these questions would have to be "No!" Paul states it poignantly: **2Co 4:16** **Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day.** And take a look at this next verse! **17 For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal [Lit., age-lasting] weight of glory far beyond all comparison, 18 while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.** These unseen things are the very things we have been looking at this morning.

If life, seen at the beginning Scripture, is being in a position able to fulfill the purpose for which God created man, and death, seen at the beginning of Scripture, as preventing man from fulfilling that purpose, then *we would have to see salvation (in its full scope) as touching all three parts of our being*. Still, someone might be reluctant to accept that our spiritual birth is not in-and-of-itself the full scope of salvation. Someone might want to keep believing the way he have always believed, that Jesus has done it all, and there is **nothing** that we can do to affect any part of salvation. I have always said: “A person convinced against his will is of the same opinion still.” If an individual rejects the purpose for man’s creation as being the same purpose for man’s salvation, in spite of all the Scriptures he has heard in this series, and he continues in his unbelief until he breathes his last breath of earth’s air, then at the JSOC he will remain in a very similar condition to what he is today; in a very similar condition as we all are today! The only difference is that he will be in an immortal body! He will have an alive spirit; He will be a Child of God, and as such he will be an heir to God, but he will remain, as he is today, naked and unable to step into his God-given purpose which can only be fulfilled in the Coming Age. He will be in an immortal body, but he will be separated from Christ’s glory, when Christ is revealed in glory. And that will be his condition for another period of time. It will be his condition for 24/7/360/1000 — for a period *time* of 1,000 years.

I leave you with this: As an eternally saved person we have before us the choice of life and death. This choice is made in the present age but has ramifications in the Coming Age. Jesus said it so well when He was telling His disciples what the cost of “following” Him would be. While looking at this passage, please keep in mind that our gift of eternal life did not cost us anything. He freely gave His life so that we could have life. But after the free gift, there is a cost! **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 (or soul) shall lose it; but whoever loses his life (or 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 (or life)? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul (or life)? 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.**

Yes, we can still die again. We will either die here and now or then and there. We will either die to the flesh now and live in the Coming Age, or we will live to the flesh now and experience death in the Coming Age! The choice is up to us. And it all comes down to the trials in our everyday lives. James told us about this in his epistle: **James 1:2 Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance...**

...12 Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life, which the Lord has promised to those who love Him. 13 Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone. 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.

Paul's knew of this possible deception. We can hear his concern for the Church at Corinth and for us by extension in these words: **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.** The very thing that happened to Eve in the Garden can happen to us here. We could be deceived into thinking that the loss or death of our soul is not possible!

I'd like to close with the words that Moses gave as he spoke to the saved generation of individuals about to go into the Promised Land: **Deuteronomy 30:15 "See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, and death and adversity; 16 in that I command you today to love the LORD your God, to walk in His ways and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His judgments, that you may live and multiply, and that the LORD your God may bless you in the land where you are entering to possess it (speaking of the inheritance that was on offer to them). 17 But if your heart turns away and you will not obey, but are drawn away and worship other gods and serve them, 18 I declare to you today that you shall surely perish. You shall not prolong your days in the land where you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess it. 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, 20 by loving the LORD your God, by obeying His voice, and by holding fast to Him; for this is your life and the length of your days, that you may live in the land which the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them."**

My prayer for all of us today is a Paul prayed: **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. I Thess. 5:23**