

WHERE ARE THE MILLIONS OF DEAD?

Are the dead living in another world? Can they see, hear, and know what is happening in this world? Five minutes after you die, where will you be? in heaven? hell? purgatory? or asleep in the dust? What really happens to a person when he dies? There is nothing that man dreads and fears so much as death. There are 60,000 deaths every twenty-four hours! Just think of the mighty army that is passing away every day! People of all religions and races, rich men and poor men alike all must die; black or white, educated or ignorant—all must pass away.

It is because men are not acquainted with the true condition of man in death that there is so much fear of it. The heart-cry of millions tonight is: "Where are my deceased loved ones? What has God done with the millions of dead?" Only as we read the whole story as it is given in the Bible can we properly understand this question. There is much diversity of opinion and considerable confusion in respect to the state of the dead because some have taken one or two texts and misinterpreted the meaning to their own destruction.

Most of us have had the heart-breaking experience of losing a loved one. Just about every home has a vacant chair, as Longfellow said:

"There is no flock, however watched and tended,
But one dead lamb is there!
There is no fireside, howsoe'er defended,
But has one vacant chair!"

Everyone wants to live; but there is a time when the grim reaper knocks on every door. We would give everything we have if we might drive him away. Death is like a cruel monster who steals into the home and carries away our loved ones, leaving a void and loneliness that can only be eased by the loving and sympathetic compassion of Jesus.

Perhaps you have heard the song, "Fair as the morning, Bright as the day, Dear ones in glory LOOKING THIS WAY." But are our dear ones in glory looking this way? That is not what the Bible teaches. I sometimes think that if an angel of God were to stand in the pulpits of some churches and teach the truth about the state of the dead, as it is in the Bible, he would be cast out. But I am sure that you who are here tonight are interested in the truth of God's Word in respect to the state of the dead.

After God created Adam and Eve He warned them that they were not to eat of the tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil; for if they did, they would surely die. But Satan appeared to Eve in the form of a serpent and told her not to believe what God said. In Gen. 3:1 we read. "Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?"

Eve was very curious about the serpent that could talk. In verses 2 and 3 of Genesis 3 we read: "And the woman said unto the serpent, We may

eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die." Eve was not in the dark about this matter. She knew that God had said if they ate of that fruit they would die."

But the devil came back with that original lie that he passed right down to our time. In Gen. 3:4 and 5 it says: "And the serpent said unto the woman, YE SHALL NOT SURELY DIE: For God does know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." God said that if man sinned he would die. Satan said he would not. Which pronouncement are you going to believe tonight, my friend?

Satan here told the first great lie that was ever told to a member of the human race. What a pity that Eve believed him! It is even more pitiful that so many people today still believe this lie. The sad fact is that men do die, and they are dying every day. This fact is proved by the thousands of graveyards scattered all over the earth. It is strange how many people choose to believe the lies of the devil, and, unfortunately, many preachers tickle their ears with doctrines that are not according to the Word of God. People have heard the lies of the devil repeated so many times that they are left in confusion—they do not know what to believe.

There is an epitaph on a tombstone in Richmond, Virginia, as follows:

"Stop, my friend, as you go by,
As you are now, so once was I.
As I am now, you soon shall be.
Prepare yourself to follow me."

A school boy, reading this inscription, added these lines with white paint:

"To follow you, I am not content
Until I know which way you went."

There are many people today who believe that when death comes they will sort of flit away into a more glorious life. They believe that they have been grinding away in low gear and suddenly they are going to shift into high and be gone. But God has not left us in darkness regarding the future. He has told us plainly what really happens to a man when he dies.

Many people admit that the body returns to the dust, but they believe that there is a spirit that is still conscious and returns to God. The Bible says in Eccl. 12:7: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." We know that the body returns to dust, but what is the spirit that returns to God? There are several theories in respect to the spirit that returns to God after death. Whenever there is a diversity of opinion in these matters, it is always wise to let the Bible explain itself. The opinions of fallible men are not always reliable. The Bible is its own best commentary.

In Job 27:3 it says: "All the while my breath is in me, and the spirit of God is in my nostrils."

Notice that the spirit of God is in man's nostrils. In other words, the spirit is merely the breath. In the marginal reference of Job 27:3 it explains "the spirit of God" as "the breath which God gave him."

Job gives us more light on the state of the dead than any other Bible writer. In his 17th chapter, verse 1, he says: "My breath (margin—spirit) is corrupt, my days are extinct, the graves are ready for me." In place of the word "breath," the margin reads, "spirit." So again we find that the spirit that goes back to God is the breath of life.

Over in the New Testament, in James 2:26, we read: "For as the body without the spirit (margin breath) is dead, so faith without works is dead." It is not the air which soars off when a person dies; for there is still plenty of air. But it is the breath of life which leaves man. It is the breath which God gave him when He created him.

In Gen. 2:7, we read: "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the BREATH OF LIFE; and man become a living soul." What was it that made man a living soul? It was the breath of life that God breathed into his nostrils. When that breath is taken from him, he becomes a dead soul. It is just like electricity. When I turn on the switch the lights come on; when I turn off the switch the lights go out.

When God breathed the breath of life into man's nostrils, he lived; when that breath of life returns to God, man dies. David says in Psalm 104:29: "Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled: THOU TAKEST AWAY THEIR BREATH, they die, and return to their dust." But someone asks, "What about the soul that never dies?" Is it true that the soul never dies? The word "soul" is mentioned in the Bible about 850 times, and nowhere does it say that the soul never dies. To the contrary, there are a number of texts that say the soul does die.

What is a soul? Well, I am a soul, and you are a soul. The Bible tells us in I Peter 3:20: ". . . EIGHT SOULS WERE SAVED BY WATER." So Noah, his sons and daughters-in-law, and his wife were souls. A minister once advertised that he would have a living soul on display, and when he told the people that he was that soul, they were disappointed. They had expected to see some mysterious something that they had never seen before. The human family seem to want to make the simple things of the Bible dark mysteries.

The Apostle Paul tells us of a certain voyage on a ship: "And we were in all in the ship two hundred three score and sixteen SOULS." Acts 27:37. In other words, human beings are all souls, living souls. The Bible tells us that there are three things that make a conscious man: The body, the soul, and the spirit. We all know what the body is. The spirit, we have found, is the breath of life; and the soul is the intelligence, or consciousness of man. Not one of these three can exist apart from the other. When the spirit, or breath, leaves a man, his intelligence, or consciousness, ceases and his body then returns to the dust.

In Eze. 18:4 we read: "Behold, all SOULS are mine; as the SOUL of the father, so also the SOUL of the son is mine: the SOUL THAT SIN-

NETH, IT SHALL DIE." It is quite evident from this text that those people who say that the soul never dies, must be making a mistake. While soul and spirit are mentioned some 1800 times in the Scriptures, there is not one single reference that says that they are immortal. Some men say that the soul never dies; but God says that it does. Whom are we to believe?

Again we read in Rev. 16:3: "And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man: and EVERY LIVING SOUL DIED in the sea." It is quite evident from these and many more Bible references that a soul can and does die. Some will say, "But I have always been taught that the soul lives on after death." Again let me say that we should be interested only in what the Bible says. If we accept any other authority than the Bible, we are treading on dangerous ground. The reason we have so many conflicting theories about religion today is that the opinions of men are held by many to be above the Word of God. But those who are honest will say, as did the reformers, "The Bible and the Bible only," and will accept what the Bible says.

David tells us what happens to a man when he dies. In Psalm 146:3, 4: "Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help. His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish." The princes cannot help you, for they die just the same as anybody else. "His breath (spirit) goeth forth, he (the body) returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts (soul) perish." Here we have all three things that make up a man, the body, the soul, and the spirit. David says that the body returns to the earth, or to dust; the spirit, or the breath, returns to God, and the consciousness, or soul, perishes.

If the soul or the spirit were conscious after death and went to heaven, it would surely want to praise God when it got there; but the Bible says in Psalm 115:17: "The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence." The dead are not in heaven praising God, for as David has told us, when they die their thoughts perish, and then, as he says, they praise not the Lord, for they have gone down into silence. David was called a man after God's own heart, and if anyone would have been taken to heaven, surely David would have been the one; for the Lord loved him very dearly.

But when Peter preached on the day of Pentecost under the mighty power of the Holy Spirit he said: "Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that HE IS BOTH DEAD AND BURIED, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day." Now someone says: "Yes, that is right. I know his grave is still here, but I think there is something—either the soul or the spirit that flits off to heaven." Let us read verse 34: "FOR DAVID IS NOT ASCENDED INTO THE HEAVENS." So David is resting in the grave until the resurrection day, just like everybody else who died then and since David's time.

Did David expect to go to heaven as soon as

he died? He says in Psalm 17:15: "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, **WHEN I AWAKE**, with thy likeness." Notice that David looked forward to a glorious day when the Lord would come and awaken him. He did not believe that he was going to be translated when he died, and that some part of him would fly away to a gloryland. He says: "I'll be sleeping, but I will be satisfied when I awake."

The apostle Paul did not expect to go to heaven when he died either, and he is one of the greatest men of God found in the Bible. He says in II Tim. 4:7, 8: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." Notice that Paul expected to receive his reward, his crown of righteousness when Jesus comes.

Paul makes it clear that a future life for the redeemed is dependent upon the second coming of Jesus and the resurrection of the dead in Christ. He says in I Cor. 15:16-18: "For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." Paul tells us that the grave is not the doorway to paradise or heaven, but that those who have gone into their graves, except they have hope in Jesus Christ and believe in a resurrection from the dead, **ARE PERISHED**. If there is no resurrection, there is no reward. But, thank God, **THERE WILL BE A RESURRECTION**."

The apostle Peter did not expect the members of the early Christian church to go to heaven when they died; for he wrote in I Peter 5:4 "And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." Peter expected to receive a crown of glory at the coming of Jesus. All of the disciples looked forward to the second coming of Christ as the fulfillment of their fondest dreams. They knew and taught that the reward of the righteous would not be received until that time.

But someone wonders about the thief on the cross. Doesn't the Bible say that he was going to be with Christ in paradise the day that Christ died? We shall read that text in Luke 23:43: "And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise." There are two ways that this text can be read, and it is determined by the placing of the comma; the comma can be placed either before or after the word "today." Let us read it with the comma after the word "today." "And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee today, shalt thou be with me in paradise." This changes the meaning of the text altogether.

The 1930 Revised Edition of the Concordant Version of the Bible has a more correct translation: "And Jesus said to him 'Verily to you I am saying today, with me you shall be in paradise.'" We should understand that commas and other punctuation marks were not used in the first manu-

scripts of the Bible. In fact, commas were not invented until 1490. Therefore I believe that the comma has been misplaced, and should be placed after the word "today" instead of before. In order for the text to harmonize with the rest of the Scriptures, it has to be this way.

Another very interesting fact is that the thief on the cross did not die that day; therefore it would have been impossible for him to be with Jesus in paradise on that day. Jesus did not go to heaven that day, either, and the thief was not yet dead; so he could not have gone on that day. Therefore how could Jesus have meant that the thief was going to paradise that day? What Jesus was saying to him was: "TODAY of all days, when I am hanging on the cross seemingly defeated, and I do not appear to be a Saviour to anyone, even today, this very day when everything appears dark and hopeless I say unto thee thou shalt be with me in paradise."

We are sure that the thief did not die on that day because in John 19:31-33 it says: "The Jews therefore . . . that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day . . . besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other . . . But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs."

We know that Jesus was not in paradise on that day because three days later when He appeared to Mary after His resurrection: "Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: . . ." John 20:17. You can see how important it is to let the Bible explain itself.

To show how a comma can change the entire meaning of a sentence, I would like to tell an experience that occurred years ago when women were fighting for womens' suffrage. They were planning to hold a rally in a certain town, and had sent copy ahead to a printer to prepare posters to put up all over the town before they would arrive. The poster was to read: "Woman, without her, man would be a beast." The printer made the posters and hung them up. When the women arrived they were amazed to find that he had made a mistake by putting the comma in the wrong place. It read as follows: "Woman, without her man, would be a beast." Needless to say this printer had to leave town to escape the wrath of the women.

Let us call some witnesses to the stand tonight, men whom God considered great and loyal servants of His. The first one is Job. What does Job say about the subject death? Job 14:14, 15: "If a man die, shall he live again? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, **TILL MY CHANGE COME**. Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands." Job asks the question that so many are asking today. Job was looking forward to the time when his change would come, when his mortal body would be changed to an immortal one.

Job says in the 14th chapter, verse 12: "So man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep." Job certainly makes it very

plain that when a man dies he will not be raised again till the heavens be no more, or at the second coming of Jesus. Why will men try to change the truth about the dead? The Bible distinctly says that they are asleep until Jesus comes to awaken them on the resurrection morning. They do not rise to haunt their relatives, or to appear in some spooky seance to perform monkey-shines. They are unconscious, peacefully resting. Why should we be concerned about them? The sleep of the dead is sweet rest.

In verse 13, Job continues: "O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave, that thou wouldest keep me secret, until thy wrath be past, that thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me!" Job is speaking of the last days, when the Lord will come. Job had just buried ten children and he was looking forward to the resurrection day when they would be raised and he would see them again.

Where did Job expect to wait? He says: "If I wait, the grave is mine house: I have made my bed in the darkness." Job 17:13. So Job was going to wait all the days of his appointed time until his change came, until the Lord would call and he would answer right in his grave. The dead, according to Job have a quiet resting place away from the confusion of this world. They are in their quiet graves, unmolested by the wars, storms, and other horrors of this sinful world. There they wait until their change comes. The Bible does not say that the dead wait WITH JESUS until He comes back. They wait in their graves, not in heaven.

Now when does this change come, according to Job? In the 19th chapter, verses 25 and 26 it says: "For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." Isn't it wonderful, Christian Friend, that our Redeemer shall stand at the latter day and shall awake those who have fallen asleep in Him?

What was this change that Job expected when the Lord would call? We find through the apostle Paul in I Cor. 15:51, 52: "Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." We are all going to be changed at the time of the resurrection. And this is when Jesus comes.

Paul says in verses 53 and 54: "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. . . then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP IN VICTORY." This is the change that Job was looking forward to at the second coming, at the resurrection of the just, and also David, Paul, and the others. These vile bodies are going to be changed. We are not immortal now, and we will not be until the last trump sounds.

Now the smartest man who ever lived in the history of this world was Solomon. What does he say about the dead? Let us read in Eccl. 9:10:

"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest." Please notice how specific this is. No language could be clearer.

Where are the dead, and what is their condition in death? Solomon says in Eccl. 9:6: "Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun." Now that is direct and strong, isn't it? According to such devilish deceptions as the Bridey Murphy case, the dead come back to watch their loved ones, and to participate in their deeds. Our dead loved ones would have very little rest if they had to observe all the sufferings and troubles of their relatives and friends in this veil of tears. God says that the dead have no more to do with anything that is done under the sun. This proves that such stories as the Bridey Murphy hoax are lies of the devil.

But Solomon makes even a stronger statement in Eccl. 9:5 when he says: "For the living know that they shall die: but THE DEAD KNOW NOT ANYTHING, neither have they any more reward; for the memory of them is forgotten." How could any language be clearer than this? The living know that they shall die, they live in expectancy of death; but the dead know not anything. It fits perfectly into the picture that we have already drawn as given to us by other servants of God.

One night after meeting a woman came up to the minister and said: "Pastor, you are preaching such a sad doctrine on the state of the dead." "Well, I will let you be the judge," he said. "Do you love your husband and two children?" he asked. "Yes, very dearly," she said. Then he said: "Well, suppose you should die and, as you like to believe, you went immediately to heaven. According to your theory, you would know everything that your husband and children were doing.

"Now, suppose that after you have gone to heaven you saw your husband going out with a young girl of questionable character, would you be very happy in heaven watching this? You can see that this girl is out to get all your husband's money. You remember how you worked and saved with your husband to get the things that you had; and here is an unscrupulous girl taking it away from him. You see them get married, and you see the misery that comes into your home. That husband who vowed that he loved you has fallen in love with a girl of low character. Would you be happy about it?

"Suppose you see your daughter, without any influence to guide her, fall in with the wrong associates. She becomes a wayward child, and you see her traveling down the road of dissipation and degradation. Then you see her in a terrible auto accident, on the way to the hospital in agony, bones broken, body severely injured for life. Now, honestly, do you believe you would be happy in heaven under such circumstances? Do you think that the doctrine that the dead go immediately to heaven when they die is the best way, God's way?

"Suppose your son takes to drinking and falls into the snares of crime and drunkenness. Would

this make you happy or sad as you supposedly observe him from heaven?" The woman agreed that the Bible way is best. The doctrine of the dead being asleep, not knowing anything, is God's way. God tells us in Job 14:21: "His sons come to honour, and he knoweth it not; and they are brought low, but he perceiveth it not of them." Parents who have died do not see their children when they get into bad company or any trouble. They do not see them when they are brought low, or when they are suffering pain. They are asleep; they know not anything. God's way is the best way.

A newspaper sometime ago told of a man who died on the operating table, and to all appearances was dead for a moment or two, but they quickly made an incision and massaged the heart so that he revived again. When asked "Did you know anything during the time that your heart stopped beating?" His answer was: "I did not know a thing." Now, if it were true that when a person dies, when the heart stops beating, he goes immediately to heaven, this man should have gone to heaven right away. But he says he knew nothing.

"Time Magazine" a few years ago reported the work of some Russian scientists who had successfully administered powerful heart stimulants a few minutes after death and revived patients. A reader asked the editors: "During the interval when the patient was dead, did his soul or spirit go to heaven only to be required to return quickly, or was the spirit halfway to hell when summoned to the body again? Can these questions be answered?" One of the editors replied. "NOT BY TIME MAGAZINE."

When Jesus was on His way to Bethany after He received word that Lazarus was sick the disciples could not understand why He did not hurry to get to him. After receiving word that Lazarus was dead Jesus said to His disciples: "... Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep." The disciples could not understand why Jesus would want to awaken a sick man who was sleeping. Then Jesus said unto them plainly, "LAZARUS IS DEAD." John 11:11, 14. Jesus immediately went to the home of Lazarus, and then to the tomb where Lazarus was laid.

Standing surrounded by mourning people Jesus commanded that the stone be rolled away. Then did Jesus say, "Lazarus, come down from heaven?" No, what Jesus actually said was: "... Lazarus, come forth." John 11:43. And Lazarus obeyed. After being buried four days Lazarus came forth from the tomb, still wearing the grave clothes. If he had been in heaven I should think that Lazarus would have been disappointed to have to come back to this troubled world. But Jesus did not call him down from heaven, or up from hell; but He called him forth from the tomb where he had been sleeping.

The Bible tells us about Jairus' daughter who was sick with a fever. They sent for Jesus; but the girl died before Jesus could get there. Jesus went to her side, called her by name, and said something to her. Did he say, "Now, Daughter, I want you to

say goodbye to the angels in heaven and come on back down here to be with your folks?" No, He didn't say that; but what Jesus did say to her was: "Damsel, I say unto thee, arise." Mark 5:41.

Some people believe that if you walk across the street and a Ford car hits you, knocking you down, you are unconscious. But in a moment, if a Cadillac comes along and runs over you, you are no longer unconscious but you know everything. Now, why, if a flower pot falls out of a window and hits you on the head you don't know anything; but if a safe fall out and crushes and kills you, according to popular theory you would know everything. In other words, the dead are more conscious than those knocked unconscious. Dear Friends, a good man does not go off to heaven or a bad man to hell; but they are both laid in the grave where they remain until the latter day when our Redeemer comes to raise the dead to life.

If the dead go to heaven as soon as they die, then there would be no need for Jesus to come again to raise the dead. Most Christians believe that when Jesus comes He is going to judge the world. But if individuals go to heaven or hell as soon as they die, if they are already judged, then why would Jesus need to come to judge the world? Surely Jesus would not come and give us our disease-ridden bodies back again. No, dear Friends, we are waiting in our graves for Jesus to come and give us new bodies, incorruptible and immortal when He raises us from death unto life. Jesus most certainly would not call all the spirits back from heaven and tell them to get down in their graves so He could raise them again.

There is going to be a literal resurrection from the dreamless sleep of the dead some day. Jesus makes it plain that the dead will be in their graves when He comes, for He says in John 5:28, 29: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." Notice here Jesus says that both the good and the bad are in their graves. They will not be raised until the Lord comes again.

In Daniel 12:2, that grand old prophet says: "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." So both wicked and righteous are again pictured as in the grave till Jesus comes. Every outstanding prophet of God that had anything to say about the dead clearly states that they are asleep in the grave. Even Christ referred to the dead as sleeping.

Now notice what the angel said to Daniel in the 13th verse: "But go thy way till the end be: for thou shalt stand in thy lot at the end of the days." So Daniel will be right in his lot in the cemetery until the end of the days, until Jesus comes. All of the outstanding Bible characters revealed that they would stand in their lot to await their crowns of glory at the end of the world when Jesus would appear the second time. Peter, Paul, John, Daniel, David, Job, and many others definitely state that they would not see Jesus and

receive their reward until the resurrection morning.

In I Thess. 4:16 Paul tells us: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: **AND THE DEAD IN CHRIST SHALL RISE FIRST.**" There is certainly no doubt as to when the dead will be raised. It will be at Jesus' second coming. Only the "dead in Christ" will be raised at this time to be taken to heaven with the living saints.

When Christ comes He rewards His children with immortality and eternal life. We read in Rev. 22:12: "And behold I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Again, we read in Matt. 16:27: "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and **THEN HE SHALL REWARD EVERY MAN** according to his works." All the Bible writers looked forward to the day when the rewards would be given. They all made it plain that it was to be a future event, that immortality would not be given until the last trump sounds, when Jesus comes.

Sometime ago a Sunday school teacher and deacon in a church in Kansas was held for the murder of his wife and little children. When he was questioned he said: "Well, I just thought it would be better for them to be rushed on to the glory world. I couldn't bear to think of their going through the trials of this life." If the theory were correct that one goes to heaven immediately when he dies, this man would have had the right idea. If it were true that when men die they are immediately ushered into a glorious paradise, then it seems to me that every one would be desirous of dying so he could go to that wonderful place. If the doctrine were true that death is a quick jump into glory, then Stalin and Hitler in killing off so many people did more good than all the sermons that have been preached in the world today.

If death is a gateway to heaven, then why do people weep and sorrow at funerals? The Bible says in Ps. 127:2: ". . . He giveth his beloved sleep." Sleep is wonderful. There is no pain or trouble, no knowledge of the passing of time. If they are in their graves one year or a thousand years, it will be just as a moment. Think of it, one moment you lost consciousness in the sleep of death, the next moment you will hear the trumpet sound and see Jesus face to face. Death would not seem so dreadful if we could only realize this.

O, Friends, we need not be troubled about death. Jesus says in John 14:1-3: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." Jesus does not say that He is coming to receive His own when they die, but He does say that He will come again, after the mansions have been prepared in heaven, to gather His saints. Then even though their bodies have returned to the dust, they will be made whole again.

Ezekiel was shown the vision of the valley of dry bones, and he was shown how God will remake those bodies and fashion them like unto the glorious body of Jesus Christ. Paul tells us in Phil. 3:20, 21: "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."

A seed was discovered by Lord Lindsay in the hand of a two thousand-year-old mummy. The seed was planted to see if it would grow, and it did. Though it had been dormant for two thousand years it sprang up into a beautiful plant once again. Dear Friends, no matter how long the dead rest in the grave, they shall some day spring up be beautiful new creatures.

One time a chemist placed a silver cup into a chemical solution, and it dissolved completely. Other chemicals were mixed in and the silver then settled to the bottom of the container. That same silver was taken and molded into a beautiful cup once again. So the Lord will mold our bodies once again and make beautiful spiritual bodies that will never be afflicted with sickness, pain, or death anymore.

I want to say that there is no future for any of us except in the Lord Jesus Christ. His life in this world makes possible our life in the world to come. Life in this old earth is short and full of trouble, but there is a better life coming to those who walk with Jesus. He says that death is an enemy. In I Cor. 15:26 we read that "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." If death is an enemy, it certainly wouldn't be the ushering into a better life.

But if your loved ones were up in heaven could they be happy seeing your troubles and heart-aches? The majority of people are not going to be saved. Jesus says that the way to glory is strait and narrow, and few will find it. Most of the people are in the broad way that leads to destruction. Frankly, I would rather have all my loved ones resting peacefully in their graves tonight than to know that even one was suffering torment in hell.

Someone says, "I don't see how Jesus will remember every one." Well, in Isa. 49:15 it says: "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, **YET WILL I NOT FORGET THEE.**" It matters not what our end may be, whether we go down into the depths of the sea or whether our bodies be burned in a holocaust of flames or whether we are blown out of existence by atomic bombs, God says, "**I WILL NEVER FORGET THEE.**"

When General MacArthur was driven from the Philippine Islands, he made the promise to the people: "**I WILL RETURN.**" Many months later, after the war had been going on for some time and the tide had turned, General MacArthur came back, and when he landed the first thing he broadcast was, "**I HAVE RETURNED.**" Jesus is returning soon. He is going to raise the dead. He is going

to give all immortality—eternal life—bodies that are free from sickness and disease.

A mother and father stood at the side of the coffin of their dear little girl who had recently died. Just before the coffin was closed the father said: "Good-bye, Darling, good-bye." Then the mother leaned over and kissed the brow of her little daughter and said: "Good-night, my Baby, good-night." Later the father asked the mother why she said "good-night." She replied: "Well, I know that Jesus is coming soon and our daughter will be raised; and we will be united again. You are not a Christian, so you have no hope of ever seeing her again; therefore you say 'good-bye'." Tears came to the father's eyes and he said, "God helping me, I am going to be a Christian, for I want to see our little baby again."

My Friends, I want to say tonight that there is only one heartbeat between you and eternity. Your life hangs by a slender thread, and when Jesus takes the scissors and clips that thread, you will have to go to your rest. When people reach the age of sixty or seventy years they know that they must be careful, for they realize that they are living on borrowed time. Everyone in this auditorium tonight is living on borrowed time.

One time a sculptor carved out a beautiful work of art, and when the people of the artistic world came to view his work the young sculptor hid behind a screen so he could hear the comments of the viewers. Michelangelo also came to see it. After some little time he was heard to say: "IT LACKS ONLY ONE THING," and he left. His words hurt the young sculptor. He was so grieved that his friends sought out Michelangelo and asked him what it was the statue lacked. He replied, "O, I should have explained. It lacks only one thing, "THE BREATH OF LIFE, to make it alive."

Many a man today is carving a perfect life as best he can by being a good husband, a good neighbor, a good father, or a good business man. But no matter how good his work may be, there is one thing lacking. Unless a man lets Jesus come into that life, he lacks the breath of life. He may be a good man, but only those who accept Jesus Christ

and let Him breathe into them the breath of life can be truly perfect.

In John 11:25 it says: "And Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life. We do not really have life unless we have Jesus. He came that we might have life and that we might have it more abundantly.

And some day He is coming with the keys of the grave and will call our loved ones. And we with them shall be taken home to dwell in the mansions fair. Some day Jesus will make it all plain, and then we will understand those things that we have experienced in this life. But best of all we will be reunited with those we have lost in this life, and then we will live beyond the vale of tears. We do not know the day nor the hour of His coming—only God knows that. But we know it will be soon. The important thing is to be ready to meet Him.

Paul says in I Thess. 4:13: "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that YE SORROW NOT, even as others which have no hope." O, Friends, on that bright and cloudless morning when the dead in Christ shall rise and the glory of their resurrection share, when that roll is called up yonder on that glorious resurrection day, will you be there?

If you are not with the redeemed, there will be sadness in the hearts of your loved ones. Most of all, Jesus your Redeemer will be sad to know that you will not be with Him through eternity. Make your decision right now to be there. If you have lost a loved one, you cannot give flowers as a tribute of love and expect them to last. But YOU CAN GIVE YOUR HEART TO JESUS and expect to meet that loved one in days to come. Friend, are you going to meet your loved ones in the kingdom? This will depend upon the decision that you are making today. Is it going to be good-bye forever, or—I'll meet you in the morning? May God help you to make the most important decision of your life now; and may the decision be to give your heart completely to Jesus.