

**WHEN A PERSON BREATHES HIS  
LAST, WHERE WILL HE BE?  
IF A HUMAN BEING DIES,  
WILL HE LIVE AGAIN?**

**Abraham Podimattathil**



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### **WHEN A PERSON BREATHE HIS LAST, WHERE WILL HE BE? IF A HUMAN BEING DIES, WILL HE LIVE AGAIN?**

(English translation of Manushyan Pranane Vittal Pinne Avan Evide? Manushyan Marichal Veendum Jeevikkumo?)

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## **Introductory words**

Start reading this book with an open heart and without prejudice. There can be matters which you may not comprehend or appreciate. Continue the reading beyond boundaries without classifying as false teaching. While reading you may be feeling uninterested initially but continue to read without keeping it aside by trusting in God, and you are through. Debates, discussions and analysing are welcomed. May almighty God help us.

## Preface

I give all honour, glory and praises to the omniscient God that He has given me grace to write and publish the book “when a person breathes his last, where will he be? If a human being dies, will he live again?”

The above mentioned are the two important questions that Job the Godly man has asked (Job 14:10, 14). This book has derived from various bible study sessions done on the basis of this topic. “The words and promises of the Lord are pure words, like silver refined in an earthen furnace, purified seven times over”. (Ps. 12:6). In the same manner this book has seen light after being transcribed more than once, read over and purified.

Life after death is one of the paramount topics that any thoughtful man has thought over and asked questions about. Quite often such questions are asked where the soul of man goes. Is there a life after earthly life? If yes where?

Various teachings and schools of thoughts exist regarding this subject. Most people reach the conclusion that human spirit is immortal and heaven and hell exist, whereas some others argue that there is neither heaven nor hell. Everything is finished by death here itself. The modern scientific world that seeks after life in other planets also gropes in darkness unable to determine the destiny of human soul.

The word of God has profound wisdom that neither science nor human mind can impart. Suppose the eternity of human soul is a coin, one side is birth and death, then the other side is resurrection and judgement. Let us think about after life of those who have died since the beginning of the world beginning with the first man Abel through to the last man dying at the end of the millennium. Where and when each one would be resurrected? We can reach the conclusion that the after life state of an unborn person died in the womb without seeing the sun as well as Methuselah who lived 969 years it is the same; the difference being that each one would be in different rank and turn.

God's people need not believe in guesses and assumptions rising from ignorance. The scripture has recorded all things with clarity. This book has been written on the basis of scripture especially the book of Revelation in a simple and easy- to- grasp manner without using original rendering or difficult words. For convenient study purpose the book has been divided into two; in the first part it deals with the topic when a person breathes his last, where will he be? (After-death ranks). In the second part if a human being dies, will he live again? (Resurrection ranks), thus covering both the topics in the twelve chapters of this book.

I would like to express my gratitude to the Lord as well as to all of those who have read my first book "Revelation of Eternity" and come up with sincere comments to encourage me. Those heart touching comments and encouragements have boosted my morale in the making of this book. I humbly request all of you to continue praying and cooperating with me.

This book was originally published in March 2011 in Malayalam. Pastor Sunny George, Delhi has consented to translate it into English. I express my hearty thanks and gratitude to pastor for taking his valuable time and putting much effort even in this age and bring forth this book so that it reaches beyond boundaries of language. Also I would like to thank my dear brother in Christ Prasad K Skaria with whom I have the brotherly affection and love since we met in year 2000. Presently he is a missionary to the people of Arunachal Pradesh and he helped in many ways in bringing out this book into light. I also acknowledge with thanks that there have been so many God's people behind this publication with prayer and efforts. Without naming anyone I would like to desire abundant blessings on all those who have worked behind this and I would like to place this work at the feet of the almighty God.

**Abraham Podimattathil**



## A word by the translator

Bewitched by the title, "When A Person Breathes His Last, Where Will He Be? If A Human Being Dies, Will He Live Again?" I took upon myself to translate the book when the desire was expressed by the author Abraham Podimattathil at the first meeting. We got introduced to each other through the mobile prayer line- a prayer and intercession time through mobile phone conferencing in the early morning hours.

The subject 'life after death' is as intriguing as tedious because of the mysteries shrouding it. As far as an ordinary man is concerned, the time ever since he begins thinking and cherishes memories about and the time he becomes unconscious before leaving the earth are the beginning and end of one's life. In other words that is the period which a person can consider as the real, substantial period of existence and activities explainable. But one who believes in the Bible is informed much more about the facts before and after the above period. The inspired Psalmist David says about a chaotic time before the birth or even conception. "For you have formed my inward parts; you have covered me in my mother's womb .....my frame was not hidden from you when I was made in secret. Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed" (Psalms 139:13-16).

Regarding the life after death also the Bible gives us authentic information that souls are escorted by angels to the places prepared by God such as the place of torment or Paradise (known in the Old Testament as 'Abraham's bosom') depending on one's worthiness (Luke 16: 19-31). In the parable of Rich man and Lazarus we get a bird's eye view of what the after death life is like rather than exclusive information on the soul's worthiness to the Paradise or to the place of torment etc...

In order to get a more or less perfect idea about the life after death and the practical aspect of one's responsibility of preparing oneself for the greatest after-death position or rank an exhaustive search through the Bible is required. This however, is very hard or almost impossible for ordinary man in today's busy life. The servant of God Abraham Podimattathil, has undoubtedly undertaken an immense effort in answering the question, "When A Person Breathes His Last, Where Will He Be? If A Human Being Dies, Will He Live Again?" It is rather a philosophical and research-sort of work in Malayalam with new finds in terrestrial as well as heavenly realms, while he explains about the after-death ranks and the abodes of souls. At the same time, he spares no effort to prepare a spiritually elite class of perfected saints as Pure Virgin to be raptured and presented before God the Father as the Bride of the Lamb.

During the process of translation over a longer time than expected, I got benefitted spiritually in self examination and edification. So I am sure that this book will be beneficial to all who go through it.

**Pastor Sunny George**  
Delhi.

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## Part - 1

# WHEN A PERSON BREATHES HIS LAST, WHERE WILL HE BE?

(After-death ranks)

### Contents

*“Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.”*  
(Isa. 46:9,10 )

The Almighty God had already seen the end of the book of Revelation before the beginning of the book of Genesis was penned. In the plan and counsel of God to create man in His own image and likeness, **God had seen many sons of glory stringing out to heaven of heavens through His Son. The new heaven and new earth where righteousness dwells as well as Jerusalem the city of the living God** remain in the pages of the Scripture to be divine projects yet to be completed. God’s counsels and projects are ever unchangeable; they are neither casual nor accidental. All divine projects are those of viewing the end even at the very beginning.

God created man only on the sixth day after having prepared all things that were needed for the existence of mankind. The Creator God knew that man's stay in Eden would be temporary and that they would land in spiritual death enslaved by sin. Of course that is why the Heavenly Father has revealed His Son in the Scripture being the Lamb slain for the sins of the whole world since the world began.

At the beginning of Edenic life God had clearly commanded Adam the first man about what would happen in future. "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shall not eat of it, for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."(Gen. 2:17 )

This prophecy got fulfilled in the life of the early parents very soon because of disobedience. Although they were stripped of glory being spiritually dead and were expelled from the garden, they were not met with a pathetic end there forever. The heavenly hope was given to the mankind about Jesus Christ the Saviour of the world who was to appear on the earth in the form of man leaving His glory.

*"And I will put enmity between thee and the woman and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." (Gen. 3:15)*

This prophecy that the Lord Jehovah had uttered was fulfilled on Calvary through Jesus Christ who was born as the seed of the woman. Thus the Gospel of the birth death and resurrection of Jesus Christ has divided the world history into two. It still emerges as the greatest fact worthy of acceptance in the world even after a long time. God created man so that he might be part of the great heavenly project. God has provided opportunity for everyone who believes the Gospel to be a partner in this.

After the life in body on earth which is temporary the human soul separates from body and the Lord has

prepared special places to keep their souls. The transfer of souls after death to each place will be proportionate to the spiritual rank obtained while living in body. Though all men born in Adam's race are equally sinful from birth, the Scripture tells us that they maintain different ranks in life and death.

I quote two verses in the book of Revelation as the basis for explaining the after -death ranks.

*"I heard every creature in heaven, on earth, under the earth, and on the sea, and everything that is in them, saying, To the one who sits on the throne and to the lamb be praise, honour, glory, and power forever and ever!" (Rev. 5:13 ISV).*

*"The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and Death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and all were judged according to their works." (Rev. 20:13 ISV)*

Revelation 5:13 account is regarding that which has happened after the Church the Bride of Christ is raptured to the heaven of heavens. Since it says that there are creatures/creations that praise and worship God the Father and the Lamb His Son, in Heaven, earth, beneath the earth and in the sea, it is quite clear that the presence of God is available to all creatures' right from heaven down to the sea. Various kinds of after- death ranks and turns are given below in the following chapters in detail.

## **After- death Ranks**

### **1. Those who are in heaven**

Here I want to bring to focus who the saints will be in heaven or paradise after death (not in the heaven of heavens) dividing heaven into three. The three divisions are the first heaven, second heaven and the third heaven. In the first heaven the greatest of the Old Testament saints and in the second heaven a group of saints who attain the position of virgins of the New Testament Church and

in the third heaven are those who belong to the Pure Virgin that is the Bride of the Lamb.

## **2. Those who are on earth**

The earth wherein we live is the temporary habitation for all men to spend the bodily life. It is here that everyone lives since birth and afterwards enters into the eternal bliss in proportion to the spiritual position attained in body.

*“What profit will a person have if he gains the whole world, but destroys himself or is lost?”(Lk. 9:25 ISV)*

This word is spoken by the Lord to every one in this world. It is from the earthly life that those likely to be transformed to various after-death ranks get separated. There are the ranks of those who have both gained and lost their souls. Similarly, in both these ranks there are various kinds of both sinners and saints. Astonishingly, there will be saints at the coming of the Lord in the mid air transformed without seeing death; there will also be those who belong to the group of sinners thrown out into the lake of fire or the eternal hell at His glorious appearance. The reason why the rank of those on earth is also included is that there will be those transferred from the earth without seeing death.

## **3. Those beneath the Earth**

The human souls have not yet been entered beneath the altar or beneath the earth. This is the place where the souls of the martyrs reach who give up their life during the rule of Antichrist because of their faith. However Rev. 5:13 makes it clear there are creatures underneath the earth even now who praise God.

## **4. Those who are in the Sea**

They are those who belong to the last rank among the creatures who worship God. About them we find in Rev. 5:13 and 20:13. While analysing both these verses we can

understand who those in the sea are. Chapter 5:13 shows them as those who worship God whereas 13<sup>th</sup> verse of chapter 20 records about those who appear in the resurrection on the last day in front of the White Throne. Therefore sea is the abode of all the souls who have been entitled for eternal life or in other words those whose names are written in the book of life right from the beginning of the world through to the end of the Millennium.

## **5. Lowest Hades**

This is the one rank of sinners whose names are not written in the Lamb's book of life out of the two ranks ie. Hades and Death mentioned in Rev. 20:13. Though they are sinners they have not committed sordid sins. After death they go to the lowest Hades and on the last day resurrection get condemned before the White Throne and will be cast in to the lake of Fire.

## **6. Those who are in death**

The hell spoken of as death is a place where the angels that sinned were cast down and delivered into chains of darkness in two groups. This is not the hell of fire. Just like the angels who sinned, those who commit sins even after knowing the truths of God will be doomed to severe punishment. Those who rebel against God and commit serious sins after death will land in the hell which is death. This is the place where horrible sinners will be tormented until the final judgement. On the day of final judgement Death and Hades are cast into the lake of fire. Those who are in the hell or death belong to the last rank of sinners and those who are under the hardest scourge of God's punishment.

## **7. Those who are in the Upper Hades**

Though this is the first chapter of the first part, description is given at the far end is because of the

following reason: with the inception of the New Testament the upper Hades or the Hades above was evacuated and after death no souls any longer entered there. The souls of saints who died from the beginning of the world to the atoning death of Jesus Christ entered into this upper Hades underneath the earth. Jesus Christ after death went down and recovered all the captives and climbed upon high. He transferred those who were entitled for eternal life to the sea and those saints greater than them to the first heaven in paradise. This upper Hades has escaped mention in Rev. 5:13 because this is vacant.

### Summary

1. All the souls of the saints who died from the beginning of the world to the atoning death of Jesus Christ reached the upper Hades in the belly of the earth.
2. Those who are from the New Testament to the end of the future millennium having relation with the living God arrive after death at these places such as heaven (paradise) where there are creatures worshipping God, beneath the earth, and sea.
3. Among the saints in the upper Hades, there were those who were entitled for just **eternal life**. And also those who excelled them who attained the position to sit in Abraham's bosom.
4. When the Lord led the captive up high he transferred those entitled for eternal life to the sea and those seated in Abraham's bosom to the first heaven in paradise.
5. All sinners who are enslaved by the devil and die go to any of these two places such as the lowest Hades (place of torment) and Death (Hell).
6. Among those who are alive on earth there are those who belong to various ranks of both sinners and saints.

May I welcome you to the first chapter of this book in the name of God with the prayer that God's Holy Spirit may continue to manifest the deep divine mysteries to us!

# Chapter - I

## THOSE WHO WERE IN THE UPPER HADES

*“and now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother’s blood from thy hand” (Gen. 4:11 )*

We are going to discuss in this chapter about the abode of the souls of all the righteous who died from the beginning of the world to the atoning death of Christ on the cross, where they were before and where they are at present. I have included certain strange events that happened on earth till the death of Jesus Christ as well.

Abel was the first person on earth whose soul was separated from the body through death. His death was not a natural one. It was a murder. The parents of Cain and Abel were Adam and Eve who became spiritually dead as a consequence of the sin of disobedience. All men who are born in the Adamic lineage are sinners. “Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, so death spread to everyone, because all have sinned.” (Rom. 5:12, ISV). Though Cain and Abel were sinners by birth both of them grew up towards different directions. Born of the wicked, Cain grew gradually under the influence of the devil and became a liar committing sin and murder. “Not as Cain

who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother and wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil and his brother's righteous".(1 John 3:12 )

God who understands the thoughts in man from afar did not evaluate Cain's offering he brought from the cursed earth but evaluated his very heart. One cannot please God by the offerings and spiritual exercises that one does without fear of God. "The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord but the prayer of the upright is his delight". (Prov. 15:8 ).

The criterion by which God justifies a man is the wisdom and faith coming from the fear of God. The fact that God did not delight in Cain and his offering but delighted in Abel and his offering caused internal hatred in Cain that reflected on his face then and there.

God who hates sin but loves sinners had warned Cain of the devil's deception he would be subjected to. The loving God always gives fore- warnings to all mankind about what would befall them from time to time. Those who go ahead ignoring the divine warnings will end up in great disasters. We are well aware of the fact that the devil who is the liar and the father of lies led the first parents into bondage of spiritual death and sin through deception.

Though Cain had been warned of God about the murderous devil's desire, he took it for granted and committed the murder. Thus Cain became responsible for the first murder and became a criminal before God. Asked where his brother was, he replied to God that he did not know- he told a lie. Knowing to do well he did not do it. But he gave opportunity for such devilish acts as sin, murder, and lie. Therefore God cursed him and rebuked him away from His presence. Thus the first among men to court God's curse was Cain the murderer.

The wicked Cain got alienated from God and his parents and fled to Nod on the east of Eden where he lived as a

wanderer. The scripture records about the generations that came through him.

Cain took wife from among the daughters of Adam. Among the children of Adam and Eve only three sons are named in the Bible (Cain, Abel, Seth). "And the days of Adam after he had begotten Seth were 800 yrs: and he begat sons and daughters..." "And all the days that Adam lived were 930 yrs. And he died (Gen 5:4,5). It was a natural death. The first man who died a natural death in the Bible was Adam the first man himself. In the ancient world (world prior to the flood) the laws of marriage ordinance were not even in verbal existence. In the present world- in the dispensation of law- the Lord God banned by law marital relation between blood relations.

"None of you shall approach to any that is near of kin to him, to uncover their nakedness: I am the Lord (Lev. 18:6 ). It is dealt with even in the New Testament. In the epistles it is clearly commanded not to rebuke an elder but entreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren; the elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity (1Tim. 5:1-2 ) and also to flee fornication. In Noah's time, all things in the ancient world perished by the flood. The past earth and its climate were different from the present earth. Thus the post- flood man's lifestyle such as food, climate, etc., underwent changes and therefore newer laws of God for the benefit of man came into force. One such law was banning marriage between blood relations, which came into being since the dispensation of Law.

Prior to the Flood, population increase was very fast. Generations multiplied and grew large and filled the entire earth. In the Old Testament, the lineage of the wicked Cain was recorded at first (Gen. 4:16-24). The power of sin and dominion of death existed in the Old Testament whereas in the New Testament the power of cleansing through the blood of Christ Jesus and the reigning of life

came into force. That is why the Gospel begins with the lineage of the righteous Abraham (Matt. 1:1).

Though Cain's generations are named in the Bible, there is no detailed account of their age and death. Only rebels and murderers belonged to the generations of Cain who received God's curse (Gen 4:16-24). In this way, the scriptural history records about the people enslaved by sin and curse spread across the earth full of corruption.

*"The earth also was corrupt before God; and the earth was filled with violence. And God looked upon the earth, and behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth" (Gen. 6:11-12 ).*

Although Abel also was a sinner born according to the flesh like Cain, he by faith offered to God a better sacrifice and got justified. As a matter of fact, the book of life was opened first of all to write the name of God-justified Abel from among men of the sin-ridden earth. The Book of Life got first entry at the beginning of the world will get sealed at the end of Millennium and will be opened before the White Throne (Rev. 13:8, 20:12).

The righteous Abel's earthly life was very short. The first mention of human life span in the book of Genesis begins with the statement of Seth being born to Adam in place of Abel.

*"and Adam lived a hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness after his image; and called his name Seth" (Gen. 5:3 )*

From this verse it is confirmed that Abel's age was below hundred and thirty years.

*"And the Lord said, My Spirit shall not strive with man, for that he also in flesh; yet his days shall be a hundred and twenty years." (Gen. 6:3).*

If we study this verse also in connection with Abel's age, we can reach the conclusion that his age was

hundred and twenty years. Here we find nothing wrong in thinking that the Lord limited the human life span as little as the righteous Abel's life. In the ancient world, Abel had the credit of attaining the first rank in the Book of Life being entitled to eternal life through a better sacrifice in a very short life. With the diabolical murder by Cain who was sore eyed because of Abel's pleasing the Lord, Abel became the first link in the chain of greatest Old Testament saints as the FIRST MARTYR.

*"By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and by it he being dead yet speaks". (Heb. 11:4 )*

The Scripture reveals that when the soul of the righteous Abel separated from the body, he cried out to the Lord and the land instantly opened its mouth (Gen. 4:11) and the heavenly angels took him to the lower parts of the earth (Lk. 16:22). From Abel's death we get the answer to the question as to where be the man after he breathes the last.

From the fact that Abel's soul still speaks by faith even after he is dead, it is made clear that God intervenes with the righteous souls even after death. Abel's life shows that just as spiritual death entered into the world by unbelief, eternal life comes by faith in God. Though men in the Old Testament got justified by faith; their justification was not perfect. It became perfect by the fulfilment of Christ's supreme sacrifice. All saints until then had been held captive inside the earth.

*"When He ascended on high He led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men. Now this "He ascended" - what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth?" (Eph. 4:8-9).*

Jesus the Son of God who had power over life defeated the devil who had power over death and took the captives who were inside the lower parts of the earth up above;

from this we can understand very clearly that the souls of all the righteous men who died beginning from Abel to the crucifixion of Christ were kept in the lower parts of the earth.

Jacob the Patriarch of Israel was the first person to term 'Hades' for the lower parts of the earth.

*"For I shall go down into the grave (Hades) to my son in mourning" (Gen37:35).*

Other references to the term 'grave (Hades)' are found in Gen. 42:38; 44: 29, etc. God's word to Abraham the father of believers was this; "Now as for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried at a good old age" (Gen. 15:15).

God's promises were given to Abraham, which he cherished in the heart so that he could stick on without wavering in the midst of much turmoil. It was true even when he faced the trial of God's commandment to offer his own son as a sacrifice. He had strong faith that God would make all things work together for good whatever might happen and that He would never let his life end up in crisis. God's promise to Abraham had been fulfilled likewise.

Although in the Old Testament the souls after death whether in peace or absence of peace went down to the lower parts of the earth, but both didn't go to the same place. Imagine Goliath and David who killed him going to the same place! What would be the condition? Similarly is the case of Cain and Abel. These men went to different places.

Abraham the father of believers gathered in peace to those namely Abel, Adam, Seth, Enoch, Noah, Sarah and so on. God is with the generation of the righteous (Ps. 14:5). The fact that God is with His people even after death is proved by the statement God spoke to Moses from the

burning bush, saying that I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. By the statement that God is not the God of the dead, but of the living (Mtt. 22:32, Mk. 12:26, 27, Lk. 2:38), Jesus indicates that though they are dead and separated from the earth; they are spiritually alive before God.

Here a question may arise whether Adam who through disobedience became the cause for all to be sinners can be among the righteous. In the list of Old Testament faith heroes given in Hebrews 11 there is no mention of Adam. However, as we examine the genealogy of the righteous we can see that God has not rejected the first man Adam whom He created after the image and likeness of God.

Genesis chapter 4 begins with the birth account of Cain who was born to the first couple Adam-Eve who were enslaved by sin. Cain was born to the first parents on earth through the first delivery. When Eve gave birth to Cain in great pains it was likely that the couple tried to get closer to God and please Him. The circumstances under which Cain was born were quite different from those of the birth of Abel.

From the book of Genesis throughout the generations we can see the human attempt to please God. We have already discussed about the story of Cain and Abel born in the same family trying to please God, Abel succeeding and Cain failing. With the murder of his own brother, it revealed that Cain's plan was devilish. The reason why God was not pleased in Cain was that God knew the magnitude of Cain's hard-heartedness.

Though Abel was killed in connection with the worship of God, the fourth chapter ends with the positive implication of the worship of the Lord after Enosh was born to Seth. Here it is clear that a generation worshipping the Lord arose from Adam the first man. The worship of the Lord was begun after the birth of Enosh when Adam was two hundred and thirty five years old (Seth was born

to Adam at the age of 130 and Enosh was born to Seth at the age of 105, thus Adam's age was 235).

Adam's life on earth after the fall was full of misery and sorrow. The travail that Eve began to experience and the bereavement following the murder of Abel etc., made the first parents broken and wretched. The Lord who does not forsake those of a contrite and broken spirit came near them. It is evidenced by the fact that the wicked Cain got far from them and the worship of the Lord began in the generation of Seth. It was this worship begun in the days of Enosh that is still perpetuated in the form of New Testament worship in truth and Spirit, handed down through various forms by numerous generations.

The generation record of the wicked Cain disappeared by the fourth chapter of Genesis, whereas the record of the genealogy of the righteous born in Adam's lineage after the establishment of true worship of God is readily done. All sinners including the corrupt generation of Cain except the eight souls in Noah's family were eradicated, whereas the righteous generations from Adam have perpetuated through Noah to the present world and also to Abraham the father of believers.

The genealogy in the New Testament beginning with Abraham ends in Jesus Christ the Son of David born as the King of Jews (Mtt 1:1-16). The reason why the Gospel record was begun with none other name than Abraham's was that the Gospel was preached to Abraham beforehand "In you all the nations shall be blessed" (Gal. 3:8, Gen.12:3;22:18). Luke's genealogy began with Joseph born in the tribe of David and traced it back to Adam the son of God (Lk. 3:23-38). From this it is proved beyond all doubts that all our forefathers were numbered among the righteous.

Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous" (Ps. 69:28). This scripture explains that those who are in the Book of life

are righteous. Having presented the genealogy at the beginning from the first man Adam to the last Adam Jesus Christ, nowhere else in the New Testament is the history of the genealogy recorded. If the Old Testament is the history of the genealogy according to the flesh, the New Testament is the history of the genealogy according to the Spirit. **Jesus Christ gave His life as a ransom for all the mankind born in this world; He did not die for a particular group of people.**

*“For you were slain, and have redeemed us to God by your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation” (Rev 5:9).*

Since the salvation through Christ Jesus is a free gift to all, it is less likely to record on earth the genealogy of everyone who is born again; but it is being recorded in heaven.

*“This one and that one were born in her; and the Most High Himself shall establish her. The Lord will record, when He registers the peoples...” (Ps. 87:5-6).*

87<sup>th</sup> Psalm is a song of New Jerusalem the city of God. All nations are included in this. That all the springs of Zion are coming from the Lord (87:7). This is spoken of as the spring of salvation (Isa. 12:3) and the spring of life giving water (Jer. 2:13). Since the New Testament genealogy is recorded by God spiritually, Paul the apostle reminds the New Testament saints in his epistle to avoid genealogies according to the flesh. All those who are in the new testament Church are members of the family of the heavenly Father.

We have already discussed that Jacob has named the lower parts of the earth ‘Hades’ and that all saints of the Old Testament times went down to the Hades after death. We have also noted that there were myriads who gathered to the fathers at the end in peace, and the prominent among them were included in the genealogy of Jesus Christ.

The wicked who went down to the lower parts of the earth did not reach the same place as of the righteous, but they reached another place. Now we will look at certain scripture portions that say about the lowest Hades comprised in the Hades which is in the lower parts of the earth:

*“The way of life winds upward for the wise, That he may turn away from hell (Hades) below.” (Prov. 15:24).*

*“The grave (Hades) consumes sinners” (Job. 24:19).*

*“Let the wicked be ashamed; let them be silent in the grave (Hades).” (Psalms 31:17).*

*“You have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol (Hades)” (Psalms 86:13).*

*“You have lovingly delivered my soul from the pit of corruption (Hades).” (Isaiah 38: 17).*

These scriptures help us reach the conclusion that the wicked who have not obtained salvation go after death to the lower parts of the earth which is the “Hades” which is termed in various names such as pit of corruption, silent place, depths of Sheol etc.

If the Old Testament Scriptures present a blurred view of the lower parts of the earth (Hades), in the New Testament Jesus Christ depicts an actual, clear picture through the story of the Rich man and Lazarus.

*“There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day. But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate, desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man’s table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores”. (Luk. 16:19-21).*

The Lord here explains through this parable about two individuals who lived in different circumstances and

passed away from earth having completed life and an account of their life after death.

The rich man lived in his life time a very luxurious life with pomp and attire, whereas the poor Lazarus lay at the gate of the rich man with sores all over the body owning nothing but poverty and wretchedness. Certain phrases recorded such as 'dogs licked his sores' and 'he fed himself with the crumbs fallen from the rich man's table' etc., describe the magnitude of the pitiful state of Lazarus' life.

The life of the poor Lazarus is a lesson for every one. He went through the most acute poverty and the most excruciating pain both of body sores and mental agony (within and without). It is noteworthy here that in spite of his life being full of misery he did not think of ending his life (suicide). In the modern world wherein suicide is on an alarming rise- when numerous people of different age groups destroy their precious souls for trivial matters- there are innumerable people like the poor Lazarus who stick on in life with contentment with what they have. Despite being poor and sick Lazarus had the little glare of hope- of life kindled all through. Here the Scripture that the poor in the world are rich in faith is rendered true (James 2:5).

There are so many who get weary in the midst of poverty, sicknesses and other crises. The world needs to wake to the fact that when myriads are unable to find solution to their day to day problems they resort to death in desperation, only Jesus Christ the answer to every problem can rescue mankind. If the answer to every problem can be found in Jesus Christ who gave His life to save the world, the cause of all problems in the world is Satan the deceiver.

Generally men think that only if everything goes well one must live and in the event of a small adversity it would be better to die. Elijah the man resembling our nature had also the same attitude. God's plan about Elijah who desired

to die was to take him up to heaven in fiery chariots! God's people must never get desperate or desire death whether it is in spiritual realm or physical realm. We all must have the hope of being raptured to the heaven of heavens at the coming of Jesus our Bridegroom. It is this heavenly hope of the Bride-church that works as the motive force that keeps the church as the victor overcoming all the schemes of the devil.

We gather information from the following Scripture portions that Lazarus who had the hope in God had overcome the adverse circumstances of life and that his death was precious to God.

*"So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom" (Luke 16:22).*

The phrase "the beggar" does not refer to all poverty-stricken people but to the particular godly man Lazarus. When his spirit departed from the body, he was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom (Upper Hades). The angels could go down to the lower parts of the earth and come back up, which is evident from the fact that the angels carried him to Abraham's bosom.

The souls after death do not travel alone; God decides who should go to which after-death rank and deputed angels carry them to the respective place. Heavenly angels carry souls of the saints and evil spirits carry the souls of the wicked sinners. When the saints depart very peacefully the wicked show terrible death pangs at the sight of the evil powers approaching to carry them away and the apprehension of the horrible place they are taken to.

When the soul of Lazarus reached peacefully Abraham's bosom escorted by the heavenly angels, he began to experience untold joy! His departure was a farewell for good to say good bye to the earthly life full of miseries. The statement that 'Lazarus is now comforted in the bosom of Abraham' (Lk.16:23) shows the comfort of the saints after death.

*"The rich man also died and was buried; and being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off and Lazarus in his bosom." (Lk. 16: 23).*

The life of Lazarus is a lesson for all mankind whereas the rich man's life is a warning to all. The rich man indulging in luxuries had never thought of such a sudden end. It was all the more painful for him to say bye-bye to all material things that he had possessed. The rich man, being in the similitude of the man who had many goods laid up for many years, had the attitude of "take your ease, drink, eat, and be merry." Luke has written about the foolishness of the rich man who laid up treasures for himself not being rich toward God (Luk. 12:19-21) where God asks him "whose will those things be which you have provided?"

*"No one has power over the spirit to retain the spirit, and no one has power in the day of death."(Eccl.8:8).*

No man in the world has power over death; all have to be subject to it no matter how powerful one may be. In the same way no amount of money or influence will be useful to save one from death.

The statement "the rich man also died and was buried" presupposes that he had a status in the society and his death had created havoc all over. We can easily conclude from the incident that a big crowd had probably accorded him an ostentatious burial accompanied by procession and wide viewing. Perhaps people from all walks of life might have paid homage wishing eternal rest to the soul. However, heaven was silent at the death of the rich man. When the last rites were being performed on earth, the evil spirits had carried the rich man to no other place than the place of torment in Hades.

It doesn't mean that one should not get a honourable burial. However, after life is separated from the body, we must give the body a honourable burial. But this scripture tells us vehemently that after one's death, neither living

saints nor dead saints can do a pennyworth thing for the departed soul.

The rich man who reached the place of torment is making a direct appeal to the Father Abraham. Have mercy upon him, Lazarus may be sent to dip his fingertip in water and cool his tongue, because he is tormented in the flame. In spite of making such appeals directly to Abraham, his reply shows that it was rejected (Luk. 16:24,25).

The lower parts of the earth or the place commonly called 'Hades' is divided in two by a large gulf.

*"And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us"* (Luke 16: 26).

The phrase 'between us and you' shows the separation between the righteous and the wicked. From this we understand that both these groups are not in the same place but in two different places, and there are two places such as Upper Hades and Lower Hades.

Father Abraham and companions were in the upper side and those including the rich man were in the lower side, evident from the fact that the rich man lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham. Another thing to learn from this scriptural revelation is that the destination of a soul after death is non-transferable. It is evident from the statement that there is no passage between the two sides.

Do not mistake the place of torment for the fiery hell by the statement that the rich man was tormented in the Hades. Here are only the flames of the fiery hell that is beneath the lowest Hades and hell. Then what will be the fiery hell? The very thought of it will be drastic.

If the appeal from the place of torment directly to Abraham was of no avail, whom to appeal then? Or of what use even if appealed? From the scripture portion

isn't it clear that prayer to or for the dead is useless? There is no reference in the Old Testament and New Testament to prayers for or to the dead.

*".....should not a people seek their God? Should they seek the dead on behalf of the living? (Isa. 8:19)*

It is a devilish act for a living man to communicate, as it were, to dead spirits. Only God who is the owner of the souls can bring the souls back to life. The Old Testament prophets Elijah and Elisha as well as Jesus Christ and the disciples in the New Testament have raised the dead. The power to raise the dead is still working in Christ's disciples through the Holy Spirit.

The Devil and his agents can neither raise the dead nor make them appear before the living. However, they may be successful to show off imitation works that seem to be divine works. Satanic forces can never raise the dead back to life restoring them to the former state just like Jesus and the disciples did. But one thing they can do; they can take the form of any dead person and make it look like the same person.

In 1Samuel 28:7-11 we see the dramatic episode of King Saul's pathetic declension of going to a woman who was a medium who brought up an evil spirit masquerading like the Prophet Samuel who was dead and made him speak.

*"Then Saul said to his servants, "Find me a woman who is a medium ...then the woman said, "Whom shall I bring up for you? And he said, "Bring up Samuel for me."(1Sam.28:12-13)*

"So he said to her, what is his form?"

*"And she said, an old man is coming up, and he is covered with a mantle'. And Saul perceived that it was Samuel, and he stooped with his face to the ground and bowed down" (1Sam.28:14)*

Now Samuel said to Saul,

*“Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up?..... and God has departed from me..... and the Lord has done for Himself as He spoke by me.....And tomorrow you and your sons will be with me. The Lord will also deliver the army of Israel into the hand of the Philistines.”*  
(1Sam.28:15-20).

As we read these passages, we will be under the impression that Samuel literally appeared in life, which was not the reality. Was the spirit of Samuel the great prophet of Israel at the disposal of a witch so that he would appear at her beck and call? No never!

How come the medium woman was able to stand before the spirit of Samuel the prophet seeing that she was frightened to confront him while alive? To understand the matter of fact, we need to discuss it in the light of the scriptures.

*“And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works”*  
(2 Cor. 11:14-15).

On spiritual ministry platforms, quite often the ministers of Satan disguise themselves as ministers of righteousness. Paul the apostle says that it is not surprising. Savage wolves in lamb's clothing, false apostles, feigned workers, false prophets etc., are those who disguise themselves as ministers of truth in the new testament Church. They are Satan's agents who masquerade as God's servants. Their actions will show who they are. Let me remind all God's people the words of Christ that any tree will be known by its fruit. If we carefully watch the works of such workers that prophesy under the evil spirits despite being prayerful people and dynamic preachers, we can easily make out who they really are. While they show off actions of godliness outwardly, their inner heart

will be full of greed. Notice the words of Peter the apostle about them:

*“False teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction,. And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed. By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words” (2 Peter 2:1-3).*

All spiritual exercises aimed at material benefits cashing in on spirituality are devilish, not from God. The Church established by the Lord cannot be considered as mega supermarkets of profit-making commercial networks. The worship places on the contrary, are sanctuaries of the Holy Spirit that purify the human hearts enabling to worship the true God in pure conscience. The Lord has not established His Church counting on the world's finances, but the divine objective is the redemption of souls that are costlier than the world, and the finishing of their salvation.

Just as wicked men disguise themselves as ministers of righteousness the evil spirits can appear in the form of any person who has died. Coming back to our topic, it was only an evil spirit that appeared at the call of the medium woman on the requirement of Saul and spoke to him. It is a fact regarding evil spirits that those evil spirits who abide in some men do not depart from the world even though the carriers die.

Take the case of the man possessed by legion; when Jesus had rebuked the demons, they had expressed the desire to enter into the swine. The evil spirits are in the habit of migrating from one to another. From this we understand that there are evil spirits who know very well the past old affairs of many generations. When such evil spirits migrate in to a new person, they act or speak in the same way or circumstances by which such spirits entered. This is what is meant by “demon possession.” (If you want

to know in detail how the evil spirits were created, please read my book "Nithyathayude velippad" (Revelation of Eternity) Pp. 24, 25.

Just like the angels of God evil spirits also travel. Human spirits after death reach their destination instantly, and they never wander along. Know for sure that until and unless the Lord who is the owner of all souls gives command, no single soul can move an inch from their abode, where they have reached.

There is a common belief among some that the souls of premature death (such unnatural deaths as suicides, murders, accident deaths etc.) do wander along on earth till the completion of their life span, which is not in agreement with the Word of God. Some people are scared about the places where unnatural deaths have occurred. There are also occasions when evil spirits find an easy access into such fearful people who in turn become eccentric.

At places of accidental deaths weird fearful atmosphere is not created by the souls of people who met accidental death, but by evil spirits or demons. The demons or spirits that have neither flesh nor bones are eager beaver to enter into human body and once they possess make humans act like puppets.

There are also such evil spirits that migrate from generation to generation. However, human spirit will never migrate to other human body. Only one human spirit abides and works in a human body. It is impossible that more human spirits should work in a human body. But of course several evil spirits can enter a human body at a time and work inside him.

No matter what kind of death occurs, the human souls that depart from body go to the place designated by God. The human spirit by no means enters into another body whether at death or afterwards. As for the criterion of the judgment, the Bible says that "Every man will have to

appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad" (2 Cor. 5:10). Now suppose that in a human body more human spirits have worked. Then which human spirit will enter which body in resurrection? Which human spirit will be judged by God in connection with the body? Since there is no scriptural support to such a concept, we can readily establish the fact that human spirit does not migrate from one body to another.

The evil spirits and demons have a more or less clear idea of the past history as well as future of the wicked men belonging to their circle of activity. Though satanic forces have knowledge of the past of the righteous to a certain extent, evil powers cannot prophesy the future of the righteous because the righteous are under God's control. In certain exceptional cases some by the help of the evil spirits speak accurately. It is through leaking the messages given by the Holy Spirit on some occasions (Jer. 23:30). The reason why the evil spirit disguising as the Prophet Samuel predicted about the evil that would befall Saul and his family and the same was fulfilled was that Saul became subject to the Devil's power. It would be fitting here to discuss the Parable of the sower.

*"And as he sowed, some seed fell by the wayside; "(Mtt. 13: 4).*

*"When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside." (Mtt. 13:19)*

Since Saul was the anointed of the Lord, the merciful God kept speaking to him even after he erred. As the days passed by his heart became subject to the Devil by jealousy and rebellion deteriorating to the extent that he could not grasp the Word of God. Though what was predicted through Samuel the prophet was taken for granted, Satan,

knowing that God's word would come true, had a somewhat-may-attitude keeping the same for Saul's disaster.

This is how the evil spirit disguising as the Prophet Samuel narrated one by one through the medium. In the war with Philistines, since the Lord had rejected Saul Satan had rained all his vengeance on him and his family. Here we have a warning that hearing God's Word is well and good but not heeding to it and acting on it will result in disastrous end with the devil's scheme. For example, if anyone hears the Word of God and refuses to come to salvation like the seed that fell by the wayside, Satan will come near him and blocking the door to salvation will take him along to eternal damnation. One can expect a hundredfold yield only when he hears the word of God and make it affect his life accordingly.

There are some who have doubt whether Satan can eliminate the saints or not. It is possible if God allows it. Some instances may be given below though many can be cited.

*"Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul" (Luke 12:4; Mtt. 10:28).*

This verse implies that Satan can kill the body (death of the flesh). It was the work of Satan to kill the righteous Abel. The Book of Job tells us that Satan had eyed on Job's soul to kill him but the Lord didn't permit it (Job 1:12; 2:6). We read that though Satan could not kill Job, he killed his children through accident in Job 1:19. At the same time God proved that in everything that happens in the life of the saints, He makes it work for their good. On such occasions, none of the saints has blasphemed God or complained asking why such a thing happened in their life. The strong belief of the saints of God is that everything happens according to the will of God and that behind everything God has got great plan. In the New Testament, when Stephen was martyred and James the brother of John was slain by the sword, none of their relatives raised

the question 'why'? Moreover, the church history bears witness that through all such incidents the Church was strengthened.

The Lord has assured that we need not fear those who kill the body and after that have no more that they can do. Satan and his accomplices might be able to kill some of the saints of God through some ways under some mysterious circumstances. But we are told not to fear any way. Those who are under God's control rejoice always because they have strong faith that the life here is temporary and as they go beyond it to the eternal bliss no power can block it.

Just as evil spirits can appear in the form of anybody who is dead and act and talk, in the same way those who are devoted to the spirits can bring up the demons and speak to them. Astonishingly, there is going to be a most modern communication system launched during the rule of Antichrist which will be more widely circulated than the present Information Technology. It will be what can be called divination through medium communicating with demon spirits for puzzling matters and make people act accordingly. The media then will not be any of the present technological gadgets such as Internet, Mobile Phone and 666-chip. But the new system will be through innumerable chains of networking of evil forces. No wonder the rumblings of such a development have already started sounding now. As a matter of fact, all people irrespective of religions had thought of worshipping Satan as a mean thing. But now people have arisen to take pride in worshipping Satan. In these days when the young generation slips away into the bondage of Satan, it is imperative that we defend against the onslaught of the devil and bring them back from the clutches of Satan inculcating the truths of the Word of God into them.

The Church teaches that after death it is not chaos but everything starts after it. God has given freedom to every man to make sure one goes to eternal life or eternal death

even while one is in body. It is God's unchangeable law that once the spirit departs from body the after death state of a soul by no means can be changed.

From the narration of the rich man and Lazarus, we can learn that even after death, souls have such experiences as memory, pain, sorrow, and thirst in the case of rich man as well as on the other side comfort, goodness, hope, and divine presence in the case of Lazarus. The rich man's guilty conscience aggrieved him. The rich man while living on earth had overemphasized the worldly fortunes at the expense of his soul's salvation. The painful fact that from the place of torment, where he reached after death, there was no possible way of release, had added greatly to his unending grief. With the rejection of his request that at least five of his brothers must not be sent to this place, he was flung into eternal silence, despair and pain.

See the paradox while the relatives of the deceased are taking efforts by performing rituals for the soul's eternal peace, the soul of the deceased is attempting to save his relatives on earth. What is the outcome of both? All such attempts end up in vain.

Behind every good thing in the world that the devil the god of this world (2 Cor.4:4) provides, there is a vice hidden. Pity how many in the world today advance in the worship of Satan just for the temporary material benefits. Let us not go after the material prosperity that Satan might provide; we should escape the corruption that is in the world through lust by the divine power that provides everything for both life and godliness and should be partakers of the divine nature (2Peter 1:3-4). Only those who have strong resolution that God-given benefits suffice, clinging on to God's promises that for him to whom the Lord is the shepherd, goodness and mercy shall follow all the days of his life, can be free from Satan's allurements.

From the story of the rich man and Lazarus, make no mistake that all the rich people will go to hell and all the

poor people will get to heaven. Many poor people indulge in the miry pit of sins showing rebellion and cursing the God who has given them life. If anyone caught up in the bondage of Satan does his will, unwilling to repent in spite of having opportunity, God will not show any consideration to such a person who ever he may be or how poor he may be.

*“Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent.” (Acts 17:30)*

In this God makes no difference of colour, creed, rich or poor; God commands everyone in the world to attain eternal life. God’s spirit speaks through Paul the apostle to all who are financially poor like this:

*“For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain that we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content.” (1Tim. 6:9-10).*

If God has given someone wealth, the Word of God has also recorded how it must be utilized.

*“Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy. Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share, storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come that they may lay hold on eternal life.” (1Tim.6:17-19).*

Also he exhorts through the Word of God that the rich should not take pride in riches but they should be generous to give out of what the Lord has given abundantly to enjoy to others who are poor, and must not give grudgingly but cheerfully (2 Cor. 9:6-9).

The saints of both the Old and New Testament had experienced both riches and poverty. But their life speaks to us that richness or poverty had never dimmed or blurred their spiritual vision. They never had their minds on the wealth of this world, but they had lived fixing their

eyes on spiritual richness. The disciples of the Lord were extremely glad in it either.

*“Now he who received seed among the thorns is he, who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word and he becomes unfruitful.” (Matt. 13:22).*

In the present spiritual realm, we can see an alarming rise of the thorns of greed choking up the spiritual life of many people and rendering it unfruitful. In the first century church the tragic scene that took the life of Ananias and Saphira (Acts. 5:1-11) was caused by greed for money. The stumbling block for Judas the traitor who betrayed Jesus and hanged himself was also greed for money.

The reason why Jesus the Lord picked up the rich man from among the innumerable sinners in the place of torment as an example was that the ‘love of money is a root of all kinds of evil’ ( 1 Tim. 6:10). In the Book of Ephesians covetousness is likened to idolatry (Eph.5:5) whereas in Colossians the apostle records “covetousness which is idolatry.” Covetousness is the idol that Satan has put in the hearts of many. How besetting is the great influence of money in man! The Lord has taught the disciples to beware of greed of money because it is one of the principal areas which Satan finds an easy doorway of influence.

Well, through the story of the rich man and Lazarus the Lord unfolded a great mystery of life after death which was hidden until then. Here we find a vivid picture of life after death such as : the destination of all the souls after departing from the body right from the beginning of the world to the establishment of the New Testament was the lower parts of the earth; the place called Hades was divided in to two by a large gulf;

The upper part of the Hades also called Abraham’s Bosom was the abode of all righteous souls and the lowest

part known as the Lowest Hades was the abode of all the wicked souls which was the place of torment.

Thus we have noted from the Scripture that the lower part of the earth or the Hades was divided in two by a great gulf and that the souls of the wicked reached the lowest part and the souls of the righteous reached the upper part and that across the two parts there was no traffic line.

The Upper Hades had two different ranks of righteous:

1. Those who were just worthy of eternal life.
2. Those great men worthy of sitting in Abraham's Bosom.

As we look at the two ranks of righteous in the Upper Hades as to who they were and where they were, all our doubts will be cleared.

### **1. Those whose names are written in the book of life (Those who are worthy for just eternal life).**

If the life formed in the womb has not come out but died inside without seeing the sun. Even then, the soul thus formed does not die. All the souls of the infants that depart from the world not knowing good or bad including those mentioned above will be worthy of eternal life, which is according to God's justice. When the Lord said, "let the little children come to me and do not stop them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these" (Matt. 19:13-15), all children are included in it. Moreover, the Lord means to say that they will have entry into God's kingdom worthy of eternal life in the new heaven and new earth.

Some are of the opinion that, since the infants have sin by birth, they are not God's until it is done away, therefore they perform some rituals on behalf of new-born babes. But the fact of the matter is that anyone who studies the Scripture can understand the futility of the same.

*"The spirit of a man is the lamp of the Lord....." (Prov. 20:27).*

In any child that is born into the world we can see God's light. Though the seed of death is in them, it becomes active only when man grows up to the worldly knowledge. As the world's knowledge puts out the spiritual life, the human spirit comes to spiritual darkness. All men are in the same condition. If the infants are not marked by certain visible labels, they are hardly distinguished as to which religion they belong. All infants after death will be worthy to enter the Kingdom of God no matter which religion they belong to. That is why Jesus said that unless you are converted and become like little children you will by no means enter the Kingdom of heaven. It is proved that the rituals performed on ignorant children are of no use. In the Old Testament, the rituals like circumcision were outward and the purpose was to assimilate the candidate into the Jewish commonwealth, not for eternal life (Romans 2:28-29). As per the law, after a child was born sacrifices were offered in the temple for purification, but it was not for the purification of the child, but for the purification of the mother who gave birth (Lev. 12<sup>th</sup> chapter, Luk. 2: 22-24). There is nothing wrong in dedicating children in churches any time, but it must not be done as a ritual.

Though the infants are born in sin, since the soul inside them is the lamp of God, if they depart in the same state, no doubt, they will resemble God who is the spirit the light. Since the infants living in body cannot do either good or bad, they do not deserve divine judgment or reward, but it is confirmed here that they are worthy of eternal life.

If there are individuals who can live as innocent as infants not deceived by the worldly knowledge, of course they will be saved from the lake of hell fire even as those who are mentally retarded living in the same innocent state not knowing good and evil. It is a fact worthy of acceptance that those who have not experienced any good in this life will rise up in the world to come to receive its good.

It is also a matter not forgotten that any man who does not accept the true light that illuminates the mankind living in spiritual darkness but does evil loving darkness will definitely join the Devil who is the darkness. Our forefathers of preceding generations did not have as much spiritual light as we have today (It is not about the fathers in the early century church). The Lord, who searches the hearts, looks at each one's faithfulness in accordance with the light one received. If the forefathers lived in strict adherence to the truths they received, they will receive appropriate after-death rank and resurrection. However, if we neglect the divine truths known to us that God gives us today and follow the vain tradition of men, we will be forsaken. Neither traditions nor any other man-made thing can save the human soul. God has revealed the way of salvation to the world very clearly: "Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

Those who accept the Word of God as the truth and commit their lives to Jesus the Lord are born again like new born babes and get saved from God's wrath that is to come.

It is faith in the God who justifies that marks the beginning of the spiritual life (eternal life). As discussed earlier, it was Abel who was justified by faith who attained the first place in the book of life for eternal life. The book of life begun to be written then had the entry of myriads of souls who came by faith.

As long as man and death continue on earth, or in other words from the beginning of the world to the end of Millennium, there have been and will be entries in the book of life.

The first rank among the after-death ranks of the saints is the above said rank of those whose names are just written in the book of life. While they are worthy of eternal

life, they will also inherit the earth in the New heaven and New earth and will live for ever and ever. These saints who went down to the Upper Hades after death were brought up when the Lord descended the lower parts of the earth and led the captives free and ascended on high, and they were hidden in the sea. It has been discussed in detail in the chapter titled 'Those who are in the Sea'.

## **2. The great men who are made worthy to sit in the bosom of Abraham.**

We have discussed above about those who were just worthy of eternal life. Now we are going to continue studying about those who have a greater spiritual standard.

*"Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection.....of whom the world was not worthy" (Heb. 11:35-38).*

Among the Old Testament saints, those who lived in submission to the Word of God and suffered are greater in rank than those who were just worthy of eternal life. When Abel got justified by faith and became the heir of eternal life, he rather got elevated to a higher spiritual rank by his martyrdom. Such men as these had suffered for a far better resurrection.

Jesus used the terminology of 'Abraham's bosom' for the upper part in the Hades in order to show those who belonged to the greater rank of the Old Testament saints centring on Abraham the father of believers his predecessors and successors, signifying the place they reached after death. It is due to the fact that the poor Lazarus belonged to the greater rank of the Old Testament saints that Luke (16:22) recorded about his being carried to Abraham's bosom by the heavenly angels.

We get more light on this as the after-death ranks of Isaac and Ishmael are explained. It is recorded in the Scripture that Isaac who was born as the promised son to Abraham in Sarah breathed his last and died, and was

gathered to his people (Gen. 35:28-29), and about Ishmael we read that he breathed his last and died, and was gathered to his people (Gen. 25:17). Ishmael was the son of Abraham born in Hagar the Egyptian maid. From the words 'he gathered to his people' it doesn't mean that he was taken to the place of torment in the lowest Hades; but to Abraham's place in the upper Hades. But Ishmael was not worthy to sit in Abraham's bosom where only those like Isaac born of promise could sit. We have more details about it in Galatians in the New Testament.

*"Abraham had two sons: the one by a bondwoman, the other by a freewoman.....what does the scripture say? 'Cast out the bondwoman and her son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman.'" (Gal.4:22-31).*

Ishmael and Isaac who were in different states in life had reached in the same way two different spiritual ranks after death. Here it is established beyond doubt that in the upper Hades there were those belonging to two different ranks.

At the death of Jesus Christ, He descended to the Hades and delivered both the groups from the upper Hades. When He ascended on high with them, He promoted the souls who belonged to the first rank such as were worthy of good resurrection or just worthy of eternal life, whose names were written in the book of life, to the Sea; and He promoted the second rank such as were greater than those worthy of eternal life, such as were worthy to sit in Abraham's bosom and those worthy of a better resurrection, to the first heaven in Paradise.

Now I hope it is clear that Jesus Christ delivered all the souls of the Old Testament saints from the Hades' captivity and ascended on high, placing some in the Sea and some in the first heaven in Paradise. Since by the blood of Jesus Christ the complete pardon of sin and justification has been fulfilled, the souls of saints who die after the inception

of the New Testament no longer go to the Hades but they go to one of the various ranks beginning from the first rank of saints in the Sea to as high as heaven (Paradise). What is written in Revelation 5:13 is in this connection. Here I hope it is clear that the righteous people in the New Testament after death do not arrive at a place of silence but a place where there are creatures who worship the Lord.

*“And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying: Blessing and honour and glory and power be to Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, forever and ever!” (Rev.5:13).*

While telling about the groups or ranks included among those who worship the Lord (Rev. 5:13), those who are in the upper Hades are left out because of the fact that the Upper Hades which was the resting place of the Old Testament saints was evacuated since the beginning of the New Testament.

Unless we discuss about certain strange events that happened from the beginning of the world to the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ in continuation with this, this study will not be complete. Now we are going to continue our study discussing mainly five important happenings thus happened.

## **STRANGE EVENTS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT**

- 1. Those taken up without death ( Enoch, Korah and group)**
- 2. Those manifested on earth as fore-shadow without genealogy (Melchisedech, Elijah)**
- 3. Those appeared in glory after death (Moses, Elijah)**
- 4. Those who re-lived on earth after death and resurrection.**
- 5. Those saints who were raised to life at the death of Christ.**

## 1. Those taken up without death (Enoch, Korah and group)

*"By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death..."(Heb. 11:5).*

*"If these men die naturally like all men... but if the Lord creates a new thing, and the earth opens its mouth and swallows them up with all that belongs to them, and they go down alive into the pit, then you will understand that these men have rejected the Lord." (Num. 16:29-33).*

The above-quoted are two strange events of people who are taken away from the earth without seeing death. First was the happening in the life of Enoch who belonged to the 7<sup>th</sup> generation from Adam, and the second was an event happened in Israel during the journey to Canaan the Promised Land at Kadesh in the desert of Paran (Numbers 13:26).

The first person who disappeared from the earth without seeing death was Enoch the Godly who walked with God 300 years. The long term communion with God had distinguished Enoch's life from others'. Enoch had got the information from the Lord about the great disaster the flood that was likely to happen to the then world. Moreover, the first prophet to make the first prediction about the second coming (appearance in glory) of Jesus Christ was Enoch.

*"Now Enoch, the 7<sup>th</sup> from Adam, prophesied about these men also, saying, 'behold the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints.'"(Jude 14:15)*

The Lord will not do a thing without revealing His secret to His servants the prophets (Amos 3:6), which is said by the prophet Amos is a downright reality right from the beginning of the world. It has already been proven in the scripture how the likely events as revealed by the Godly saints walking with the Lord were fulfilled. Enoch who was the shortest lived in that generation as recorded had

appealed to God to take him up before the coming flood and we see the fulfilment of such a request.

*“By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, and was not found, because God had taken him; for before he was taken he had this testimony that he pleased God” (Heb. 11:5).*

*“And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him” (Gen. 5:24).*

We get rather clearer information in the New Testament regarding this subject. But nowhere is it recorded as to where God had carried him to. The common belief is that God took Enoch away to heaven in body. God has not given authority to anybody to either add anything to the word of God or take away from it. Therefore if we say that he was taken to heaven we will be found teaching against the scripture. There is clear proof regarding Elijah that he was taken up to heaven in the whirlwind, which will be discussed later.

From the statement that Enoch was not found because he was taken up, it is difficult to reach a clear conclusion. Here it is better to compare with parallel incident in the scripture and reach a conclusion. Though we do not have record where Enoch was taken to, we have clear information in the scripture about the rebellious group namely Korah, Dathan, and Abiram and all their siblings were swallowed up, the earth opening its mouth. (Num. 16:26-33)

*“That the ground split apart under them, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up with their households and all the men with Korah, with all their goods. So they and all those with them went down alive into the pit.” (Num. 16:31-32)*

*“Let death seize them; let them go down alive into hell (Hades). For wickedness is in their in dwellings and among them” (Ps. 55:15)*

From the Psalms quoted above we get a hint that similar events will happen again. As we analyse the end of Enoch and Korah group we understand the following fact; if those who rebelled against God went down in to the pit in Hades (Lower Hades) without seeing death it is reasonable to think that Enoch who pleased God and walked with Him went to the upper Hades without seeing death where the Old Testament saints including Abel reached.

Both these events are shadows of two great events that will take place. Just as Enoch belonging to the seventh generation from Adam went to the upper Hades without seeing death, another reality will come to pass such as the dead in Christ of the new testament church, which is the spiritual bride of Christ during the time of the seventh Church, which is the Church of Laodicea will be resurrected along with those that are alive walking with Him will be transformed and taken up to the clouds without seeing death.

At the end of the world or at the second coming of the glorious coming of Jesus Christ it will happen just like Korah group who went down to the lower Hades alive. At the end of the Armageddon war the Beast (Antichrist) and the False Prophet will be bound and thrown alive into the lake of fire (Rev. 19:20). And all the wicked of all the nations walking with the Beast will be made to stand at the left hand side of the throne of glory and will be thrown alive into the eternal fire, which is prepared for the devil and his angels (Mtt. 25:41). This will be another substance of the shadow. Just as the saints in the New Testament Church who live in obedience to the Lord are taken up to the heaven of Heavens without seeing death at the secret coming of Christ in the mid-air, those extremely wicked people walking with the Antichrist who rebel hard against God will be thrown alive into the hell of fire at Jesus' glorious appearance. What happened in the lives of those who were taken away alive without seeing death in one of the strangest happenings of Old

Testament was the shadow of both these events. Since Enoch was taken up without seeing death, there are some who think that he will re-appear along with Moses during the tribulation period and will die. This needs to be proved in the light of the scripture as to its accuracy. We have already discussed about Korah group who went down alive into the lower Hades, it is not Enoch alone who was taken away without death. Those who argue that Enoch will have to appear and die since he was taken up without seeing death have also a responsibility to prove with the support of the scripture when Korah-group who went down to the Hades alive will return to earth and die.

Let us take a reasonable ground to stand on in this connection. Enoch was taken to the upper Hades and along with the great saints whom the Lord rescued from captivity. Enoch also was carried to paradise (the first heaven) and even as he prophesied he will appear in the glorious appearance in which the Lord and all His saints will come. Thus we can find a better reasonable ground that Enoch will not appear on earth before that. Korah-group who went down alive into the lowest Hades will appear before the White Throne on the last day of resurrection; when Death and Hades will give up their dead and will be cast into the hell of fire condemned at the last judgement; none of them until that time come to earth and die.

## **2. Those manifested on earth as fore-shadow without genealogy (Melchisedech, Elijah)**

### **Melchisedech**

*“For this Melchisedech king of Salem, priest of the Most High God.. without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life but made like the son of God, remains a priest continually” (Heb. 7:1-3).*

*"Then Melchisedech..... He was the priest of God Most High" (Gen 14:18-20).*

The scripture records (Ps 110:4; Heb 5:6;7:1-20) passages about the priesthood and the High Priest greater than Aronic Priesthood of the Law received by Moses in the Old Testament.

Melchisedech came as a shadow without record of genealogy, birth and death and blessed the Patriarch Abraham whereas Jesus Christ the true Son of God appeared on earth as a substance to bless all mankind.

*"And in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.... To you first, God, having raised up his servant Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from your iniquities." (Acts 3:25-26).*

There is only one way to obtain God's blessing that is none other than Jesus Christ the Lord, by whose faith forgiveness of sins and eternal life can be had. Anyone can attain material blessing through any means on earth but a person can obtain eternal life, which is God's excellent promise only through Jesus Christ. Its reason is that the blood of Jesus Christ was given as the ransom for man's redemption. There is nothing on par with it.

*"Knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible, things like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct.... but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Pet. 1:18-19).*

Melchisedech who appeared in the Old Testament as the priest of the Most High to Abraham was the shadow of Jesus Christ the great High Priest who appeared as substance to bless all in the New Testament. He was King and priest of the Most High God who remains as priest forever like the son of God. If Aronic priesthood was changed, the New Testament priesthood through Jesus Christ according to the order of Melchisedech cannot change. The New Testament priesthood is heavenly and

not earthly. That is why in the New Testament Church established by Jesus Christ; importance is not given to buildings, or attire, ostentations, etc. Peter the Apostle makes it clear in his epistle what is the heavenly priesthood.

*"But you are chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvellous light" (1 Pet. 2:9).*

The Lord God gave prophecy of the son of God in the book of Genesis who was going to appear to establish the heavenly priesthood on earth.

*"And I will put enmity between you and the woman and between your seed and her seed, he shall bruise your head and you shall bruise his heel" (Gen. 3:15).*

We find the fulfilment of this prophecy at the beginning of the New Testament

*"and Jacob begot Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus who is called Christ" (Mtt 1:16).*

Though we find many prophecies about the son of God through out the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit has prophesied regarding the birth of Jesus Christ through Isaiah like this;

*"Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bare a son, and shall call his name Immanuel". (Isa. 7:14)*

Again we find another prophecy through Isaiah recorded as to who the child would be.

*"For unto us a Child is born unto us a Son is given and the government will be upon His shoulder and His name will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace" (Is. 9:6).*

Paul the Apostle quoted the Old Testament prophecy and confirmed it in the epistle (Gal. 4:4).

*“But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son born of a woman...” (Gal. 4:4)*

Manifesting as a shadow in prophecy in diverse times in the Old Testament, the Son of the Most High has taken the form of man as the Saviour of the world as substance at the beginning of the New Testament. The description of how the priest of the most high appeared to Abraham as a shadow under the title of Melchisedech is given in the Old and the New Testaments. The details such as his genealogy, where he came from, etc are not given because Melchisedech has neither beginning nor end. Being the shadow of the Son of God an angel from the heaven of heavens appeared in the form of man to Abraham and afterwards he was taken up back to the same place. In the fullness of time the son of God as substance born of a woman as a true man and having ministered, died buried and resurrected and ascended to the heaven of heavens to the right hand of the Father where He is seated and intercedes as the great High Priest (Rom 8:34).

Thus we find through these evidences that Melchisedech who was manifested in the Old Testament was a shadow of Jesus Christ who appeared on earth as the substance as a great high priest.

## **Elijah**

Elijah was also manifested like Melchisedech without any details of genealogy or description of parents or of tribe.

*“And Elijah the Tishbite, of the inhabitants of Gilead” (1Kngs 17:1)* this is how much description about Elijah’s background is given in the Bible.

Elijah was a mighty prophet of God whom God had appointed to declare a message of condemnation point blank to the king Ahab in the palace at a critical time of Israel when the king Ahab and Jezebel misguided the people taking them away from the true God to the worship of Baal and Asherah .

After the horrible drought of three and a half years in Israel the Lord's word came to Elijah to show himself to Ahab again; he had summoned all Israel and the 450 Baal's prophet and 400 prophets of Asherah at the Mount Carmel; when the false prophets failed in bringing down fire on the sacrifice Elijah prayed down God's fire on the sacrifice and the altar upon the Mount of Carmel, thereby proving that Jehovah is the true God and restored people of Israel to the Lord Jehovah as well.

Although Elijah had done such a dynamic ministry he was scared by Jezebel's threat and went under a juniper tree and wanted to die. However, the Lord strengthened him and led him to Horeb where the Lord appeared to him and commissioned to do certain ministries and finally when the ministry was completed, he was taken up to heaven by fiery horses and fiery chariot in the whirlwind (1Kngs18, 2Kngs 2:11)

*"Elijah was a man with a nature like ours..." (James. 5:17-18)*

From this scripture we can understand that if the priest of the most high appeared from heaven of heavens as a shadow was equal to the son of God, Elijah who appeared from heaven was like a man. On several occasions angels have appeared in the form of man. The three angels who appeared to Abraham can be recognized as Father, Son and the Holy Spirit (Gen. 18:2). Similarly, if the angel from heaven of heavens came in the form of man as Melchisedech, an angel from heaven (Paradise) came as Elijah. God has got various kinds of angels in different places.

In this particular issue of Elijah's translation to heaven, certain things need to be noted. Elijah was taken to 'heaven' and not to the heaven of heavens. Another point to be noted is that the phrase 'without seeing' is not used. The phrase 'without seeing death' is written in Enoch's case because he was born as a real man.

Elijah who appeared as the prophet in Israel was a shadow of the prophet of the 'Most High' who was to be appeared in the New Testament. If Elijah and Melchisedech who appeared on earth as shadow, they had likewise appeared in substance as the son of the most High and the prophet of the most high in the New Testament. The prophecy regarding the son of God that was to be revealed as the son of the most high began at the beginning of Genesis and appeared as a shadow under the title of Melchisedech to the patriarch Abraham and blessed him. The Son of God who is the Saviour of the world manifested in the flesh as the true son of man under the title Jesus. He fulfilled the atonement for sin by His own blood. The closing words of the prophecy of Malachi the last book of the Old Testament were prophecies regarding the prophet of the Most High.

*"Behold I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord".(Mal. 4:5-6)*

We have already discussed in detail about Elijah who appeared as prophet in Israel's history. It was not recorded as a birth according to genealogy because it was a heavenly angel in shadow appearing as a man. The son of the Most High revealed to His own disciples who was the Elijah supposed to come.

*"And his disciples asked him saying 'why then do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?' Indeed Elijah is coming first and will restore all things. But I say to you that Elijah has come already... then the disciples understood that he spoke to them of John the Baptist" (Mtt. 17:10- 13), (Mk. 9:11-13).*

At the birth of John the Baptist his father Zachariah being filled with the Holy Spirit prophesied about Jesus the Saviour of the world as well as about the prophet of the Most High who was born to prepare the way for Him (Lk. 1:67-80). Though there are so many prophecies in

support of this I'm not venturing because of lack of space. John's voice was the word cried out in the wilderness (Is. 40:3; Mtt. 3:4; Mk. 1:2-3; Lk.2:3-6). If the prophecy regarding the Son of the Most High was begun in Genesis the first book of the Old Testament and with the prophecy regarding the prophet of the Most High in Malachi the last book of the Old Testament, the writing of the Old Testament came to a close, at the beginning of the New Testament John as the prophet of the most high and Jesus Christ as the Son of the Most High with a difference of six months time manifested in the flesh on earth. Before their birth the angel Gabriel had come down and got the message to the respective people (Lk. 1:13-19, 1:26-35)

That John who was born as a true man as shadow resembled Elijah is quite clear even from his dress code. While it is written in the New Testament in (Mtt 3:4) that John himself was clothed in camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist. The account about Elijah in (2Kings 1:8) is parallel.

Elijah who appeared as the shadow without genealogy was not truly a man but was an angel and at the end of his ministry, he was taken by God to the same place where he was sent from. John who was the prophet of the Most High in the New Testament was truly a man born according to the genealogy. He was beheaded at the end of his ministry and his soul entered the Upper part of the Hades. Thus the scripture confirms the fact with proof that Elijah was a heavenly angel who came as a shadow of John.

### **3. Those appeared in glory after death (Moses, Elijah)**

*"But I tell you truly, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the kingdom of God... two men talked with him, who were Moses and Elijah who appeared in glory". (Lk. 9:27-36), (Mk. 9:1-7, Mtt. 16:28, 17:1-8)*

Jesus Christ the founder of the New Testament Church and James, Cephas and John known to be the pillars of Church once went up to mount of transfiguration (Tabor). When Jesus was praying He was transfigured and Moses and Elijah appeared in glory and they talked about the death that he was going to accomplish at Jerusalem.

We are going to discuss here how Moses who lived about 1500yrs before Jesus' coming to the earth and Elijah who was John the Baptist beheaded by Herod appeared on the mount of transfiguration in glory together.

The details regarding the birth and life of Moses are recorded in the second chapter of the book of Exodus. Some outstanding characteristics are: the first prophet of Law who received the fiery law from God and gave it to Israel, the meekest person on earth, whom God talked face to face without any cover, the leader who led more than 2.5 million Israelites for 40 years as their deliverer. ... and so on.

At the end of Moses' ministry the Lord said to him about his death directly and he had died at the age of 120 according to the word of the Lord on the mount Nebo in the land of Moab, and died there and was gathered to his people. What God spoke regarding the death of Moses is given below:

*"Go up into this mount Abarim, and see the land which I have given to children of Israel and when you have seen it, you also shall be gathered to your people as Aaron your brother was gathered" (Num. 27:12-13).*

*"take vengeance on the Midianites for the children of Israel afterward they shall be gathered to your people" (Num. 31:2).*

*"Then the Lord said to Moses 'behold the days approach when you must die" (Deut. 21:14).*

*"Go up of this mountain of Abarim, Mount Nebo which is in the land of Moab, across from Jericho; view the land*

*of Canaan which I give to the children of Israel as a possession; and die on the mountain which you ascend, and be gathered to your people, just as Aaron your brother died on mount Hor and was gathered to his people.”*  
(Deut 32:49-50)

The last book Deuteronomy of the five books written by Moses was closed with the description of the death of Moses the man of God.

*“So Moses the servant of the Lord died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord, and he buried him in a valley in the land of Moab opposite Beth Peor but no one knows his grave to this day”* (Deut. 34:5-6)

After death his body was buried by the command of the Lord under the leadership of Michael the archangel, to which the New Testament gives us evidence.

*“Yet Michael the Archangel, in contending with the devil when he disputed about the body of Moses, they do not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, ‘The Lord rebuke you!’(Jude 9).*

Why the Lord God buried Moses’ body most secretly was that Moses had to appear in glory on Mount Tabor after about 1500yrs. It was Moses chosen by God as the founder of the nation of Israel who was the first to be accorded with the honour of the heavenly army. Moses’ burial is one of the strange events in the Bible. When God had his body buried in secret by Michael the archangel, the devil came with argument who was rebuked and the burial took place most secretly.

That the devil contended about the body of Moses who received the Law from God’s hand is the best example of the fact that by the deeds of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight. (Rom 3:20).

Moses died and was gathered to his people. It means that at his death the angels carried his soul to the lower parts of the earth to Abraham’s bosom, which was a place

designated for the great old testament saints. The soul of Moses who was supposed to appear in glory did not go to heaven, but was gathered to the thither-to-fathers (Deut. 13:16; 32:50). Precisely speaking his soul went to Abraham's bosom in the upper Hades that was in the lower parts of the earth. His body was buried under God's special supervision.

From Moses' life we also get a hint that the glory man lost due to sin will be restored. We read from the scripture that Moses' face shone by communion with God and therefore he put a veil on his face whenever he spoke to the people (Ex. 34:33).

*"... if what is passing away was glorious, what remains is much more glorious" (II Cor. 3:7-12).*

If the Old Testament ministry was glorious the New Testament ministry is much more glorious. If in the ministry that passes away Moses' skin had shone, of the ministers who remain it is their inner eye that shines (Eph. 1:17). Since the inner eye of the spiritual ministers of the New Testament shines the fact that distinguishes the saints of excellence in the New Testament from the Old is that their body will be fully glorified in resurrection.

It was God's plan that Moses the first prophet of the Law and Elijah (John the Baptist) the last prophet should appear in glory. When Moses' body was buried most secretly by God under the leadership of Michael there arises a question why not the body of John the Baptist who was Elijah supposed to appear along with him was likewise buried. John the Baptist last prophet of the Law was beheaded by Herod. His disciples took his body and gave a burial after which they came and got the news to Jesus (Mtt. 14:1-12; MK. 6:14-29). Though there is proof that his body was buried we have no idea as to what Herodia did with his head.

Just as the devil contended about Moses' body the devil did not come to the scene to argue regarding the body of

John the baptist who was Elijah because at that time of execution Jesus the heavenly King was present in Galilee. The fact that Jesus was in Galilee at that time is evident from the Gospels.

After uttering these parables Jesus departed from there and came to his father's town [Joseph who belonged to the clan of David lived in the city of Galilee which was Nazareth (Lk. :1:26). This was the city known to be Jesus' hometown (Mtt. 13:33-58; Mk. 6:1-6)]. We read that Jesus came to the land of Galilee (Mtt. 13:53). We also read that Herod heard about the report about Jesus and the resultant perplexity and also about the death of John the Baptist (Mtt. 14:1-12).

*"And his head was brought on a platter and given to the girl..... Then his disciples came and took away the body and buried it, and went and told Jesus" (Mtt. 14:1-12).*

That it was after burying John's body that his disciples went and told Jesus about it becomes clear to us from Mtt 14:14 that Jesus departed from Galilee after that incident. John's disciples had buried his body at the command of Jesus the king of heaven. "Then He took them and went aside privately into a deserted place belonging to Bethsaida (Lk. 9:12). Departed from there" (Mtt.14:14)

We get clear evidences from the Bible that that Jesus was in Galilee his hometown at the time of John's death. Before Jesus who is the king of kings no power can stand. The head of John the Baptist the prophet of the most high, Herodias might have buried; in case if not whatever she might have done with it the creator God able to restore the head to the body was in the form of man on earth. Wasn't he? There is nothing too hard for Him. Just as Moses' body was buried, most secretly the scripture makes it clear that the body of Elijah (John) supposed to appear in glory was buried in the invisible presence of Jesus Christ and under his complete control.

If the devilish power raised a voice of triumph mowing down the head of the last prophet of the Old Testament; the triumph of the wicked was temporary. It didn't take long for the head of the wicked one to be crushed. Jesus Christ who came down from heaven to establish the New Testament through His death He crushed the head of Satan disarming the principalities and powers on the cross triumphing over them and making them an open spectacle (Col. 2:15). After the death of Moses and Elijah (John) who appeared along with Christ on the mount of transfiguration, their souls went into the Upper Hades of the lower parts of the earth. Their spirits by God's command had probably returned from there to their bodies and they resurrected and appeared in the cloud of glory on Mount Tabor.

What happened on the mount of transfiguration was a powerful demonstration of the kingdom of God; from this we get a fairly good idea as to what the kingdom of God is (Mtt.17:1-8; Mk. 9:1-8; Lk. 9:28-37). Now let us examine what Mathew, Mark and Luke wrote about this.

The three gospel writers have written about the same subject. Jesus took along those who would not taste death till they saw the kingdom of God to a high mountain to pray. They were: Peter, James and John. They had ascended the mount on exactly the sixth day after Jesus said these words. Luke wrote eight days rather approximately. While Jesus was praying there, He transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun and His clothes became as white as the light. Moses and Elijah appeared to Him, talking with Him regarding the possible death of Jesus in Jerusalem. The first and the last prophets (Moses, John) of the Law had not talked about any other topic than the bodily sacrifice of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins of which all the Old Testament prophets had testified. To which the apostles who were counted as pillars of the New Testament church namely Peter, James and John became witnesses either.

We see Peter and those with him were heavy with sleep, and see Peter's suggestion if he could make three tents, one for Jesus, one for Moses and one for Elijah. At that time a cloud came and overshadowed them and a voice came out of the cloud saying, "This is my beloved son. Hear Him!" Moses and Elijah disappeared leaving Jesus and the disciples there.

What connection did this event have with the Kingdom of God? First of all it tells us who all will be in the Kingdom of God. The triune God who manifested at the beginning of the public ministry of Jesus appeared once again at the end of His ministry. From this incident, we can understand that the presence of the triune God and the saints of both the old and new Testaments will be in the Kingdom of God.

The Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Heaven are one. The prayer 'thy kingdom come, and will be done on earth as it is in heaven' will be fulfilled only when sin and death is eliminated from the earth forever and the heavenly state devoid of sin and death will be completely brought about. The Lord who began the work of the Kingdom of God will likewise complete it. God's children in spiritual sense are now in the Kingdom of God. Those who have become partakers of eternal life having received remission of sin by the blood of Jesus Christ are no doubt in the Kingdom of God in spiritual sense.

The new heaven and new earth of the same heavenly state devoid of sin and death will be ushered only after the two main appearances of Christ on the earth. Of them the first has already taken place with the coming of Christ to the world as the Saviour of the world to take away sin (I John 3:5). With the glorious appearance of Christ i.e., the second coming, Christ will establish the Kingdom of God on earth and after the millennium (Thousand year reign), death (Satan) will be eliminated forever and the kingdom will be handed over to God the Father.

*"For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be destroyed is death."  
(1Cor.15:25-28).*

*"Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men.....there shall be no more death, nor sorrow nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."  
(Rev. 21:3-5).*

We have already seen that the divine trinity appeared on the mount of transfiguration and that there would be saints of both the Old and New Testaments in the Kingdom of God. Moses and Elijah the first and the last prophets of the Law represent all the great saints of the Old Testament and those worthy of eternal life. We have already noted that in the Upper Hades i.e., in the lower parts of the earth there were those who belonged to two ranks. Moses represented the excellent rank of the Old Testament while Elijah represented those worthy of eternal life.

The three representatives of the New Testament Church represent three ranks. They are such as those who belong to the pure Virgin the Bride, the Virgins, and those who are martyred (during the time of Anti-Christ). Thus those who will be dwelling with God eternally having been resurrected in the kingdom of God will consist of five spiritual ranks, three of the ranks of the New Testament Church and two of the Old Testament Church.

Given below is the brief description of the after-death ranks that are in the Kingdom of God gathered in from all mankind on earth.

**Those who are in the first heaven: - The excellent of the Old Testament saints.**

**Those who are in the second heaven: - the virgins of the New Testament Church.**

**Those who are in the third heaven: - those who are the Pure Virgins.**

**Those who are beneath the earth: - the Martyrs during the rule of Antichrist.**

**Those who are in the Sea: - the heirs of eternal life.**

What is given here is a brief description of those who belong to the five ranks that are in the kingdom of God; it is given in order to prove that the five persons who were on the holy mountain represent five ranks. You can see detailed study about these ranks in the following chapters.

The second revelation we get about the kingdom of God is the statement of the Apostle Peter "I will make three tents" that is said with the spiritual far-sightedness. These three 'tents' represent three parts in the kingdom of God. This statement was not Peter's babbling that he uttered awaking from sleep. When the Lord's face shone like the sun the knowledge of God's glory on his face illumined the inner eyes of those who were with him. "..... ...Who has shown in our hearts to give the light of his knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (II Cor. 4:6).

It was the divine knowledge by which they were able to recognize Moses and Elijah who appeared on the mountain. The Apostles of Jesus had the knowledge of past-present-future times. Knowledge of the past, because they could recognize Moses and Elijah; of the present, because Peter vehemently said that Jesus was the Son of God; of the future, because Peter had the vision of three parts in the new heaven and the new earth corresponding to three tents.

Of the three tents that Peter said he would make for the Lord was about the heavenly Jerusalem, which is the temple of the living God. The reason why Peter avoided them was that he had the revelation about the mystery that in the tent of Jesus (temple) all the saints belonging to the pure virgins including Peter were included. In the tent of Christ His bride is also there. The tent ascribed to Moses represents the holy place. In the holy place those excellent

of the Old Testament saints and virgins of the New Testament church belong. The third tent ascribed to Elijah represents the courtyard that is the New Heaven and New Earth where righteousness dwells. Among these all the saints whose names are written in the book of life and who are worthy of Eternal life are included.

**The vision of the Kingdom of God yet to be completed**

Three Tents	Represented by	Those included
Of Christ Jesus	The Temple that is the most Holy Place in the city of New Jerusalem	Pure Virgin
Of Moses	The Holy Place in the City of New Jerusalem	Virgins of The new testament church and the old testament champions
Of Elijah	The New Heaven and New Earth (Courtyard)	Those worthy of eternal life

Thus the Holy Spirit has revealed to us the spiritual mysteries hidden behind what was manifested on the mount of transfiguration. As the kingdom of God will be established on this earth in its pristine glory, there will be the presence of the triune God as Father, Son and the Holy Spirit in the New Heaven and New Earth and those five ranks who emerge from among men as worthy and the three parts such as the **temple, holy place and the courtyard** as well. In the temple which is the Christ there will be those belonging to such as is the Pure Virgin the bride. This is the temple of the Holy Spirit wherein the Father dwells. In it the Father will surely abide. In the Holy Place there will be the Virgins of the New Testament Church and the excellent group of the Old Testament Saints. Those who emerge worthy of eternal life from the beginning of the world to the end of the Millennium will live in the courtyard that is the New heaven and New earth.

Moses and Elijah after appearing in glory returned to the very same place where they had risen from, ie. Upper Hades. When the Lord rescued the captive and ascended

on high, their souls also accompanied them to the appropriate ranks.

As we have understood that Enoch will not be one of the two witnesses appearing during the Tribulation period, neither will Moses and Elijah appear. The reasons are that the mission meant to be fulfilled through them was completed and that there is no single prophecy in the Bible both Old Testament and New Testament left to be fulfilled regarding the reappearance of Moses and Elijah (John) to this earth again.

#### **4. Those who re-lived on earth after death and resurrection.**

In the Bible there are some strange incidents recorded in which some individuals after death were brought back to life and they re-lived normal life on earth as before and again died. None of them was given a glorified body when they resurrected.

The modern science might be able to make a dead body function through artificial methods and could make it talk like a living man. However, neither science nor satanic forces can bring a human soul that departed from the body through death back to life. The reason is that all human souls departing from here are under God's complete control.

Let us examine some scriptural records of events in which the dead came back to life.

1. Elijah reviving the son of the widow at Zarephat (I Kings 17:21-22)
2. Elisha raising the son of Shunammite (2 Kings 4:32-37).
3. The dead body of a young man gets revived by the touch of Elisha's bone (2 Kings 13:21).
4. Jesus raising the son of the widow of Nain (Luke 7:11-15).

5. Jesus raising the daughter of Jairus (Luke 8:49-56).
6. Jesus raising the dead Lazarus after 4 days (John 11:38-44).
7. Tabitha raised by Peter (Acts 9:36-43).
8. Euticus raised by Paul (Acts. 20:8-12).

Only He who has power over life can raise one to life after death. In all the eight incidents mentioned above resurrection was by the power of God. In such strange incidents in which the dead come back to life, the soul that departed from the body returns to the same body and after coming to life, they lead a normal life and later die again. Such people that came back to life have not related their experiences after death nor have such things been recorded in the Scripture. Therefore importance need not be given to such tales or testimonies as are told to have been by those returning from death. Why because Abraham replied to the rich man that even if a man from among the dead comes back and tells they will not believe. Those who reject the Word of God will never accept the words of anyone no matter how great he is. If such testimonies bring about edification, it is well and good. But on the contrary, if it is fairy tale or myth unsupported by scripture, it may take the form of heresy attaching undue importance, which cannot be recommended in the Church.

Only the Lord Jesus Christ can disclose the mysteries of the heaven of heavens. The account of Paul the apostle's being taken up to the third heaven (2Cor. 12:2-4) is provided so that the spiritual mysteries of heaven the Paradise hidden till then should be revealed by the Spirit to the Church of God.

It will be better for the people of God to be aware of the fact that we don't need any more supplementary epistles or Gospels or after death experiences of anybody as a bible study guide or faith building basics since Bible the Word

of God is complete in writing and perfect in contents. These days, we need the divine understanding to help us overcome such devilish attacks.

In the eight examples on subject of those who relived after death, all the seven are those resurrections before being buried. But only Lazarus of Bethany who was dear to the Lord was brought back to life from a stinking state on the fourth day after being dead and buried. Soon after death, the angels took his soul to Abraham's bosom in the upper hades. Waiting for the Lord for a long time and not finding Him the dear and near ones gave burial to Lazarus in desperation and sorrow over the loss of the deceased for ever on the earth. When all their hopes had died, the Lord who makes impossible possible reached the tomb and called Lazarus back to life; then his rotten body was restored to the former state by the voice of the Lord, and his soul was escorted back to the body by the heavenly angels. Lazarus emerged alive in the same fashion that he was buried.

Though we do not know exactly when Lazarus died afterwards, there is nothing wrong to believe that he had probably died after Jesus' resurrection and Church establishment. If so, when he died first, his soul went down to the upper hades and returned to life after four days; and if we suppose he died the second time after the Church was established, he had the better privilege of being transferred to the heavenly paradise.

**A man takes birth as man only once there is no one who was born more than once. Rebirth** (physical) is impossibility on the basis of scripture. But man may be subject to death more than once, and there are instances of being translated without death.

When an individual died and resurrected, returns to life, the spiritual condition is not the same in the latter life that was in the former life. The soul of the particular individual will be transferred to the kind of after death

rank that suits the spiritual condition that the individual maintained at the time of departure of the soul from body.

As we consider the case of resurrection, it is not only the instances recorded in the Bible of dead individuals returning to life. In the New Testament, God has given authority to the disciples to raise the dead! From the first century onwards so many individuals have come back to life in this way surely departed or will depart from this earth through death or other means.

## **5. THE SAINTS RESURRECTED AT JESUS' DEATH**

*“and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many” (Mtt. 27:52-53).*

Since the identity of those who rose again has not been revealed clearly except the statement that they rose and appeared to many after the resurrection of Christ, we find it difficult to reach a conclusion regarding this at the outset. Besides, nowhere else in the Bible we have mention of this phenomenon which makes it more difficult.

Since we cannot produce scriptural reference to prove this, it would be advisable to analyse the circumstantial evidences and reach the most acceptable of notions in this respect.

Well, the main points as we analyze the circumstantial evidences one by one are given below:

1. While we read that “they went into the (holy city) Jerusalem and appeared to many, we can understand that they were contemporaries and acquaintants of those in Jerusalem.
2. They were not resurrected with glorified body. This is just a resurrection of those who were dead.
3. During the Lord’s public ministry Jesus had not only 12 apostles but had many more disciples who had followed Him.

4. Though many were dear to Him, only Lazarus' name is mentioned.
5. If we say that some of the dearest of Jesus' disciples had died before the death and resurrection of Jesus, it may not be a heresy or deviation from truth.
6. No other instance is mentioned in the Gospels like that of Lazarus as dearest of Jesus being raised to life.
7. It will not be a fantasy if we think that by the miracle of Jesus calling Lazarus back to life, the faith of the followers of Christ had multiplied greatly; there were those extremist believers in Jerusalem who believed that Jesus was able to raise Lazarus no matter how many days passed after being dead and buried. Through the raising of Lazarus at Bethany Heaven declared to the world many things: that Jesus is the resurrection and life and that with physical death life does not end and at the voice of the Lord all sons of men gone into the dust will return time to time.

*"Therefore the people, who were with Him when He called Lazarus out of his tomb and raised him from the dead, bore witness" (Jn. 12:17).*

*"For this reason the people also met Him, because they heard that He had done this sign." (Jn. 12:18).*

*"Now a great many of the Jews knew that He was there; and they came, not for Jesus sake only, but that they might also see Lazarus, whom He had raised from the dead." (Jn. 12:19).*

The above mentioned verses are evidences that Lazarus' resurrection had caused a great havoc in Israel. The reason why the crowd that came to Jerusalem for the festival met Jesus singing Hosanna and shouted "blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord King of Israel" (Jn. 12:13), was that most of the thither-to-held human notions had been shattered. **With the raising of Lazarus, the**

**people viewed a strong King able to defeat even death in Jesus Christ. People had hailed Jesus not after the death; but even before death people were already amazed by the wondrous works that he did.**

When Lazarus was raised from the dead, those who were with him at that time gave a testimony which had stirred up Jerusalem. Seeing the popularity of Jesus that was beyond the imagination of the rulers and religious hierarchy, they were frightened. This had added fresh impetus to their destructive schemes and both the parties had hatched out conspiracies to kill Jesus.

Their inward fear is manifested through this sentence "you see that you are accomplishing nothing. Look, the world has gone after Him!" (Jn. 12:9). Anyone who is familiar with the world history can realize that these words were not simply uttered. The triumphal ride that Jesus took across Jerusalem that day was also a public declaration of the heavenly project of the King Jesus to set the mankind free from the bondage of Satan and power of tradition. Millions of people got forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ and attained eternal life and greater spiritual positions! The devilish world is falling apart everyday while the Kingdom of God is leaping into progress; no power can stop the forward movement of the divine project.

While coming towards the close of the Lord's public ministry, though the enmity to Jesus was mounting up, the faith inside those who followed Jesus was on the rise. By this we have clear proof that there were staunch disciples in those days that had trust and intimacy to Jesus.

The sick Lazarus had faith that Jesus would come and heal him. When he was nearing death, his weak eyes likely to be dying were straining to look for Jesus. Finally, Jesus was not seen, the time came to breathe his last, eyes were closed and gave up his spirit; all the while he was having faith that Jesus would come to raise him back to life as He

did to others. He who believes in God would never be put to shame. The Lord who fulfils the desire of his servants demonstrated it at the tomb of Lazarus for the world.

There were probably at least some followers in Jerusalem like Lazarus who became sick and died and buried though they believed in Jesus. When they died, they and their relatives too had the faith that Jesus would come and raise to life like He did to Lazarus. In all probability they had been buried with strong faith on Jesus that He would raise them to life. During the public ministry, we don't see anymore instance in the Bible when Jesus raised anyone like Lazarus.

What happened in Jerusalem was the fulfilment of those who cherished the faith in their bones while dying that Jesus would raise them to life. It is recorded that many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised." Why because those who were justified by faith in Jesus Christ and their sanctification was completed by the shed blood of Jesus Christ's sacrifice.

At that time there were those in Jerusalem who had cherished the faith about their dear ones to be retrieved by resurrection. "Women received their dead raised to life" (Heb. 11:35). That was also an occasion when some women testified to their receiving the dear ones who were dead raised to life.

As a matter of fact this event did not catch public attention because it was eclipsed by the greater event i.e., the resurrection of the King of kings, and the catchy news spread everywhere that breaking the Roman imperial seal, He triumphed over death and appeared to many.

Well, we have so far discussed about who might have been the saints raised to life at the death of Jesus Christ and its circumstances. Further on, we need to look for more scriptural proof to substantiate this view point.

*"so it was, as they were burying a man, that suddenly they spied a band of raiders; and they put the man in the*

*tomb of Elisha; and when the man was let down and touched the bones of Elisha, he revived and stood on his feet” (2 Kings 13:21).*

In this incident we see that the bones of Elisha the deceased prophet of God had power to revive the lifeless body of a dead man. If so, at the touch of the life giving power of Christ to the earth, it is a matter without controversy that the bones of some dear ones who were asleep were revived with flesh and sinews on the bones and covered with skin and in a twinkling of an eye their souls being called from Abraham’s bosom in the Upper Hades, some were resurrected.

Let me illustrate how the resurrection of those saints happened: two thousand years ago in Jerusalem city which is the centre of earth, Jesus being crucified in the cross at Golgotha shedding his blood even to the last drop cried out saying “It is finished” and gave up his spirit. At that moment the great life-giving vital force of Jesus entered into the lower parts of earth and touched the bones of some of the saints and resurrected them to life, because they died cherishing the faith that even though they died Jesus would resurrect them to life just as he resurrected Lazarus.

Though they were resurrected at 3 o’clock (9<sup>th</sup> hour) the time of Jesus’ death on Friday, they remained inside the tombs till the resurrection of the Lord on Sunday morning. **When the government of that day made the tomb of Christ secure by Roman seal, no power could prevent some tombs of the saints from opening and saints from coming out.** The saints resurrected this way had risen with physical body. They lived and died again and were transferred to their spiritual rank.

Thank God that the mystery of the strange event which is the resurrection of the saints at the death of Christ has been unfolded.

In this chapter titled “Those who are in the upper Hades” we have discussed about the location of all the saints right from Abel who gave up his life at the beginning of the world up to the death of Christ as to where they were after death and where they are at present, as well as the strange events that occurred during the same period. In the next chapter titled “Those in heaven” we will deal with the topic of the location of the saints right from the death of Jesus Christ up to the beginning of the rule of Antichrist. Let’s proceed to the next chapter for it with prayer.

### **Lesson Summary**

- Abel was the first man to give up his life. Immediately, by the command of the Lord the heavenly angels carried his soul to the upper Hades beneath the earth.
- After death, the human souls by no means, migrate from one to another or wander along. They, in fact, reach their after-death ranks.
- It was Jacob the patriarch who first of all indicated the place where the righteous souls reached with the common name ‘Grave’ or ‘Hades’.
- It is the Lord Jesus Christ, the Master of all souls, who has given us a clear picture of the Hades beneath the earth (Based on the life of rich man and Lazarus).
- The upper Hades and the place of torment (the lower Hades) are separated by a gulf and the upper Hades is the place of comfort for the righteous souls whereas the lower Hades is the place of torment.
- Jesus Christ after death went down to the upper Hades and rescuing all the righteous souls from there. He ascended on high. Hence the upper Hades is vacant now.
- All men have eternity. God has given freedom of choice to all during this earthly life to choose where one should

be. When one has reached one's after-death-rank, by God's irrevocable law it is not transferable.

- All human souls transferred through death from here are under God's control. Only God and His servants have authority over them to bring them back. But Satan and his emissaries can only create artificiality making ditto appearances of the dead persons.
- Among those born on the earth, very few are translated without seeing death. Of them, Enoch went to the upper Hades and Korah and his group were transferred to the place of torment in the lower Hades.
- Those manifested in the world without genealogy especially Melchizedek and Elijah are heavenly angels appeared in human form as shadow. In the New Testament they took birth in substance as the great high priest Jesus Christ and John the Baptist the prophet of the most high.
- The souls of Moses and Elijah who appeared on the mount of transfiguration by God's command were escorted by God's angels from the upper Hades to their bodies and they appeared in clouds on the mountain and returned to the same place as before.
- In the resurrections after death they had just returned to life in the same manner they had departed. None of them had returned to life in the resurrection body.
- Those saints who were resurrected at the death of Christ Jesus had not come out of the tomb in resurrection body. Here also the same thing happened. The soul returned to the body on the same way as was before. They were also dear to the Lord even as Lazarus who was raised after four days of death.

## Chapter - II

### THOSE WHO ARE IN HEAVEN

*“And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying: “Blessing and honour and glory and power be to Him who sits on the throne, to the Lamb forever and ever!” (Rev. 5:13).*

We have already discussed that all the saints who died and were transferred from Abel down to the atoning death of Christ on the cross of Calvary went to the Upper Hades underneath the earth and they belonged to two ranks. What we are discussing in this chapter under the title ‘Those who are in Heaven’ is not about those who are in the heaven of heavens which is explained in the book of Revelation chapters 4 and 5. The descriptions in fourth chapter are about the throne of God in the heaven of heavens and those who are of the Bride Church of the Lamb (the Pure Virgin) who has been taken up there.

In Revelation Chapter 5 we see a scroll which has seven seals on it which no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth is able to open or look at it. Then we see the Lamb that was slain who could open the scroll and loose its seals. When all fall down before the throne and worship, the slain lamb does not fall down and worship. Here we understand the equality of God the Father with God the Son.

*“For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers... against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.” (Eph. 6:12).*

Since spiritual hosts of wickedness are not in the heaven of heavens, it is proven beyond doubt that the heavenly places mentioned here is not the heaven where the throne of God is.

The ‘Heaven’ indicated in Rev. 5:13 speaks of Eden the garden of God which is in the sky. Before the creation of the earth, God had created the sky and all that was in it. Lucifer and group had belonged to the host of the sky there (Isa. 14; Ezk. 28). These two chapters explain about it. Lucifer and the group puffed up with pride had fallen from heaven and were cut to the ground. They were not fallen from the heaven of heavens. In paradise the garden of God, God’s presence and the creatures that worship God are still there. Its clear evidences are available in the Scripture.

*“To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.” (Rev. 2:7).*

The paradise of God spoken of here is about Eden the garden of God that is above. The experience of Paul’s life also makes it clearer.

*“I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago..... such a one was caught up to the **third heaven**... he was caught up **into Paradise**.” (2 Cor. 12:2-5).*

These two phrases such as “to the third heaven” and “into Paradise” have disclosed so many important divine mysteries regarding after-death-ranks by the Holy Spirit for our study. Those who are made perfect in Christ like Paul after death reach the third heaven in Paradise. By the specific saying of third heaven, it is clear that in Paradise i.e., heaven, there are these two other parts such as first heaven and second heaven also.

The main topic in this chapter titled 'Those who are in heaven' is about those who are included in New Jerusalem the city of God.

All the souls of the saints who are excellent that are transferred right from the inception of the New Testament Church to the beginning of the rule of Anti-Christ go to rest after death in Paradise which is heaven. Now Paradise is divided into three such as those who are in the first heaven, those who are in the second heaven and those who are in the third heaven.

## **I. THOSE WHO ARE IN THE FIRST HEAVEN**

*".... Then he said to Jesus, Lord, remember me when you come into your kingdom." And Jesus said to him, 'Assuredly I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise.'" (Lk.23:44)*

All the souls of the Old Testament right from the beginning of the world after death went down to the lower parts of the earth till the inception of the New Testament with the death of Christ on Calvary. Jesus Christ the Saviour of the world came to the world so that He might rescue mankind from the bondage of death and Hades. The verse quoted above is the assurance Jesus gives to the Penitent sinner who was the worst criminal likely to be transferred to the hell which is death. Here is the indication of the spiritual position of him who accepted Jesus. It is a sudden exaltation from his eternal doom, the destiny of death that is hell (the last of all cursed rank) to Paradise that is heaven.

From the parable of Rich man and Lazarus in the previous chapter we got the mystery unfolded of the Hades which is the lower part of the earth. In the book of Genesis what man lost was access to Paradise. But see here the fulfilment of it (Paradise entrance) not as a shadow or in a parable but Jesus gives it directly to a sordid sinner who repented in the Gospel that is the New Testament.

Among those who were born till that time the first individual to get entrance into heaven (Paradise) was the malefactor who was crucified with Christ. At the beginning of the world when the soul of Abel the righteous man cried out as he was murdered, the Creator God did not come down from heaven to earth. The heavenly angels rather carried his soul by the command of God to the upper Hades in the lower part of the earth. But at the beginning of the end of the world (the end of the world beginning with the coming of Jesus Christ and closes with the glorious appearance of his second coming), the creator God manifested on the earth in the form of man. When two malefactors representing the whole humanity were hung on two wooden crosses on either side with one cross in the middle on which Jesus the saviour was hung.

Being hung on the cross in the middle, nearing death, Jesus the Saviour opened the new way for the believing sinner to enter Paradise. The speciality of the New Testament that it is not the shadow but substance, is on account of the fact that the creator God entered into human sphere by taking birth like humans and went through all things including death except sin.

Jesus who would save man from their sins was born in Bethlehem according to Scriptures. He was brought up in Nazareth. At the end of His public ministry He died according to the scriptures. The holy blood of the Lamb of God the anointed Christ atoned for the sins of the mankind. He offered Himself as a pleasing sacrifice to God tasting death. That is the fulfilment of the New Testament which is the substance. It has been recorded in the Old Testament beginning from Genesis to Malachi as a shadow.

Jesus Christ substantiated the fact on the cross clearly that He came to the world to save sinners even by saving one at His death time. While the death of Christ on the cross and resurrection was the beginning of the fulfilment of heavenly projects that were since the world began, it

was also the beginning of destruction of all the diabolical schemes of Satan forever. When Christ the Saviour of the world was lifted up on a cross in the middle and two malefactors on each cross on either side, both the traitors under the same condemnation had represented the whole world.

*“There is no difference, all have sinned and come short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23).*

This scripture shows the picture of the spiritual blindness of all the mankind. Similarly the middle position of Christ’s cross at equi-distance shows the fact that Jesus the light of the world is available to all equally.

Jesus Christ is the way of salvation to all mankind; there is no respect of persons in this. Anyone can receive the salvation of soul; freely through faith though salvation was possible to both the traitors equally, each of them went to a different destiny at the end. Just as everyone is born in sin without any difference the way of salvation through Jesus Christ is prepared freely for all without any difference. God has revealed to the world the scripture that rebirth which is the salvation of souls can be obtained through the way of faith.

The Lord who at the beginning of creation, started the work by separating light from darkness, finished the work on Calvary separating death and life. When one of the cross-sharers with Christ repented and obtained worthiness to enter the Paradise, the other man, without having any internal change, was thrown into the hell which is death (the last and cursed after death rank).

When so many are caught up by the vicious cycle of rituals for access to heaven, the declaration of Christ to the penitent thief proved on the cross that entry to Paradise (heaven) cannot be had by human efforts. All the four Gospel writers have dealt with the Supreme sacrifice of atonement that Christ performed in Jerusalem which is

the center of earth. Jesus our Lord had suffered the worst and the cruellest persecution for our salvation that the world had not yet inflicted to anyone nor would do anymore. Naturally, the civilized society treats any criminal who is sentenced to death with human consideration. But two thousand years ago ghastly devilish assault had been perpetrated at Jesus in Jerusalem. A prophetic description of the incident was given through David by the Holy Spirit in Ps. 22.

*"... many bulls have surrounded me, strong bulls of Bashan have encircled me. They gape at me with their mouths, like a raging and roaring lion..." (Ps. 22:6-18).*

In spite of finding no fault in Jesus, by the pressure of the Jews Pilate handed Him over to flogging and delivered Him to be crucified (Mtt. 27:26). Then the soldiers of the governor mocked, scorned and spat on Him and placed a crown of thorns on the head and struck Him on the head. Thus they did to Him all that they could. Finally, they had Him bear the heavy wooden cross regardless of His mental agony and exhaustion. Way up Golgotha, they crucified Him on three nails. To Him who was thirsty the world did not give even a drop of water to drink. The heavenly Father, by giving over His darling Son to the most merciless death for the salvation of mankind, demonstrated His love to us ward.

In spite of going through the most excruciating pain, Jesus did not curse or abuse even once. An utterance of prayer went to the Father from His lips 'Father forgive them for they do not know what they are doing (Lk. 23:34).

Such loving words for the sinful men touched the heart of one of the hard-hearted evil men. It is when the Word of God touches the heart of a person that the conviction comes inside a person of sin, righteousness and judgement.

The first thing that the penitent thief realized was that he was a sinner, not just him but the other person with

him also. He realized that their suffering on the cross was due reward of their deeds and shared it with his comrade. St.Luke has recorded about it thus:

*“Then one of the criminals who were hanged blasphemed Him, saying, “If you are the Christ, save yourself and us”. But the other, answering, rebuked him, saying, “Do you not even fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong. Then he said to Jesus, ‘Lord, remember me when you come into your Kingdom.” (Lk. 23:39-42).*

It was a great change that came into the life of the penitent thief. He reached very close to Jesus in Spirit. Therefore, inspiration arose from within to accept Him as the King of kings as well as to pray to Him. **When he who was the sinner accepted Jesus the One who justifies, he was saved from the judgement that was to come and became worthy of access to Paradise.**

Peter, who openly admitted to the Son of God, the Saviour of the world that he was a Sinner became the pillar of the Church. It was self-realization that he was not worthy to walk with Jesus that made him the first among the apostles. Those who humble themselves are the ones who are exalted in the presence of God. Just as the spiritual elevation had happened in Peter at the beginning of Jesus’ ministry at the end of His ministry also on the cross someone was spiritually exalted. There at the cross all scornfully called Him ‘hail, Jesus O’ King’, the one who really accepted Him as the King at that moment of writhing in pain obtained the access to Paradise for the first time.

The world thought that there ended Jesus. In the midst of increasing scornfulness, the one who had faith increased put forth his request to remember him as Jesus would return as King, which was recognized by Jesus as acknowledgement among scornful grins. Jesus’ reply to

this 'Today you shall be with me in Paradise was the most excellent utterance the Son of God that none in the world had heard yet.

Those who recognize the Messiah do not accept the Word of God the Living Bread in their hearts for momentary gratification by bread crumbs, such people accept Jesus as Lord, Saviour, King and all in all in their life. The penitent thief appears to be the most fortunate person who took due advantage of the opportunity when so many while away the opportunity to get God's blessings. In his life so far, all the decisions that he had taken were wrong and punishable, but this one decision that he took at the end on the cross was the most excellent. That had freed him from all the sins and burdens. Though his hands and legs were nailed, he was happy inside with all the clutches of sin broken. The two thieves hanging on either side of Jesus portray the true picture of the two aspects of the world. On one side, the man receiving forgiveness from Jesus was experiencing solace while on the other side the unrepentant man even at the point of death passes away into damnation hobnobbing with the devil.

The one who accepted the Son of God as King by faith is proceeding on to eternity enriched, while the impenitent having despised the Son of God is departing to eternal damnation suffering the loss of everything. "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." That man who found God real had fallen in the list of the blessed obtaining the ticket to embark on the trip to heaven the Paradise. In the modern world, man has been able to undertake interplanetary travel to other planets by scientific achievements. But two thousand years ago what happened on Calvary was embark on a great travel project of believing souls after death up to heavenly paradise.

In order to attain divine salvation, adequate knowledge of the Scripture is a must. The man who possessed entry

into heaven at the cross in a matter of three hours didn't obtain it by physical efforts. Being on the cross, we know, he could not afford to go on pilgrimages, pledge vows or votive offerings or anything like that. Neither had he taken immersion baptism nor did he eat anything to revive himself. Though many were including mother Mary and others were around him at the time of death, he did not make any pleas to them. He did not ask anyone who was dead for salvation, but he asked only Jesus the Lord who was living no wonder, he obtained it readily.

The matter is very clear that the penitent thief had entered into heaven (Paradise) though he had not got baptized nor worshipped the Lord taking a separate stand from the world. Therefore quite a good number of people believe that all the above things are not necessary. The basic teachings of the New Testament Church have not been changed or amended for anybody. As a matter of fact, the baptism after faith came into force only after the Church was established. By a simple logic, the penitent thief who got saved at the cross was not a member of the New Testament Church. Is it not commendable to yield to obey God's commandment when we have opportunity? Our love to God is demonstrated through our obedience. Breaking the legs of both of them, the soldiers had removed the bodies (Jn. 19:31-32). At their death, each of them departed to different destinations, one saw off to Paradise with the Lord while the other saw off to death with Satan.

*"But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory, which none of the rulers of this age knew for had they known, they could not have crucified the Lord of Glory."  
(I Cor. 2:7-8).*

The Lord of glory came down to the earth void of glory and got crucified so that He might return the glory to the mankind who had lost it. It was the divine mystery hidden before the world began. Those who tried to know Jesus

the Saviour of the world by the human wisdom could not be successful. Though the people of Israel looked forward to the King of Jews, they could not grasp the Lion born in the tribe of David. Its reason was nothing but that they put their intellect into it. The Jews who were well acquainted with the history of such strong and valiant kings as David did not see things occurring as expected. Jesus' aversion to carrying out any plans to liberate them from the yoke of Roman Empire caused doubt in them. When they got satisfied with the multiplied loaves and fishes and they saw many miracles like raising of Lazarus after 4 days, they sang Hosanna probably thinking that it would be better to make Him King. But they soon changed their mind in line with the High priests just because they saw the helpless condition of Jesus outwardly after arrest.

As soon as the news spread about Jesus' arrest and retention, the majority of people changed their mind. They also thought that there was no more hope left in Him. They soon forgot all the miracles they had seen so far. They sang Hosanna once but with the same mouth they shouted along the streets saying to eliminate Him. Here we see the double standards of man. Most men have a weak disposition of loose mind, changing views every now and then. There was always a band of followers with Jesus following him sincerely till the end. The penitent thief who accepted Him publically, those who gave Him a honourable burial and the bereft disciples and so on are examples to this. **Only those in whose heart the word of God fell will stand firm others will take flight.**

We have now seen the background in which the change of mind of people who had wanted to make Jesus King. That generation could not understand about Jesus the Lamb of God who did not utter a word when the Roman soldiers mocked and flogged.

The Prophet Isaiah had written about it in the Spirit of prophecy long time ago:

*"He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a Lamb.....For He was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgressions of my people. He was stricken." (Isa. 53:7-8).*

The people who could not grasp the divine prophecies had rejected Him. **It is not astonishing that they thought it better to kill such a weak one than make Him King, the situation even today would be the same- most people are inclined to heroism and signs and miracles not to divine knowledge.** It is not that signs and wonders are not in the New Testament Church. They are all with the intent of confirming the Word of God (Mk.16:17).

On the contrary, the signs and wonders done with the view of weakening the word of God are false and spurious. It was already foretold by the Lord that such things would happen (Mtt. 24:24; 2Thess. 2:9-12).

A spiritual war was fought on Calvary. When the world and Satan had afflicted the Lord's body very cruelly, the Spirit inside Him was very strong. The one born as the seed of woman had crushed the head of the snake the old serpent and triumphed over the evil forces on the cross. **Though Jesus seemed to be weak and exhausted before the world, He was not weak.** He bound the strong one and disarmed one by one. If they struck Jesus' head with the reed, the Lord had crushed the mastermind head of the devil. If they had placed a thorn-twisted crown on His head, Jesus had stripped off the crown of authority from the devil's head which had power over death. Thus on Calvary that day complete defeat of the Satanic Empire was carried out. The mission that God the Father had entrusted to the Son was to overcome evil. The reason why we say that it was complete defeat of the devil because the Lord had fulfilled everything on the cross without thwarting the divine principle. Satan and the evil forces exalted themselves, Jesus humbled Himself and became obedient even to the death on the cross (Philp. 2:7-8).

Though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered, and it was after having been perfected that He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him (Heb. 5:8-9).

There are those who teach that it was not Jesus but somebody else was crucified. As we examine the incidents in relation to crucifixion one by one, we can thoroughly establish the fact that it was none other than Christ. During the long hours of cruel persecutions, both on the way of the cross and while hanging on the cross for six hours, **Jesus was fully conscious** till the end. He neither went into comma nor was delirious at any time. Jesus breathed His last at the last utterance of the seven sayings 'it is finished', all the while consciously uttering each of the seven sayings in order to fulfil the scriptures. While we compare with an average man who falls unconscious by a strong slap on the cheek the truth becomes all the more vivid that it was the Son of God Himself in the form of man suffering afflictions in the body, died.

The reason why we are long focused on this topic 'those who are in the first heaven' is because it has much to do with the incidents related to the death of Jesus. When Jesus cried out with a loud voice and gave up His spirit, the following three things happened.

1. At the death of the Holy One who was sinless and perfectly obedient to God, the devil and the wicked spiritual forces in the heavenly world could not block the way of the Spirit of Jesus to the heaven of heavens.
2. When the living force of Jesus descended from the middle to the lower part of the earth. The Hades and death (hell) trembled. The powers of death and Hades and the devil could not afford to stand before Him. They were defeated before Christ Jesus. The key of death and Hades was flung into Jesus' hands freeing all the people of upper Hades who were in bondage, Jesus ascended on high when the lower world forces could not block the upward march of the heaven-bound group. **Thus the**

**wicked forces in the lower world also were completely defeated.**

3. God the Father did not allow the lifeless body of Jesus to be left disowned on the cross. Though He was poor at his birth, He was with the rich at the death (Isa. 53:9). Joseph of Aremathea a rich and honourable man accompanied by Nicodemus a Jewish leader arranged for a decent burial according to Jewish custom. None was able to cause any hindrance to it or do anything to his body permeating to corruption. “.....Nor will you allow your Holy One to see corruption.” (Ps. 16:10). This scripture was fulfilled. The last attempt by the devil and his aides the world powers to hinder the resurrection of the Nazarene by any means had to lay down their weapons. Just as He had said while alive in body He would, He rose again on the third day breaking the Roman seal. With that event, all the powers of heaven, earth and Hell admitted their defeat altogether.

Let us also think here about the deliverance made available to the mankind by virtue of the atoning death of Jesus.

1. At the death of Jesus, sin was atoned for by the blood shed on Calvary. Those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ got rescued from the powers of death and Hades fully. It was the penitent thief, one of those who were crucified with Jesus who was the first to become worthy of entering the Paradise direct. The door of Paradise had been opened since then.
2. Many of those saints who had strong faith in the Lord Jesus Christ got resurrected and entered back into life. It thus proved that Jesus is sufficient not only for the affairs of this world but for everything including victory over death.
3. When Jesus rescued all saints from the beginning of the world to the sacrifice of the Lamb and ascended on high, He transferred those who were worthy of eternal life to the sea, and **those superior to them to the first heaven in Paradise.** To all the saints who died prior to the atoning death, Jesus bore

the glad tiding descending to the Upper Hades. Having thus rescued them from the bondage of Hades, He became the Lord of the dead also (Rom. 14:9, I Pet. 4:5).

With the perfect sacrifice of the Lamb, sin was atoned for and the aroma of life began to spread through the Gospel, the work that the Lord began to spread through the Gospel. The work that the Lord began gained momentum and is moving to its finishing line. The door opened to Paradise and to the Sea then has not yet been closed. The saints who died after the death of Jesus enter into the realm spanning from the sea to the first heaven in Paradise; after the establishment of Church the saints enter into the ranks such as second heaven and third heaven.

**To the first heaven** in Paradise; the most excellent saints who were in the Abraham's bosom of the Upper Hades **were entered**. Here souls reach even now but few in numbers. God established the New Testament Church on the fiftieth day i.e., the day of Pentecost. During these fifty days saints may have died. None of them descended to the lower part of the earth. Either they went to the Sea or to the first heaven. **Two thousand years have passed** since the Church was established; even then **so many** places and individuals remain unevangelized. All people in such places after death do not get transferred to the lowest hell and death as sinners. Until the resurrection takes place in the first heaven if anyone is found in God's sight **worthy to enter into the first heaven, such will enter into the first heaven in Paradise.**

The upper Hades is now empty; we have already seen that the Lord rescued all who were there. Those who reach the first heaven after death are those singers who will walk before Jesus the great King. They all will rest in the first heaven in Paradise till their resurrection takes place (at the beginning of Anti-Christ's rule). Taking part in the resurrection of the two witnesses they will be translated

to the heaven of heavens and will accompany the Lord and His Saints in the glorious appearance. More details have been given in the section of Resurrection-ranks. Thus the study is completed of the first heaven in Paradise where in are all the excellent ones of the Old Testament and others of similar experience if any. Now we will enter into the next topic of those who are in the second heaven.

## II. THOSE WHO ARE IN THE SECOND HEAVEN

*".... The virgins, her companions who follow her, shall be brought to you, with gladness and rejoicing they shall be brought; they shall enter the King's palace" (Ps. 45:14-15).*

We have discussed so far about the abode of all the souls from the beginning of the world to the establishment of the New Testament Church. When Jesus at His death on Calvary rescued the saints from the Upper Hades and ascended on high, those souls belonging to the rank who were given entry to the Sea, and the souls superior to them were given entry to the first heaven in Paradise. Those saints, who slept during the period between the Passion of Christ and the establishment of the Church in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, do not belong to the New Testament Church. Of those who slept during this period, the souls worthy of eternal life were given entry to the Sea and those worthy of Abraham's bosom were given entry to the first heaven in Paradise.

We are continuing to look at where is the abode of the saints after the establishment of the New Testament Church.

Only if we understand on the basis of scriptures what is the true Church that the Lord has established on earth can we understand about the saints that are in the Church.

*"You are Peter; I will build my Church on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it" (Mtt. 16:18).*

There are those who say that Jesus has not established Church here. There are others who think that the Church of God is built on Peter. As we carefully examine the above mentioned scripture, both these notions are wrong. The Master builder of the Church of God over which the gates of Hades shall not prevail is none other than God the Heavenly Father. The Scripture makes it very clear that it is not built on Peter which is the rock but on Christ the solid rock. Some have a distorted statement like this: "Peter, you are the rock; I will build my church on this rock." But it is the other way round. "You are Peter (piece of rock) I will build my Church on (Christ) this rock". The first stone that came near Jesus Christ the living stone and obtained life was Peter.

*"Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, you also as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house..." (I Pet. 2:4-7).*

*We also see in scripture. "Behold I lay in Zion a stone for a foundation, a tried stone, a precious stone... Whoever believes will not act hastily". (Isa. 28:16)*

The corner stone that Isaiah had fore-seen centuries before was not Peter but Jesus Christ. We have no prophecies in the Old Testament about Peter. The Rock that followed Israel was Christ (I Cor. 10:4). We can provide ample of evidences from Scripture such as this. **The living New Testament Church has been built on the living Rock (Jesus Christ). It is very clear that it was not on the rock that became a living stone (Peter).** Since the Church established by the Lord is still in existence, it is not a valid point saying that the New Testament Church has not been founded.

*"According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation". (I Cor. 3:10).*

What Paul has said here does not mean that he is the master builder of the living New Testament church of God

but that it hints at his pioneering into the unreached places and planting local congregations. Allowing us no room of doubt or misunderstanding, he has aptly stated the next verse.

*"For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (I Cor. 3:11).*

From this it is reaffirmed that the New Testament Church has been built on the Corner stone which is Jesus Christ the foundation.

*"Having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone." (Eph. 2:20)*

The reason why the apostles and prophets are said to be the foundation is because of being built together with Christ the foundation and being the foundation of the Walls of New Jerusalem the city of God. The fact being so, the apostles and prophets will not become the foundation of the Temple which is the Lamb. (Rev. 21:14, 21:22). As a matter of fact, the foundation of the building and the foundation of the Wall have no relation whatever, because it is not needed on earth. But regarding the Wall around the Temple the city of God being built and lowered from heaven, the foundation of the walls around four sides is built together with that of the Temple. It is required for its existence (I hope I will discuss more about in the study of the Book of Revelation).

The history of the New Testament church that the Lord founded by His blood from the beginning to the end is given uninterruptedly in the book of Acts Chapter 2 to the Revelation chapter 3 (3:22). Moreover, the Word of God gives evidence that a remnant of the Church will be on the earth till the end of the world. "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." (Mtt 28:18-20).

The Lord did not give such a command to Israel but to His disciples. **Only the New Testament Church has established has the baptism after faith in the name of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit.** Neither Israel nor any others have baptism after faith. The reason being that born again people are not among them. Even after the Lord descended to the mid-air and caught up from the universal Church “the Church of the first born’ (Pure Virgin)., there shall be a remnant of the Church on earth. It will be completed with the ingathering of His saints by the end time harvest. That is why our Lord Jesus spoke to His disciples that He would be with them always even to the end of the age. The world is not going to end with the coming of the Lord in the mid-air. The end of the age and the glorious appearance of the Lord will happen only after seven years.

The church established by the Lord (the Lord added to the Church daily those who were being saved-Acts2:47) will be on this earth from the time of the Lord’s first advent to the Second Advent till the divine projects are fulfilled. There are irrevocable administrative systems and basic principles of the New Testament Church. In God’s administration, it is not that all of us select God; but God selects those who must be part in this (Jn. 15:16; Deut. 7:6).

The New Testament Church is the divine organization built up with the living stones revived by the Holy Spirit upon the Chief foundation corner stone Jesus Christ the Son of God. Being founded by the Heavenly Father, foundation being Christ Jesus and the leading Spirit being the Holy Spirit; its members are from all nations (ethnic groups) joining to it by faith. Since the New Testament Church is not of human origin but divine, human laws, or teachings or practices have no place in the Church. As we have understood the spiritual constitution of the Church, we will also look at the seven principles of the Church that are basic doctrines. It is irrevocable and no one has the authority to bring the laws of the heavenly Church to naught, nor to amend adding to or deleting from it.

The history of the origin of the Church is given in Acts chapter 2. On the day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit descended from heaven and came upon the 120 disciples gathered in the upper room in Jerusalem like a mighty rushing wind and filled them. Those who were filled by the Holy Spirit spoke the mysteries of God in unknown tongues. Those who had gathered there were Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven (Acts 2:5). When the spirit-filled people spoke in tongues each of their languages, the hearers were astonished. Peter along with the eleven stood up and spoke to them concerning Jesus Christ based on Scriptures. He exposed the scriptures and proved the resurrection of Jesus Christ and quoting the prophecy of Joel he said that it was the fulfilment of the very same prophecy (Joel 2:28-32). Those who had heard Peter were pricked in their hearts and asked what they should do, to which the answer came as the Spirit's revelation explaining what each one in the New Testament Church must follow- the basic doctrines.

## **THE BASIC DOCTRINES (Acts 2:37-42)**

### **1. Repentance**

By the work of the Holy Spirit who convicts about sin, righteousness and judgement, people get convicted about sin. Those who want to get delivered from sin put their faith on the Lord Jesus Christ for justification. Those who confess their sins to God forsaking them and God, in turn, forgives all their thither-to-done sins and such become God's children. **People get justification by faith not by works**

*“Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent” (Acts 17:30).*

Repentance is God's command required of all men. The Lord accepts everyone turning to God with repentance, no matter what kindred or tribe one belongs to. (Acts 10:34,35).

## 2. Baptism after faith

A person who is born again is dead to sin and the world and takes baptism to be in union with Christ after becoming a new creation. In fact, each one puts on Christ through baptism (Gal. 3:27). Through baptism one partakes of Jesus' death and resurrection. It is a symbolic act while at the same time takes on substance. Salvation and baptism are two sides of a coin. "He who believes and is baptized shall be saved. He who does not believe shall be condemned" (Mk. 16:16).

Let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38). The scripture clearly tells us that such ones receive remission of sins through baptism of faith.

*"For he who has been freed from sin. Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him." (Rom. 6:7-8)*

As we read through the passage in Rom. 6:1-6 carefully, we can grasp how we who are dead in sin can be released from it. Paul the apostle has written about the topic of baptism here. Baptism of faith has vital importance in the Church. It is God's commandment. When one believes in the Lord and is baptized one gets admitted into the Church. The Lord daily added to the Church those who were being saved (Acts 2:47). **To be in union with Christ means to be in union with those who live in** obedience to the laws of Christ. Those who received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them (2:41). From these verses it is clear that the Lord added daily to the Church only those who were baptized. It is not written anywhere that baptism may be by force or outward pressure. **When you are exposed to the Scripture about the need of baptism by the Holy Spirit you must not deliberately hinder it but obey God's word.**

Baptism in Jesus' name; it is the baptism taught by the Lord. Some have **distorted it like anything**. **The truth is that in the name of Jesus, Father and Holy Spirit are there. Then what is wrong in giving baptism clearly in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit pronouncing distinctly so as to be understood by all?** The Church is obligated to obey what the Lord taught us without moving an inch from it (Mtt. 28:18).

### 3. Holy spirit baptism

*"Asked, if they received the Holy Spirit when they believed they replied: "we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." Then he asked, "What kind of baptism did you receive?" "The baptism of John," they answered. "And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied" (Acts 19:2-7).*

*"Now when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them, who when they had come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit. For as yet He had fallen upon none of them. They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit" (Acts 8:14-19).*

In both the above mentioned occasions, we see that the Holy Spirit is received by the laying on of hands by the saints. The first incident was of the baptism received by the disciples of Appollos who only knew about John's baptism (Acts 18:25). What was lacking in the baptism received by Jesus and the disciples for the **Holy Spirit baptism**? Its answer is that the Holy Spirit will not compromise with even a trivial matter in relation to the Holy Spirit. The baptism of John was valid from the day John started giving the baptism of repentance up till the time the Church was established on the earth after our

Lord ascended to heaven. Afterwards the baptism taught by the Lord came into force and the baptism of John was abolished. This shows us clearly that there is no use if we continue something that God has done away with. That is the reason why they hadn't received the Holy Spirit. In the second incident, we see about the Holy Spirit being poured out on those who had taken the real baptism of faith by the laying on of hands. None can either block or oppose this. If the servants of God have laid hands on a person who is born again and baptized at anytime that he may receive the Holy Spirit, he will receive it at God's time though not instantly. He will no longer need prayer with laying on of hand for that purpose. **Scripturally, there is nothing wrong to lay hand on and pray over those who are baptized for the infilling of the Holy Spirit.**

Those in the Church do only that which the Lord has commanded. There is scriptural evidence that all who live in obedience to the Word of God can receive the Holy Spirit by faith.

"And we are His witnesses to these things and so also is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him" (Acts 5:32). "So God who knows the heart, acknowledged them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He did to us, and made no distinction between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith". (Acts 15:8-9). The baptism of the Holy Spirit is God's promise and command. Anyone can receive it by faith. Anyone who repents and takes baptism can pray for and receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit. But **God satisfies only those who have desire.**

**The enemy at first tried to oppose the baptism in water and in the Holy Spirit but could not succeed; therefore he is trying to win by duplicate methods.** Either opposition or duplication is his modus operandi. God's children must be able to identify the evil schemes of the devil. The laws given to the early Church are the same

as long as the Church continues on earth. The laws of the Church are not outdated. **The Church is of the New Testament, not of new generation. The principles taught by the Church and its worship methods are never gone out of fashion.** "For if he who comes preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached or if you receive a different Spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have no accepted-you may well put up with it!" (2 Cor. 11:4).

If this was the state of affairs in those days, who is there to oppose today in the Church that is lukewarm? Whatever one may do gets accepted easily! People say yes shaking their head. Attention! Never encourage anything in the church that is not supported by the Scripture!

#### **4. The Apostles' Doctrine**

The book that is given to the Church of the Lord has been written by the Holy Spirit. God has given into our hands 66 books from Genesis to Revelation all things that the Holy Spirit has accomplished and yet to accomplish. The Church needs no more things in addition. The Church must not give heed to any other teaching except the sermons, notes, articles and ministries based on 66 books. The apostles' teachings are given for spiritual edification. One person cannot sit alone and have spiritual growth. He may need others' prayer admonitions and cooperation.

#### **5. Fellowship**

Fellowship of the saints is an essential factor. The Lord's presence will be there wherever two or three gather. Fellowship leads the believers to spiritual growth. The fellowship of the Lord's love must be experienced in all areas by the children of God not just in gathering for worship. Fellowship is needed even in the matters of income and expenditure (Phil. 4:15). Paul also says about some that they gave him the right hand of fellowship (Gala. 2:9).

*"But do not forget to do good and to share (fellowship), for with such sacrifices God is well pleased" (Heb. 13:16).*

*"and let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching (Heb. 10: 24,25).*

## **6. Breaking of Bread (The Lord's Table)**

The Lord's Table must be observed according to the pattern that the Lord has laid to the Church. Here transubstantiation does not happen (substance does not change) but place changes. When bread and wine is prepared and prayed over in the name of the Lord, it changes into the Lord's Table. It is also an observance like baptism which is symbolic. As we take part in it symbolically it also points forward to the day in the kingdom of God we will all sit together for supper in the resurrection body with the Lord. The Lord's Table is to be partaken by all who are sanctified and are sure about it. Those who partake of the Lord's Table violating the Word of God will be subject to God's punishment.

## **7. Prayer**

*"Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving." (Col. 4:2).*

Individual and corporate prayer has much importance in the Church. We have to follow the example of the Lord. The Lord does not hear the prayer of the sinners, but the prayer of the saints is smoke of incense reaching the presence of God.

*"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints and for me" (Eph. 6:18-20).*

The basic doctrines of the Church of God continue to stand even today unchangeably. The activities of the Holy

Spirit begun that day have neither stopped nor slowed down. Some say like this: Did not three thousand take baptism that day together? Why not such things occur today? That at the beginning of the ministry of the Holy Spirit three thousand joined the living Church receiving life was the substance of what had happened as a shadow in the Old Testament. When Moses came down with the Law tablets of the ministry of death, the state of affairs was such that the Levites had to kill three thousand with the sword (ex. 32:28; 2 cor. 3:6-7). The Book of Acts records the account of the activities of the Holy Spirit at the being of the Church centring on Jerusalem the centre point of the earth. By God's commandment the people of God received power moved from Jerusalem to all Judea, further on to Samaria and the ends of the earth. When the ministry spread in this manner, how many thousands of souls round the globe are getting into union with God daily! This proves the expansion of God's Church.

In the ministry routine of the Church, importance is given to the Word of God, prayer and worship. **At the beginning of the New Testament church during the process of choosing of the disciples and commissioning of them to the ministry, there were neither special convocations nor pomp and attire (Acts 1:23-26).**

In the case of Matthias, he was selected by lot and numbered among the apostles. Further in acts.13:2-3 we see Saul and Barnabas being separated for God's work. When the Lord was on this earth, He never established His throne on which to sit. From the New Testament we can understand that His disciples also never did it.

*"leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps."  
(1Peter 2:21).*

Jesus went back to heaven after leaving us a good example. **And no example that the Lord hasn't shown is needed for the Church.**

We have been discussing so far about which the true Church is, its basic doctrines as well as its growth. Right? Now we'll discuss about the spiritual ranks of the saints in the New Testament church. Just as we saw that the Old Testament saints did not belong to one rank but to two different ranks, we will see that the saints of the New Testament church are divided into three after-death ranks.

*"But each one in his own order..." (I Cor. 15:23).*

This verse shows us that there are various ranks. Jesus our Lord had spoken to the public in parables and explained its meaning to the disciples. Let us pick up for our study here one of the Parables that Jesus began speaking about the Kingdom of God.

*"Therefore hear the parable of the sower:... but he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it; who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty." (Mtt. 13: 18-24).*

Here it speaks about the Word of God being sown in the good ground and after hearing it the ground produces three kinds of fruit.

God wants that the hearers grasp the Word and bring forth a hundred fold. It means that God wants all men to come to the knowledge of truth and get saved (I Tim. 2:4). However, all do not reach the full extent of bearing a hundred fold. This shows about the various ranks of the spirituality of the members in the New Testament Church. Let us look at the same parable in the Gospel of Mark.

*"But these are the ones sown on good ground, those who hear the word, accept it, and bear fruit; some thirty fold, some sixty, and some a hundred."(Mk. 4:20).*

It speaks here about those who belong to three rows of people hearing and accepting the word of God. In the Old Testament that if the shadow, the Tabernacle and

the Temple Church were constructed with three separate partitions such as the courtyard, Holy Place and Most Holy Place. As we saw Peter saying about three tents on the mount of transfiguration, he had said anticipating the Kingdom of God likely to be perfected. (Refer Moses and Elijah appearing in glory)

In the City of the Living God New Jerusalem there are two parts such as Holy Place and Most Holy Place. Courtyard is not included.

1. **The Temple which is the most holy place** (Christ and the Pure Virgin which is the Bride).
2. **The Holy Place which is the Wall and Gates** (virgins of the New Testament Church and the excellent of the Old Testament).
3. **Courtyard which is the New Heaven and New Earth.** **This is not** the part of **New Jerusalem** descending from the heaven of heavens; but it is the part of the **Kingdom of God** (All who are worthy of eternal life right from the beginning of the world to the end of the Millennium).

Though like in the Old Testament, such distinctions as Courtyard, Holy Place, Most Holy Place are not in the New Testament fellowships these three distinctions are found among the members in respect of spiritual growth.

Despite the fact that Old Testament had three distinct places such as courtyard, holy place and the most holy place, only two after death ranks of the Old Testament saints have been figured out, is it not so? A doubt may arise here why it is so. The answer may be that the most Holy place in the Old Testament was opened only once a year and that only the High Priest had access into it. Courtyard and holy place were the most visited places where the remaining ceremonies were performed, except the only one visit to the most holy place. The entrance to the most holy place was not for the Old Testament saints. Therefore in the Old Testament the door into that place was not opened. The entrance gate into the most holy place was struck open with the veil of the temple torn from top

to bottom as the remission of sins was accomplished. Jesus who was sacrificed was also the great High Priest who passed through the heavens. He did not enter into the most Holy Place of the earthly Temple which is the shadow but into the heaven of heavens which is the substance- even to the presence of the Father. Those of the Old Testament are not worthy to join with the Lamb who is the temple in the Heavenly Jerusalem the most holy place. Only the Pure Virgin entitled to enter the most holy place of the New Testament church is worthy of that.

Hope now it is clear about why all the Old Testament saints belong to two rows. The Courtyard and the Holy Place in the Kingdom of God are the only areas permitted to them. The three rows in the New Testament have divulged as well- the courtyard, holy place and the most holy place. The main difference between the Old Testament saints and the New Testament saints is that all the saints included in the most excellent row which is the **Pure Virgin**. They are perfected from the beginning of the Church to the coming of Jesus Christ in the mid air. They united with the Lamb of God, who is the **Temple** the most Holy Place.

On the transfiguration mount where the mystery of the kingdom of God manifested, two persons had appeared representing the Old Testament saints. The reason why the Lord took along three disciples though there were twelve apostles with Him was to represent the three spiritual ranks in the New Testament Church as well as the three after death ranks. The New Testament saints who become worthy of the courtyard which is the New heaven and new earth belong to the rank worthy of just eternal life and producers of thirty fold fruit. Those who are worthy of the holy place in the city of God belong to the rank of Virgins in the Church of God bringing forth sixty fold fruit (their rank corresponds to that of the martyrs during the rule of Antichrist). Those who belong to the rank of Pure Virgin that gets into union with the Lamb the temple in the most holy place- the greatest of all the

ranks- they are the ones who hear the word and accept it; and allow the word to take full effect in their life. God's desire of each member in the Church is nothing less than becoming the perfect saints bringing forth a hundred fold fruit.

Through the parable of the Sower, through the description of the Tabernacle and the Temple church in the Old Testament and through the revelation received from the event of the appearance of the Kingdom of God mightily on the mount of transfiguration, it is made clear that the New Testament Church has three spiritual ranks and three after death ranks. Both in the New Testament and the Old Testament there are such saints as reach the spiritual positions of courtyard and holy place. But there are those in the Pure Virgin bringing out hundredfold fruit conforming to the standard of the most holy place who belong to a particular rank that is absent in the Old testament but present in the New Testament.

So far, the Holy Spirit has revealed facts about the New Testament Church and on what basis the three spiritual ranks have been classified. Now we are moving on to the next revelation as to who all will attain the rank of Virgins conforming to the standard of the Holy Place in the New Testament Church of God. Regarding their identity, Psalms 45 and 68 shed light. Let us turn our attention to the verses written there.

Take the verse from (Ps. 45:14,15) it describes there that when the prince is brought from the palace in the gown made of gold thread (45:13), the virgins her companions also will be brought along. We are not dealing with 45<sup>th</sup> Psalm as a whole. Let it be later. The principal idea we get from this Psalm is that virgins are not Bride but maids or companions. The plural form 'virgins' is given and not singular 'virgin'.

*"They have seen your procession O' God, my King into the Sanctuary. The singers went before, the players on*

*instruments followed after. Among them were the maidens playing timbrels" (Ps. 68:24,25).*

The portion of Psalm quoted above is 68 a Psalm of David who has penned several prophetic Psalms about the coming Messiah the King. From the address to God we can be sure that the prophecy is about none else but Christ Jesus our Lord. These verses talk about a future procession David saw in spirit beforehand that the Lord will take out from the millennial palace after the Lord's glorious appearance to the earth along with His saints.

Four groups among them are spoken of here. Singers going before and players on instruments after, and the maidens playing timbrels on either side. Though their identity is not revealed here, we can use our spiritual discernment basing on the next verse. These four groups are those who represent the holy place in New Jerusalem the city of God.

*"There is little Benjamin their leader the princes of Judah and their company, the princes of Zebulun and the princes of Naphtali (Ps. 68:27)*

Though there are twelve tribes manning just four tribes out of them is interesting. It is to show who may be the saints of old and New Testament conforming to the standard of the Holy Place, one of the three divisions in the Kingdom of God.

Despite the fact that the greatest saints of the Old Testament and the New Testament saints belonging to the rank of 'Virgins' are of the same spiritual rank, the spirit of God has put them in four different groups. Those shown around the Great King in Psalm 68 are the company of all the saints worthy of the holy place in the Kingdom of God from the beginning to the end of the world. In the Holy Place Old Testament saints are in their company and New Testament saints in their company, not mixed up.

While giving description of the four groups, the Old Testament saints are figured out first. Of the two groups such as singers and players on timbrels, we are beginning to discuss about the Singers who go before.

## **1. Singers**

The singers are those who are described as the princes of Judah and their company. The name Judah means “now I will praise the Lord.” (Gen. 29:35). In every journey of the Old Testament Israel the tribe that started out first was Judah. If it was so in the shadow, in the spiritual sense in the new substance also it is the same group going before praising the great King as singers. A peculiarity about them is also spoken that is not spoken about the other three groups. It is ‘the princes of Judah and their company.’ It is a large company. The Singers group is the Largest of all the four companies. They belong to the first heaven who consist of all the greatest among the Old testament saints from the beginning of the world to the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, as well as others attaining similar worthiness if any who belong to the first heaven. Until the resurrection of those of the first heaven takes place, all the saints who reach the attainment of this rank form the group such as ‘Singers’.

## **2. The Players on Instrument**

Hope it is clear about the ‘Singers’ who go in procession before the Great King that they are the most excellent saints of the Old Testament who rest in the first heaven of Paradise. Next, we are going to discuss about those who go after. If in the journey of Israelites the tribe Judah formed the frontline, at the rear was always the tribe of Naphtali. The name ‘Naphtali’ means “With great wrestlings I have wrestled”(Gen. 30:8).John the apostle records in Revelation 15:2 about those who stand near the Glassy Sea having the harps of God; they are said to have victory over the beast, over his image and over his mark and over the number of his name. As we will discuss

about them in detail in the chapter titled “Those underneath the earth”, only their identity is being discussed here. **David saw in the Spirit** those who held the harps of God and **have prophesied that those who played on the instrument went after**. Now it must be clear what the secret of mentioning only 4 of the twelve tribes in Psalm 68 is as well as the identity of two tribes. In this city of the Living God, all the most excellent of the Old Testament saints performing ministry like priests in the Holy Place from the beginning of the world to the end have been classified as two sections such as **Singers** and **those playing on instrument**. Similarly, those who are worthy of ministering in the Holy Place from the beginning of the Church to the completion of the work of the church at the end of the world, are put in the group of “Virgins”. They will be the maids of the pure virgin who is the Bride of the Lamb.

### 3. Virgins Playing Timbrels on the Left Side

While analyzing the band of virgins who walk on either side of the Great King let us discuss who they are in relation to the New Testament Church on both sides. Their position is attributed to both sides of the Great King. After discussing about those on the **left** let’s move to those on the right. Of the four tribes mentioned only two are left to be dealt with such as **Zebulun** and **Little Benjamin**. The name Zebulun means “to dwell with” (Gen. 30:20). We can understand from the Scriptures who it is that are worthy “to dwell with” the Lord.

*“.....If we died with Him, we shall also live with Him. If we endure, we shall also reign with Him.”(2 Tim. 2:11).*

From this single verse, two groups such as **those who are to live with Him** and **those who are to reign with Him** are pointed out. Here it is stated that those who are to dwell (live) with Him have died with Him. Paul the apostle says the same thing in the Epistle written to the Romans.

*"Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him." (Rom. 6:8)*

While in second Timothy both the groups such as **those who are to live with** and **those who are to reign** are mentioned, only **those who are to live together** are signified in Romans 6. There are three things on earth posing as our enemies hindering spiritual growth such as the world, flesh, and Satan. Those who have got saved and baptized overcoming the world go on by the divine anointing overcoming the flesh and living in the newness of life. Such are the New Testament saints worthy of the Holy Place living with the Lord. Those who become worthy of the Holy Place are entitled to live with the Lord for ever. That is why these are included in New Jerusalem the city of God. We may note here that they are above the average and that after hearing the word they bring forth sixty fold fruit.

*"Zebulun is a people who jeopardized their lives to the point of death, Naphtali also on the heights of the battlefield." (Jud 5:18).*

These are people who live for the Lord jeopardizing their lives because of their love for the Word of God. But the reason why they come down to the rank of Virgins is their inability to overcome the constant battle against the devil and gain **complete victory**.

The souls of the Old Testament saints who are worthy of the Holy Place live in the **first heaven** in Paradise. Another group of saints worthy of the rank of the Virgins in the New Testament Church live in the **second heaven** just above them. Those represented by the name Zebulun in Psalms 68 are who qualify to live together or "**dwelt with**", i.e., those on the left side among the virgins playing timbrels on either side. **Those who enter into the second heaven after death are the souls of those from the beginning of the New Testament church to the beginning of the rule of Anti Christ, who became worthy**

**of the Virgins' rank.** The souls of the saints belonging to the group of virgins until their resurrection will be at rest in the second heaven. After their resurrection, they will be taken up into the Heaven of heavens and live in the inner court of the palace as bridesmaids who are Virgins, and on the occasion of the marriage of the Lamb will enter the king's palace along with the princess from inside the palace. Then after the marriage, the king and the queen together with all saints will appear on earth, **the saints of the New Testament church in the second heaven will be the virgins playing with timbrels going on the left side of the Great King.**

Hope it is clear that those who are in the second heaven are they that attain to the rank of Virgins in the New Testament church. Those who are in this group have performed in spiritual life on earth all ministries in substance that the Levite priests performed as in a shadow in the Holy Place of the Old Testament. They, having been saved and baptized, stepped ahead from the courtyard rank, overcame the flesh and led spirit-filled life and partake of all such blessings and ministries of the Holy Place such as the Lord's Table and anointing. To put it in brief, those who belong to the group of Virgins are **those who strictly obey all the seven basic principles of the Church.**

#### **4. Virgins Playing Timbrels on the Right Hand side**

Though the study of the section "those who are in the second heaven" is almost complete, we need to discuss a little bit about those who are at the right hand side of those belonging to the Virgins. Hitherto we were discussing about the virgins playing on instruments at the left hand side of the great King, under the idea or meaning of Zebulon that is, dwelling with (living together with). Now the virgins who are at the right hand side entitled to live together with, similar to the left side group will attain the esteemed rank during the rule of the Anti-Christ through great hardship.

If those playing on instruments from Israel going after were those who were martyred in the battle with the Beast, the virgins playing on instruments at the right hand side of the great King are those of the remnant of the Church in the same manner who fight against the Anti Christ and get martyred.

Of the four tribes mentioned in 68<sup>th</sup> Psalm, the remaining name is about “the little Benjamin”, since we have already discussed about the others. Benjamin, the second son of Rachel who was the dearest wife of Jacob, was born giving extraordinary pain to his mother. She breathed her last naming the son Benoni meaning the son of pain.

*“Then they journeyed from Bethel. And when there was but a little distance to go to Ephrath, Rachel laboured in childbirth, and she had hard labour. Now it came to pass, when she was in hard labour ...And so it was, **as her soul was departing (for she died), that she called his name Ben-Oni; but his father called him Benjamin**” (Gen. 35:16-18).*

The name Ben-Oni means **son of pain**, where as Benjamin means **the son of my right hand**. Great are the mysteries behind each of the events happened, as it were, shadow, in the Old Testament. Here in the New Testament the Holy Spirit is manifesting through New Testament events as fulfilment. The last group of remnant of the Church who are destined to reach the Heaven of heavens will reach there with great hardship. It is with the birth of Benjamin through hard labour that Israel the Twelve Tribes of Jacob become complete. Jacob’s son of right hand is spoken of as ‘Little Benjamin’ in Psalm 68. They are those who form the group of virgins the remnant of the Church getting martyred during the rule of Anti-Christ. Their souls after death enter under the Altar ie. under the Earth.

The second heaven in Paradise is the place where the souls take rest who lived since the beginning of the New Testament Church worthy of the position of virgins and died. Even after the resurrection of the Pure Virgin (coming in the mid-air), the door of the Second Heaven will remain open. Those worthy of this rank until the resurrection prior to the Rule of Antichrist will be given entry to this place. Those of the first heaven and the second heaven will be taken into heaven together. It is not known who entered first into the second heaven. Such is the case with those who enter at last. But it is a sure fact that those who enter into the second heaven after death are those who readily obey the basic doctrines of the Church and belong to the group of Virgins.

Now we shall continue our discussion prayerfully of the section of "Those who are in the Third Heaven" the highest or the most excellent group among the after death ranks.

### III. THOSE WHO ARE IN THE THIRD HEAVEN

*"I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago - whether in the body I do not know, or whether out of the body I do not know, God knows - such a one was caught up to the third heaven. And I know such a man - whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows - how he was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter." (2 Cor. 12:2-4).*

Well, we have now come to the most excellent rank such as "Those who are in the third heaven" in the study of "When A Person Breathes His Last, Where Will He Be?" The Lord Jesus Christ the founder of the New Testament left the earth after His Death opening the **gate of the Heavenly Paradise** which was shut for the man till then (in the Old Testament). We get the confirmation of the opening of the heavenly paradise from the affirmation of Christ to the malefactor crucified on one side, who in the midst of the most adverse circumstance with no hope of

deliverance yet with spiritual revelation received Christ and repented, "Today you shall be with me in Paradise!" Christ overcame Satan who had the power over death and Hades by His own death and triumphed over.

With Christ's possession of the key of death and Hades over which Satan had power, Christ rescuing all the saints who were captives in the Upper Hades climbed on high and the powers of Hell surrendered before Christ admitting their utter failure. Moreover, to everyone's amazement, the sordid sinner who was condemned to go to the Hell of death had an amazing repentance which enabled him to enter directly to the Paradise. Thus the powers of sin and death also were defeated at the cross. Both these events occurred together after the supreme sacrifice of Christ. **This reveals that all men were sinners and not attaining full justification they were subjected to Death (Hell) or Lower Hades. Since the precious blood of Christ triumphed over the powers of Death (Hell) and Hades, those who believe in Christ obtain complete salvation from sin and death.** Ever since then, no man justified by God goes after death to the lower part of the earth but goes up into the High.

The Lord had given us at the cross a small hint about the Heavenly Paradise, whereas after the Church was established the Holy Spirit has given us through Paul fuller revelation in these verses (2 Cor. 12:2-3). Here we get a clear idea as to where a man in Christ after this life on earth is taken up from two phrases such as, 'caught up to the third heaven' and 'caught up to the Paradise'. These two distinct phrases are used to reveal a great mystery. Make no mistake of reaching a false notion that the third heaven is the Paradise. Unless the Scripture is interpreted in a proper manner, chances are that we may reach wrong conclusions. Scripture has to be interpreted by Scripture for authenticity of interpretation.

The Lord said to the person who was not a member of the New Testament Church, "Today you shall be with

me in the Paradise”, and not “in the third heaven with me!” What the author who got perfected in Christ has shared from his experience is having been caught up to the third heaven. In order to describe the location of the third heaven, the phrase is added such as “caught up to Paradise”. It is on the basis of Scriptural proof of a third heaven in Paradise that we have reached a conclusion that the first heaven and second heaven exist. The reason why the division of Heavenly Paradise is again repeated after discussing in detail about those who are in the first heaven and those who are in the second heaven in the chapter of “THOSE WHO ARE IN HEAVEN”, is to remove every room of doubt in the readers.

Our thought will dwell next on the fact that among the New Testament saints those worthy of going after death into the third heaven of Heavenly Paradise will be those belonging to the most excellent rank.

*“For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present You as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear ....” (2Cor.11:2-3).*

Here it is spoken of the chaste virgin betrothed to one husband for marriage with Christ. Notice here the singular pronoun ‘chaste virgin’ attributed to the Bride of the Lamb rather than plural pronoun ‘chaste virgins’.

*“There are sixty queens and eighty concuvinnes, and virgins without number. My dove, my perfect one, is the only one, the only one of her mother ...” (Song of songs 6:8-9).*

The scripture quoted here is one of the poetical allegories of the wise Solomon about Christ and the Church. There was not just one queen in the palace of Solomon selected from among the virgins of Israel. His numerous wives included those who were from other nations (I Kings 11;1-3). Among all those women, he saw in the spirit “my dove, my perfect one is the only one.” It was none other than the **“chaste virgin” attaining the position of purity as**

**pure as dove in spite of many thousands of saints gathered up from various tribes and languages.** The Holy Spirit has granted the authority to all nations of the earth in the New Testament church to attain the greatest rank of **Chaste Virgin**.

What is implied here is that there will be **only one** belonging to that rank. Just as the Son of God the Father was the only begotten at the birth, though **the Jerusalem above our mother has** innumerable sons through rebirth, there will be only one like the **chaste virgin in death and resurrection**. That is why it is written '**the only daughter to the mother**'. Those who are included in the group of Chaste Virgin belonging to the greatest rank will receive praise from God, not necessarily here. **Jesus Christ was only begotten at birth and in death and resurrection the firstborn**. To tell about those who are the Chaste Virgin the Bride of the Lamb; though **they begin their spiritual life in their spiritual birth like other saints** once they become perfect attaining spiritual growth, they will be in an altogether different rank in **death and resurrection**. **It is implied here that there will be none like the Chaste Virgin coming into union with Christ**.

In the description of **singers, the players on instruments, and the maidens playing timbrels in Psalms 68**, plural pronouns are used not singular. It is due to the fact that their resurrection takes place in two phases. Here there is a fact that takes us by surprise; there is no mention about the Chaste Virgin the queen of the great King. Its reason can be told here, it is that **the mystery is fulfilled that Christ the King and Queen the Chaste Virgin are no longer two but one**. The queen will always be with the King, needless to repeat it. Psalm 68 gives us description of the Holy Place the New Jerusalem which is the city of God, whereas Psalm 45 is a description of the queen of the Great King.

*"The royal daughter is all glorious within the palace;  
her clothing is woven with gold. She shall be brought to*

*the King in robes of many colours; The virgins, her companions who follow her, shall be brought to You. With gladness and rejoicing they shall be brought; they shall enter the King's palace" (Psalm. 45:13-15).*

Psalm 45 is a description of the marriage of the Lamb. When the Lord descends to the mid-air and catches up the Chaste Virgin (Pure Virgin) His bride to heaven of heavens imminently, neither a marriage hall nor a bridal chamber is prepared in the mid-air. There after the marriage of the Lamb will be solemnized just before the second coming of Christ only after all excellent saints of the Old and New Testaments have reached the heaven of heavens.

*"Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready." And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. Then he said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!'" And he said to me, "These are the true sayings of God." (Rev 19:7-9)*

The passage in Revelation 19:11-16 is a narration of the glorious appearing of the Lord (second coming) in which the Lord and those with Him will appear on earth after the marriage. There will be a time span of seven years between the Lord's coming in the mid-air and the glorious appearing. The description of events in heaven and on earth during this period is given in the book of Revelation chapter 4 to 20:6 (the events from the rapture of the church the bride to the beginning of the millennial reign).

When in the presence of God, the stage will be set for the marriage of the Lamb and the coronation of Christ as King as well as His mission to the earth with all the saints, down on earth another diabolical mission of the devil will be carried out in preparation to the rule of the Beast, the

anti-Christ enticing all the world nations on one side. At the end the divine programmes will be fulfilled while Satan's schemes will be made futile forever.

The chaste virgin suddenly caught up to the presence of God will be ushered into the King's palace as the King's daughter. Psalms 45:13 says that her clothing is woven with gold. Here also the singular pronoun "King's daughter" must be noted. Psalms 45:14 describes the scene of the princess, the chaste virgin chosen from the earth for the heavenly prince, how she shall be brought in special robes of many colours, to the King from her palace accompanied by the virgins, her companions. On the occasion of the marriage between the Son and the Chaste Virgin in God's presence, her companions and all the saints who are the invitees shall be present.

The description of the post marriage scene on earth is given in Psalms 45:9-12.

*"Kings' daughters are among your honourable women; At Your right hand stands the queen in gold from Ophir. Listen, O daughter, Consider and incline your ear; Forget your own people also, and your father's house; so the King will greatly desire your beauty; because He is your Lord, worship Him. And the daughter of Tyre will come with a gift; the rich among the people will seek your favour."*  
Psalms 45:9-12).

Psalms 45 is composed with description beginning with the rule of Jesus Christ the great King as well as about the queen, and then the narrative finally runs to the inner chamber in the heaven of heavens. In the interpretation aspect, the princess dressed up in royal robes begins from the inner chamber of heaven of heavens and enters into God's presence along with the virgins that are her companions and after marriage she stands on the right hand side of the great King as the queen on earth.

If those invited to the heavenly marriage feast are on the rank of the blessed (Revelation 19:9), the Virgins who

are the companions moving with the queen (Psalms 45:14), will be among the most blessed rank. If so, the blessedness of the Chaste Virgin who comes into most intimate union with the Lamb will be indescribable! Since the coming of the Lord in mid-air has not occurred so far, the blessed opportunity to join in the rank still remains. If any of my readers has not yet been fortunate to be ready to join in the rank, hurry; snap to it! If already prepared, the mission behind this book is that those already prepared must in turn prepare others for the coming of the Lord in the mid-air. In so doing, be over comers overcoming all the wiles of the devil.

The Chaste Virgin that gets perfected in Christ has been named as the church of the first-born who are registered in heaven (Heb 12:22-23). As we view the first born of Israel in the Old Testament, we can understand that what is written as shadow there is fulfilled in the New Testament.

*“Now behold, I myself have taken the Levites from among the children of Israel instead of every firstborn who opens the womb among the children of Israel. Therefore the Levites shall be Mine. Thus you shall separate the Levites from among the children of Israel, and the Levites shall be Mine.” (Nu 3:12, 8:14)*

Levi was born in Leah as the third son of Israel. The name Levi means ‘cling to’ or ‘adhere to’ (Gen 29:34). When Israelites pitched their tents, the Levites camped around the sanctuary too close to it. So the speciality of the tribe of Levi was their worthiness to remain very close to the sanctuary, they alone could stay close! That being a shadow, in the New Testament which is the substance, those who adhere to Christ are those who are His. “But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him” (1Cor 6:17). Just as Jehovah separated the tribe of Levi in substitute of the entire firstborn of Israel, God exalts those who attain perfection of the church to the rank of clinging

to Christ. Paul the apostle in his epistle has recorded what kind of people they are. "Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it." (1 Thes 5:23-24).

We have already discussed that there are three main foes that inhibit the spiritual growth such as the world, the flesh and the devil. Only those who overcome these three do enter the most Holy Place. Those who conquer the first foe the world will inherit the eternal life and enter the new heaven and new earth. Those who are worthy to enter the Holy Place are those who conquer the world and the flesh. The excellent saints of both the Testaments can enter into these two ranks. But only the over comers of the New Testament church can enter the most Holy Place with boldness. They have conquered the world and the flesh and are out and out in the battle against Satan and win victory.

*"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. .... praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints" (Eph. 6:10-18).*

Enumerated above are the evil forces that those who enter into the most Holy Place must conquer. The spiritual soldier who confronts the devil in the battlefield does not win with his own strength but being strong in the might of the Lord and armed with the whole armour of God.

The statement that the Lord who called you is faithful and He will fulfil it, is not in connection with material aspects. But it relates to spiritual aspect of complete sanctification of body, soul and spirit. Without holiness no man can see God (Heb. 12:14). In such a case how much holier we should be in order to be among the numbers of those who are attached to Him!

The emphatic statement in the last chapter of Revelation that “he who is holy, let him be holy still” (Rev 22:11), is not for any other purpose than for our own correction and perfection. In the book of Hebrews, we are told to ‘pursue peace with all men and holiness’ (Heb 12:14). At the same time we are told in the epistle of Timothy specifically whom all we must pursue peace with.

*“Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart” (2Tim 2:22).*

We must pursue peace with all who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. It is such people whom the Lord of peace sanctifies wholly. God is faithful to fulfil the task that is, the Holy Spirit the God of peace who is at work on earth now will bring all in the church desirous of being perfected to the completion. He will surely fulfil it. Though it is a fact that all who are called by the gospel to the church have equal opportunity to reach the highest rank of the Lord, not many people reach that highest rank. Anyone who is born on this earth from the beginning of the New Testament Church to the secret coming of the Lord in the midair, his greatest reachable height in spiritual rank is to become the bride of the Lamb. The great mystery of getting into union with Christ was at first said (Gen. 2:24) then was got reiterated by the Holy Spirit through Paul in the New Testament epistle (Eph. 5:31-32). That which must be fulfilled on earth is carried out at the Lord’s coming in the midair (1Thes. 4:16,17; 1Cor. 15:51-57) and finally gets perfected in the heaven of heavens on the day of the marriage of the Lamb (Rev. 19:7-9).

*“Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. ... Husbands, love your wives, ... that He might sanctify*

*and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. ... "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church" (Eph. 5:22-32).*

Though there are many mysteries in the word of God, the greatest mystery is clearly mentioned here. The reason why Satan fights tooth and nail against it is because it is the greatest mystery. Satan sometimes springs to action as an angel of light in the spiritual sphere to prevent the significant matter of the mystery from coming to light as it should. Throughout the New Testament we are warned by the Holy Spirit to guard against the wiles of the devil so that he may not deceive and defeat us. Asked about the end of the world, Jesus warned the disciples at first 'take heed that no one deceives you' (Mat 24:4). The Holy Spirit lays greater stress than anything else on preparing the church of God for the coming of the Lord. Today rather than giving importance to the saying of the Lord, many go after the scientific facts and world nations looking for signs of the end of the world. That is well and good; but the most significant thing is to prepare the church for the Lord's coming according to the word of God. We must not allow any power to pull us back from the great task.

In the messages to the seven churches in Asia, seven kinds of Satan's wiles or devices are found. Wherever the **Spirit** said to overcome and in what aspect we are alerted, such are the devices of the Satan which he uses to defeat the churches.

## Satan's sevenfold devices

	The seven churches in Asia	Satan's devices	How to overcome	Reward for overcoming
1	Ephesus (Rev 2:1-7)	To detach from the first love	Repent and do the first work	Will be given to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God
2	Smyrna (Rev 2:8-11)	To unleash affliction, poverty and evil accusations	Consider that all such things are for a while and be faithful	Crown of life
3	Pergamos (Rev 2:12-17)	False teaching (Balaam-Nicolaitans)	Don't side with false teaching but fight against it with discernment	Hidden manna, stone on which is written new name
4	Thyatira (Rev 2:18-29)	Prophecy misguiding the servants of God (teaching of Jezebel)	Be discrete and repent	Power over nations and Morning Star as inheritance
5	Sardis (Rev 3:1-6)	To fling into a sleep condition making highly obsessed with concern about name	Obtain, listen, wake up and act	Worthiness to walk with the Lord in white
6	Philadelphia (Rev 3:7-13)	Take away patience	Don't loose what is got and be patient till the Lord's coming	Will make the pillar in the temple of God, new name will be written on him
7	Laodicea (Rev 3:14-22)	To make lukewarm, make puffed up with spiritual pride	Realise the spiritual poverty, repent and obtain from the Lord the needed thing	Will be granted to sit on the throne with the Lord

Blessing promised to 'he who overcomes' is also a proof that there have been ranks of both over comers and mediocre ones in all periods of the Church. Satan will

operate all the seven devices mentioned here against all Churches at all times. The particular device most successful in each period with which Satan has been most successful on multitudes is the device figured out in the message to each Church. Similarly, concerning rewards promised in respect of Churches, all over comers are entitled for all rewards. The only thing is that certain rewards are figured out for certain over comers specifically. One truth is made clear at this point that only those who overcome all devices of the devil can sit on the throne with the Lord.

The children of God have so many promises, for which all saints who obtain sonship become entitled. Just as the Son is the heir of everything that belongs to the heavenly Father, those of the Chaste Virgin who join to Him are joint-heirs.

*“Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God” (2 Cori. 7:1).*

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. To perfect holiness in the fear of God is the gaining of perfect wisdom. Let no one be deceived by the wrong conception that how so ever we may live, we will go with Christ at his coming. Only those who get ready and wait for Him will hear the Lord’s trumpet. How much better it would be to teach that only those who get ready according to the Word of God will be taken up than to give wrong teaching that all ragtag and bobtail will be taken up and finally left out at His coming!

Laying emphasis on right teaching can never be false teaching. Satan has obscured this great truth and has already made innumerable people slothful and floundering. Those who have realized the truth must arise to lead the Churches to perfection and divine understanding.

The first century saints could get ready and wait for the Lord's coming (I Cor. 1:7). The same Spirit that worked then is at work even today and therefore one who sets aright his shortcomings and desires perfection of a surety, can wait for the coming of the Lord.

Whether anyone accepts the teaching of the Spirit of God or not, it is a sure fact that as the Lord comes in the mid-air, the glorious Church conquering the gates of hell shall be taken up from here. If we are alive on earth, we will be transformed on that beautiful moment without tasting death; if not should we be dead we will be resurrected and joined with Him. For this blessed hope let us perfect holiness in the fear of God and live daily anticipating that day.

Those who lead spiritual life in obedience to the divine truths revealed daily by the grace of the Holy Spirit after death will go to the third heaven in the heavenly Paradise. We have already seen that they belong to the highest rank of saints such as the Chaste Virgin. In the study of Virgins we see that to the second heaven importance is given to the basic teachings of the Church whereas to the Chaste Virgins belonging to the third heaven perfection of spiritual maturity is given importance.

*"And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head - Christ"(Eph. 4:11-15).*

God has given five-fold ministries to the Church in order that the Church activities in three main spheres may be smoothly carried out.

## 1. Evangelism

## 2. Church Planting and Pastoral care

## 3. That those who are in Church may be perfected.

Evangelism is the obligation of all in the Church. Evangelists are those who take up evangelisation as life's mission. Pastor's duty is to baptize those who accept the Gospel, plant churches and give them care. The teachers are those who teach the in-depth truths of the Word of God. Such teachers who are well reported are a great asset to the Church. Apostles and prophets are those who travel from church to church, edifying and stabilizing churches by exhortations and admonitions and prepare the churches for the coming of the Lord. This is just a brief explanation of the duties of the ministers. In addition, each minister has various other duties. There will be unity of the love of the spirit of God among the servants of God one another. Criticism is not what is needed for the churches but exhortation by the love of God. Note the comment of the apostle Peter about Paul's writings.

*"and consider that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation – as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures" (2Pet. 3:15-16).*

Here we can see the reflection of the love of God in the apostle Peter. He never pretended to be a 'know-it-all person' and the first Apostle brushing aside all others with low esteem and considering other things as trivial. He rather accepted what the other apostles spoke and wrote. Also he supported Paul's writing whole heartedly saying there are some things hard to understand in it and frowned at the twisting of the Word of God by untaught and unstable men. By this it doesn't mean that we must accept everything that comes out under the label of spirituality.

We must be discrete to know what the motivation behind every teaching is and accept what is acceptable and reject what is not. The churches must not go for contentions; because it is condemned in the Word of God saying that “we have no such custom, nor do the churches of God” (I cor. 11:16). The talk of God’s people both inside and outside must be restraint. But on certain occasions we may have to resist in person. Such an occasion is recorded in Gal. 2:11-13 where Paul opposed Peter. We also see that there was a sharp contention between Paul and Barnabas in Acts 15:36-40. Paul contended on all such occasions not for his personal gains but for spiritual gain of the New Testament Church. It is recorded that in the first Jerusalem council also there were strong arguments and contentions (Acts. 15:1-31). Those contentions were not for portfolios and properties, but for purity in doctrinal truths of the church.

In order that the churches may come up to the perfection of spiritual maturity we must go past three basic principles.

1. Basic principles of the world (Colo. 2:8-23).
2. Weak and beggarly elements of the Law (traditions) (Gal 4:1-11)
3. Elementary principles of the Scriptures or the Word of God (Heb 5:11-14; 6:1-3).

We have details about these in Paul’s three epistles. We see about basic principles of the world in the epistles of Colossians and about the weak and beggarly elements of the Law in Galatians and about the elementary principles of the Scriptures in Hebrews. Let us discuss about them briefly:

*“Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ and you are complete in Him, who is the head of*

*all principality and power. In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it. So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ. Let no one cheat you of your reward, taking delight in false humility and worship of angels, intruding into those things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not holding fast to the Head, from whom all the body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, grows with the increase that is from God. Therefore, if you died with Christ from the basic principles of the world, why, as though living in the world, do you subject yourselves to regulations – “Do not touch, do not taste, do not handle,” which all concern things which perish with the using – according to the commandments and doctrines of men? These things indeed have an appearance of wisdom in self-imposed religion, false humility, and neglect of the body, but are of no value against the indulgence of the flesh” (Colo.2:8-23).*

From this Scripture we get the warning that tradition of men and basic principles of the world are philosophies and empty deceit and that we must not be trapped by these. From the Old Testament we find instances when the Israelites gave more importance to human traditions

than to divine instructions available in that dispensation of law.

*“Ephraim is oppressed and broken in judgment, because he willingly walked by human precept” (Hos. 5:11).*

*“Because Ephraim has made many altars for sin, they have become for him altars for sinning. I have written for him the great things of my law, But they were considered a strange thing” (Hos. 8:11-12).*

Ephraim means ‘plenty’ (Gen. 41:52). When the people multiplied they forsook the Law and walked by human precept (the basic principles of the world), the prophet says that they were oppressed and broken in judgement. Next verse says that they indulged in more sins rather than returning to God for forgiveness. Satan always acts just opposite to God’s commands. The generations of those who considered the Law as strange picked up the Law of Moses in support to crucifixion. After obtaining the Law of God if someone deviates from the truth, he might land up in utter failure and bondage.

**Our Lord has said about the tradition of men like this:**

*“He answered and said to them, “Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: ‘This people honour Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me. And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.’ For laying aside the commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men – the washing of pitchers and cups, and many other such things you do.” He said to them, “All too well you reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your tradition. For Moses said, ‘Honour your father and your mother’; and, ‘He who curses father or mother, let him be put to death.’ But you say, ‘If a man says to his father or mother, “Whatever profit you might have received from me is Corban” –’ (that is, a gift to God ), then you no longer let him do anything for his father or his mother, making the word of God of no effect through your tradition*

*which you have handed down. And many such things you do.” When He had called all the multitude to Himself, He said to them, “Hear Me, everyone, and understand” (Mark 7:6-14).*

Paul reminds the believers at Colossae that they died with Christ from the basic principles of the world and therefore they must not live in subjection to the world (Colo. 2:20-23). We are warned against the cheating of those who pretend to be superstitious with an appearance of wisdom with false humility and neglect of the body (such as forbidding marriage and abstaining from certain food items). In contrast to it, James the apostle has said what the true wisdom from above is.

*“But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle; willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy” (James 3:17).*

The wisdom spoken of here is not the worldly wisdom but the spiritual wisdom. We can see many people in the spiritual sphere who are void of Godly wisdom and imitate those who pretend to have wisdom. Interestingly, masses are attracted to such men, as it were by the devil.

In the Old Testament only the wisdom of the world has been dealt with, whereas in the New Testament both the saved ones from the Gentiles (the basic principles of the world) and from the Jews (the rudiments of the Law) have become part of the Church and therefore both have been dealt with.

*“So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ. Let no one cheat you of your reward, taking delight in false humility and worship of angels, intruding into those things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not holding fast to the Head, from whom*

*all the body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, grows with the increase that is from God" (Colo. 2:16-19).*

The spirit of God speaks clearly to everyone that there is no place for any kind of traditions in the New Testament Church and that no one should be deceived by such malignant people thereby losing the prize. The Lord gave warning to the disciples "beware lest anyone misguide you" knowing beforehand that as the end of the world approached such deceivers would be more in number.

*"For I through the law died to the law that I might live to God" (Gala.2:19).*

In order to live for the Lord, first of all, one should be dead to the Law (tradition) so that one could gain momentum in spiritual life.

*"Now I say that the heir, as long as he is a child, does not differ at all from a slave, though he is master of all, but is under guardians and stewards until the time appointed by the father. Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world. But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!" Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ. But then, indeed, when you did not know God, you served those which by nature are not gods. But now after you have known God, or rather are known by God, how is it that you turn again to the weak and beggarly elements, to which you desire again to be in bondage?... I am afraid for you, lest I have laboured for you in vain" (Gala. 4:1-11).*

The Lord has forbidden the people of God to fear concerning various aspects of life in the world. But regarding the spiritual life in the world God's people must

always live in the fear of God. Paul's fear in this passage is very clear that concerning the adoption as sons of the Children of God, whether they would turn again to the weak and beggarly elements of the world and if so, they could never attain the perfection leading them to adoption as sons. Paul's fear is expressed in another place also in connection with the Chaste Virgin (2 Cor. 11:3). Adoption as Son and Chaste Virgin are one and the same in spiritual sense. First is the relation between child and son comparing Old Testament with New Testament and the second is regarding the spiritual sanctification the relation between the Bridegroom and the Bride. Heirs are those who mature to the adoption of Sons. Similarly by the terms to be in union with Him and to be Chaste Virgin it is the same thing meant. The law is not like the human tradition but it is God-given. It is never devilish but Godly. By the deeds of the Law no flesh is justified (Rom. 3:20). We have already realized the weakness of the Law from the instance that Satan contended about the body of Moses. The perfection of the New Testament is that the body, soul and spirit can be redeemed and adoption as son can be attained.

Quite often we can see a lot of people who labour under misconception in spiritual things. Some think that since Paul went to the temple of Jerusalem to fulfil a vow, there is nothing wrong to go to famous pilgrim places (Acts. 21:20-26). The Old Testament ordinances and the Temple were according to God's plan. But by the supreme perfect sacrifice of the Lord the shadow-like Old Testament was done away and by the Old Testament ordinance there is no benefit for the New Testament Church. When the real substance emerges, the shadow becomes outdated. For example, let's take the case of passport, driving licence, etc., when their validity expires only new ones are valid. The old can be preserved as nothing more than proof. Similarly, the Old Testament has no more validity than a book of reference for study among God's people. It is

rather a history than a valid book for practice. Ironically, there are some who carry only the New Testament arguing that it is what is needed neither is correct. Since the history of the origin of human race is recorded in it, the Old Testament is of paramount importance to us. Moreover, myriads of Old Testament prophecies remain to be fulfilled. "Like a householder who brings out of his treasure things new and old" (Mtt. 13:52).

No worship patterns or customs outside the Bible is Godly but may be manmade or devilish. God's people must never agree to such because it is against the Word of God. Paul the apostle knew that vows and offerings were not at all profitable. But since it was found in the Old Testament law, fulfilment of the same would not permeate to sin. Paul opposed the ordinances of the Law strongly when he found that if the first symptoms of the unhealthy church infested by rituals of the law were not treated, the Church would never come out of the legalistic entanglement. Circumcision was the traditional practice of the Jews. Even the Lord Jesus was circumcised on the eighth day. But the Word of God emphasizes that just because of the traditional clout the Gentiles were not to be circumcised (Act. 15:1-29). Thus it was laid down in the Jerusalem Council. That those who are saved from the Gentiles must be freed from the Jewish ordinances except food offered to idols, blood, strangled meat and fornication (Acts 15:2-8). In spite of such a decree, a lot of pressure was mounted so that Timothy was circumcised in the next chapter (Acts. 16:3).

From the first century itself the New Testament Church had been under attack from both within and without. We must bear in mind that by God's grace all such hurdles were overcome and even today the Church is under attacks. We can see so many pagan practices creep into churches such as Christmas and Easter celebrations. No celebration that was absent in the early Church is needed in the Church today. If people got saved then by the

foolishness of preaching, even today salvation of people is possible by the same Word of God. It is befitting to make use of such opportunities for sharing the Gospel. But be sure that for personal gain things such as stars, lighted trees and cakes do not appear. What we begin today in a small manner may likely be contributed by the coming generations with more additions and the chances are that they will be spearheading to full paganism. Hence such trends are resisted.

*“knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.” (1 Peter 1:18-19)*

Walking according to the basic principles of the world can be summed up in one word as **disobedience**. When the God of heaven commanded the first man the things that he must observe, the devil the god of this world (2 Cor4:4) taught first to disobey. **The basic or first principle of the world is therefore disobeying God’s command.** The devil also makes man commit so many things against God’s command. As the result, multitudes grope in darkness. No doubt, all such things are meaningless and vain. Another thing is aimless conduct received by tradition from fathers. If gold and silver were used in the Old Testament for redemption, in the New Testament no such materials as gold or silver are useful but the **incorruptible blood of the Lamb**. Through rebirth by the word of the Lord Jesus, eternal life for endless days is obtained. In order that one must live for the Lord in the New Testament principle, one must be fully dead to the basic principles of the world and to the traditions that are the Law.

A person so dead is born again at baptism and become alive in the grace of God. If we died with Christ we shall live with Him (Rom 6:1-11). I have already explained

about this verse in the section where those of the second heaven who are worthy of the Holy place are dealt with. While discussing about the criterion of reigning with Christ is suffering with Him and how they attain that position, it was intimated earlier that they have to go past three elementary principles. We have also seen that they must be dead to two things. When a person is dead to the basic principles of the world and the traditions of the Law, such a one enters into the first lessons of God's Word.

In order to die to two basic principles (of the world and tradition) one need not die to the elementary principles of the Word of God;

*"Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. And this we will do if God permits" (Heb. 6:1-3).*

Those who believed in the Gospel the beginning of the New Testament then learn about the basic doctrines from the Book of Acts. Paul appears to suggest that those who have effected growth through the epistles must reach the prophecies of the Book of Revelation. The book of Hebrews was written in AD 64 and Revelation was written in AD 90. When Paul exhorted others to attain perfection, the spirit that was in him gave him a vision that there were a few more mysteries yet to be revealed. Only when we start from the book of Genesis and reach the closing chapter of Revelation the last book and rise to the position saying from the sincere heart "even so come Lord Jesus", can we say that we have reached perfection of maturity. Those who attain perfection of maturity no matter which period they may belong to, they will be longing for the coming of the Lord in the midair and hastening His coming. What both the Spirit and the Bride from earth say the same thing.

*“And the Spirit and the bride say, “Come!” And let him who hears say, “Come!” ....” (Rev. 22:17).*

It is the desire of the Spirit echoed all over the world that those who hear the Word of God must grow and join the Bride who says ‘come’. Let us also think now as to how the Holy Spirit leads people to perfection of maturity.

*“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2Tim. 3:16-17).*

It is by the perfection of the revelation of Scriptures that one gets perfected in Christ. For Church to be perfected, evangelism and Church planting are not enough, perfection of maturity also must be attained. The apostles of first century church prayed and even strove together. **THE DIVINE VISIONS THAT THEY HAD OBTAINED WERE PUT DOWN TO WORDS AS EPISTLES. THE MAIN PURPOSE OF EXHORTATION AND TEACHING WAS TO PRESENT THE CHURCH PERFECT IN CHRIST (Colo. 1:28).** The testimony of Paul who was taken up to the third heaven has been clearly recorded in the epistle to Philippians.

*“.....though I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless” (Phil 3:4-6).*

During Paul’s time, should his position according to flesh be viewed, he had so many things to glory in. Here he speaks only regarding spiritual things. Paul had possessed the Roman citizenship by birth (Acts 22:26-29; 23:27, 16:37). If the centurion had obtained the Roman citizenship with a great deal of money, Paul was born

with it. It implies that Paul was born in a noble and rich family.

Saul who had possessed a higher social status was of a higher and greater spirituality than that of the Old Testament. Such a well-to-do Saul who could live in luxury with pomp became Paul who was less than the least of all. Why because he had got the heavenly vision from God. The heavenly vision had made so deep impact that he said that he would never be disobedient to it.

Paul who got such divine revelations as to write the weightiest epistles numbering fourteen appears to be on a par with Moses who wrote the most profound Pentateuch. Paul because of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ had counted everything that was of profit as loss. His involvement in the Lord's ministry through great hardship was not in vain. Saul, who would have otherwise been confined to tomb in Tarsus, did not pass into oblivion because he served the Lord; even today his voice is being heard through the pages of Scripture in the world. Similarly Moses chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, because he had eye on recompense. Therefore, he also escaped the otherwise confinement to an Egyptian pyramid but became part of divine plan, still speaks to the world through faith.

“and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith (Phil 3:9). He counted all things but loss that hindered gaining Christ. He believed in the Lord without trusting in his own righteousness. Thus he obtained justification. David says about the blessedness of the one to whom God imputes righteousness without works:

*“Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; blessed is the man to whom the Lord shall not impute sin” (Rom. 4:7-8).*

The greatest account of blessedness quoted from the Old Testament Psalms of David to the New Testament by Paul was not the Shepherd boy's becoming the King of Israel, or the head of the Philistine Giant Goliath being cut off. But the saying of David in prophetic spirit was about the crushing of the head of Satan who had the power over death by Jesus on Calvary. He wrote about the **divine plan of imputing righteousness without works** viewing the forgiveness of sins beforehand that the mankind would obtain by faith. **The central message of the Gospel is that all men can obtain so great a Salvation through faith in Jesus Christ that none else can provide.** Saul, who received justification by faith without trusting on his own righteousness, stepped forward in the path of progress of Christian life without self-contentment. Next verses describe his life journey aiming at just one thing forgetting all things.

*"...that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead"(Phil. 3:10-11).*

Being told by Ananias to take baptism resembling the death- resurrection of Christ, Saul who had already repented and received justification by faith, had instantly complied without any objection and taken baptism as gentle as a sheep (Acts. 22:16). It would be better for those who cry down baptism just because of traditions to compare with Saul's ready compliance! It is a sure fact that when such people are given clear sight they would procrastinate taking baptism (Act. 9:18).

But because of the blindness of the unbelievers by god of this world, so many people are deprived of the blessing of baptism.

Saul after getting saved and baptized prayed for the power of the resurrection of Jesus Christ and received it too. Ananias laid hands on Saul saying "that you may

receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit. At the prayer of Ananias first his eyes were opened and then he had taken baptism (Acts 9:17, 18). After baptism, Saul returned to the Temple and during prayer he was in a trance and saw Christ (Acts 22:16, 17). Thus his sight was restored being filled with the Holy Spirit. God's encounter had changed Saul's life altogether. The Christian life following that encounter was really a life of triumph. He stepped into ministry and Saul became Paul. He considered everything as garbage and went through hardships counting all the sufferings as a joy with one and only aim; that he might by any means **attain to the resurrection from the dead**. For that he went ahead counting everything as garbage. Satanic powers had not been successful to stop him short of his aim.

*"Not that I have already attained or am already perfected but I press on, that I may hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me" (Phil. 3:12).*

Though Paul had attained to such a great height in spirituality, he had never taken pride in anything. Paul had not had the thought of being perfected even in the last days, but Paul who was the strongest in the Lord had the desire to gain Christ and be perfected till his last breath.

*"Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind ..." (Phil. 3:13-17).*

He reminds the brethren about the importance of the high calling of God and to that end all must press on toward the goal forgetting what is behind. He encourages all who are on the race such as are perfect to run steadfastly not fancying that they had already attained or were already perfected. Paul who had got vision and lived his life accordingly was perfect. Those who were with him

shared the same vision and ran toward the goal of high calling being perfected.

Those who have access to the third heaven after death are they that suffer with Christ and resist the devil. Among those who followed Christ, the first for whom the door of the third heaven which is the most excellent after-death rank was opened, was Stephen who gave up his own life in martyrdom. Stephen the first martyr after the New Testament Church was established was one among the seven appointed to the ministry at the table. But amazingly, the passage in Acts 6:5 to chapter 7 last verse records his greater ministry by the grace and power of God manifesting great signs and miracles, preaching and martyrdom. Stephen's fiery preaching full of the Holy Spirit had made Jews envious. When they gnashed their teeth being red hot with anger, Stephen cried out in a loud voice what he saw:

*".....and said, "Look! I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!" (Acts 7:56)*

When they stared at Stephen with wrath, he looked up to heaven being full of the Holy Spirit. What he saw that time was heavenly vision. The faith in the never failing love of God that does not forsake even at the time of death encouraged him. They dragged him out of the city and stoned him. As each stone hurt his body and in the midst of writhing pain he was seeing vision from the open heaven. Before the pelted stones heaped over his dying body he pleaded the Lord Jesus to receive his Spirit. While they still threw stones at him, he had prayed "do not lay this sin to them" and slept.

The death of Stephen who was perfected was similar to that of Jesus on Calvary. Jesus was crucified as per the Roman law while Stephen was stoned to death as per the Jewish Law. Just as Jesus asked the Father to receive his Spirit, Stephen the saint had cried out to Jesus to receive

his spirit. Jesus prayed to the Father to forgive them while Stephen had uttered 'do not lay this sin to them'.

Saul had agreed to the killing of Stephen. But the Lord did not leave Saul unvisited. God encountered him because he saw the spiritual vigour inside him. That divine encounter had caused an upheaval in his life. One of the main factors that had motivated Saul to catapult his life to the onward motion never looking back was his eye witnessing the end of Saint Stephen.

God did not allow the body of Stephen the saint who was most cruelly stoned to be left disowned there. Some devout men took the mangled body from the stone heap and buried, **his soul was celebrating among the creatures worshipping God in the third heaven of Paradise**. No matter how many afflictions God's people may have to go through or they may have to lose their very life, they must never deviate from the path that leads to the goal of the high calling. For our path is bound to lead through so many sufferings. At any occasion, there is a door of heaven that flips open for us. The word of God got fulfilled in Stephen's life "they that looked to him were not ashamed, their faces were lightened". This promise is not only for him but for all.

*"And all who sat in the council, looking steadfastly at him, saw his face as the face of an angel" (Acts. 6:15).*

The faces of those who look to the face of God will shine like the angels in adverse circumstances. The reason is that we do not do the ministry of darkness but of light. Therefore, as Paul said, let us be firm and immovable abounding in the ministry of the Lord seeing that our labour in the Lord is not in vain (1 Cor. 15:58).

When the soul of Abel the first martyr of the book of Genesis cried out, the Lord opened the earth for him and put his soul to rest similarly when Stephen the first martyr of the New Testament pleaded, "Jesus, receive my Spirit", God opened the door of the third heaven in Paradise for

him. After that, the door of the Paradise has been kept open even today. Many saints belonging to the rank of Chaste Virgin who pressed on for the goal of the high calling suffering great hardship for the Lord, attained perfection and finished the race. Such are the ones who enter the third heaven in Paradise. Since opportunity remains till the mid-air appearance of the Lord, Paul says, “not that I have already attained, or am already perfected, but I press on that.” If the heavenly calling to such a great goal is steadfast in our hearts we will surely hear the trumpet sound. Let us live in preparation to that. If we sleep before the mid-air appearance of the Lord we must join the saints of the most excellent rank to reach the third heaven in the heavenly paradise. If not, the Lord is descending in the mid-air we will be transformed at the trumpet of God and be caught up with them to meet the Lord in the air. Let this be the goal and vision of our life.

We have already discussed about who the saints are in the heavenly paradise in the chapter titled “those who are in heaven”. The New Testament saints can reach the highest spiritual position of all the saints of all times which is the Chaste Virgin of the Lamb. Those who are in the heavenly paradise belonging to the after-death rank (first heaven, second heaven, third heaven) will be part of the New Jerusalem the city of the living God. So far we have discussed about them. Now let us enter the new chapter titled “those who are on earth”.

## **Lesson Summary**

### **Those who are in the first heaven.**

- The paradise which is the heaven wherein are creatures that worship God has three parts. They are: first heaven, second heaven, third heaven.
- The regain of paradise that was lost to man was permitted since the supreme sacrifice of Jesus Christ. The first man who was directly raised to this blessed rank was the malefactor who was crucified with Christ and had accepted Him as King.

- The saints the Lord led out of captivity from the upper Hades (those seated in Abraham's bosom) who were worthy of the highest rank among the old Testament saints, were transferred to the first heaven in the heavenly Paradise.
- Those who are during the period from the atonement of Jesus Christ to the rule of Antichrist anyone worthy of the same great rank of the Old Testament saints surely will enter into the first heaven of the after-death rank.

### **Those who are in the second heaven**

- Those entering to the second heaven in the heavenly Paradise will be the chamberlains who are virgins worthy of walking with the Lamb the Lord.
- Those entering the second heaven, all the saints who are in spite of being perfect in the basic doctrines of the New Testament Church and overcome the flesh and the world, they are not able to win victory in the battle against Satan.
- From the inception of the New Testament Church to the rule of Antichrist, entry into the second heaven for human souls will be open.

### **Those who are in the Third heaven**

- The third heaven in the heavenly paradise will be the place of rest where those who are included in the Chaste Virgin the Bride of the Lamb; the chunk exalted to the highest spiritual position of the entire creation.
- The first person who was fortunate to have entered the third heaven is Stephen who was martyred at the beginning of the Church era. The door opened then has not yet been closed. The entry to it will be open till the coming of the Lord in the mid-air.
- Those who are included in the Chaste Virgin are the perfected saints having conquered the world, flesh and Satan.

## Chapter - III

### THOSE WHO ARE ON EARTH

*“And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their pre appointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings.”  
(Acts 17:26).*

All men widely seen on every part of the earth have been made of the one man Adam. God determined times and boundaries for the man created for eternity because of the limitation of the earthly life of man for the being. It is on the basis of each man's spiritual position that he attains during this earthly life that each one's location in eternity is determined. We are now discussing on different ranks of men who will be transferred from here after death.

Though human life on earth is short, the importance of the present earthly life is highly valued on account of the fact that the matter of 'eternity' is determined by this short life. Not even a single soul separated from this earth wanders along in the world. Each soul gets transferred to the after-death rank commensurate with the spiritual position decided by the works that each one did while in body. The reason why the chapter titled "those who are on earth" is included in the section "where is man after death?", is not because of the existence of a particular rank of the dead on earth, but that we may focus attention on two important subjects.

First of all, as much then as the present earth is just for the habitation of temporary human life and as long as sin and death exists on earth (from the beginning of the world to the end of Millennium), no body can postpone death or avoid it arbitrarily. Men must die and their souls traverse to their different after-death ranks. Though the human souls inside the body are not visible and the movements of the souls are not visible, the human souls after death traverse from here very fast and reach their destined after-death ranks regardless of place period or time. The travel of souls from here to various ranks will continue uninterruptedly until death will be done away with. It is during the temporary human life on earth that those of various spiritual positions take form. Consequently, at their death various after-death-ranks are also formed. These are all plans that God had already designed before the creation of man. Briefly speaking, if “those on earth” are not, after-death ranks are not either. Hope you can understand now the importance of those who are on earth.

Secondly, the strange event that happened in the Old Testament as a shadow ‘disappearance from here without seeing death’ happens in the New Testament as substance fulfilled. This accounts for the inclusion of the chapter “those on earth” in the after-death rank because of the strange ranks of two groups disappearing from the earth this way.

When we think about the creatures on the earth that give praise, glory and honour to the one who sits on the throne and to the Lamb, and their origin, importance must be given to things related to the man who is the crest of creation of God and his habitation on earth.

If you want to know how the mankind whom God made out of one man after death get transferred to various ranks, you ought to go back to the origin of man’s creation.

The Holy Bible begins with the account of creation that in the beginning God created heaven and earth. Doesn’t

it? The earth that was created had to undergo great changes before and after man's creation. The earth that was in the time of old was not like the present earth before us, which we can learn from the scripture. The earth that was created in the beginning was not formless and void. It had become so. All God's creations were created for the divine purpose very beautifully. All God's people are well aware how the earth created for human habitation had become formless and void. (Those who want to know more about this may please read in the book titled "Revelation of Eternity" pages 13 to 16).

Having transformed the chaotic state of the earth and replenished the earth beautifully by all creatures, God created man in His own image and likeness. The first pages of the book of Genesis are the directives making man a king having dominion over all things. Man was not placed in a chaotic earth where nothing existed. The glorious Lord 'Elohim' the blessed trinity (ref. Gen. 1: 26 'let us make') descended to the earth on the 6<sup>th</sup> day and created the glorious man by His own hands taking dust from Jerusalem, the central point of the earth.

The Garden of Eden is believed to have been located on the east from the central point. There the Lord created a woman out of him to eliminate the loneliness from Adam who was single. Thus a help meet was provided to him. Man and his wife all the living things being placed upon the earth, the chaotic state of the earth was made whole. Where ever the word of God the marvellous light intervenes, the condition of such a place will be changed into a glorious and marvellous one. At the beginning of the creation of man the condition prevailing on earth was celestial one in which all sang praises to the Creator and adored in a beautiful manner.

The Holy glorious God used to descend to that earth wherein the celestial atmosphere pervaded and used to commune with His creatures especially the glory-clad

humans. The Garden of Eden on earth was the platform for the visitation of God. But this did not continue for long, because there was something on the earth that was not in the heaven of heavens that was the darkness, which was death. About this enemy that was death, God had given warning to the early man in the Garden of Eden. The creation of man with free choice was done between the light that was life and the darkness that was death. It was for revealing this that God had caused two trees to come up in the middle of the Garden of Eden such as the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen. 2:9).

In the paradise the garden of God (Rev. 2:7) in the New Heaven and in the New Earth on either shore of the River of Life are the Trees of Life (Rev. 22:2). Nowhere else can we find in the Scripture that God has made a tree of the knowledge of good and evil. It was made on the earth only in relation to man.

God had told man that he should not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and on the day he ate thereof he would die. Satan put his efforts to defeat man and carried out his scheme keeping his eye on the particular tree of knowledge. He got success in it too.

If Satan thought that he had succeeded in making man God's creation commit sin through disobedience and throwing him into the bondage of death, his presumed victory was in reality the beginning of his ruin. On that day Heaven declared war against Satan and proclaimed about the promise of the Saviour who would save mankind from the clutches of the devil. Ever afterwards, Satan has been in great fear foreboding the inevitable crush of his head. But our Lord Jesus crushed the head of Satan before two thousand years. Is it not the proof that we the human beings have received all heavenly gifts such as the spiritual liberty, heavenly hope, eternal life, etc.?

As the result of Adamic sin the earth was cursed by God and the earth brought out pain, suffering, thorn and thistles for man. Then God, after giving a warning that man would return to the dust out of which he was taken, expelled him from the garden. The earth that courted the divine curse became the arena of Satan, while Satan became the ruler over death who had flung the mankind to the troublesome bondage infested by sin, sorrow, pain and death. He (Satan) began to rule in the world by the result of which the earth was filled with man's ever increasing evil. The Creator of all the universe then was not sitting idle. By the judgement of the ancient world by flood, the condition of Genesis earth again underwent a change. The water from above and beneath gushed out to the surface of the earth. After the flood, only Noah the righteous among men and his household (8 in number) got saved through the Ark. The life span of man was reduced to 120. The climate, food and everything underwent a change. In this way, only eight souls entered to the present earth after the flood.

By God's grace men began to multiply again. The Lord said to them that fear and dread of them would fall upon all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air, upon every creature that moved along the ground, and upon all the fish of the sea (Gen. 9:1-2). After the flood, it was through the three sons the righteous Noah that all the nations of the present world have come into being.

*"These were the families of the sons of Noah, according to their generations, in their nations; and from these the nations were divided on the earth after the flood"*  
(Gen. 10:32).

The people who were divided as different nations gathered together in the plains of Shinar and embarked on a mega project of constructing a huge tower that would touch the sky so that they might not be scattered on the face of the earth. But God came down and confused their language and scattered them abroad all over the earth.

*“Therefore its name is called Babel, because there the Lord confused the language of all the earth; and from there the Lord scattered them abroad over the face of all the earth” (Gen. 11:9)*

Well, we have just seen how God made the humankind of one man to inhabit the earth as well as the history of the birth of various nations and languages.

If from one man the mankind filled the entire earth, the plan of God in the New Testament was begun i.e., all both in heaven and on earth should be re-united through Jesus Christ the last Adam.

*“.....You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation” (Rev. 5:9).*

The blood-bought saints of Christ Jesus began to form new fellowship groups of the Holy Spirit all over the world speaking the language of God’s love. God in the Old Testament came down to confuse the language whereas in the beginning of the New Testament Church the Holy Spirit descended to remove the language barriers thereby the Lord’s church began to spread.

*“But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvellous light” (I Pet. 2:9).*

In the first century, the onward march of the Church was flagged off by the Holy Spirit. Since then, the work of proclaiming the good news bringing many out of the darkened world into the marvellous light began. With the contagious outspread of the Gospel to the world over and divine fellowship groups increased day by day, the devil’s kingdom started disintegrating.

Those who read the Bible carefully can understand the truth that there is God’s purpose behind every world event. The purpose of God’s creation of man on the earth started

its journey towards perfection from the book of Genesis way down to the book of Revelation culminating it.

*“.....will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away .....” (Rev. 21:1-22:6).*

When the numbers of those who will live in the new heaven and new earth (**Courtyard**) and those who are to join to the city of the living God (**Holy Place**) and those who are to join to the Temple (**The Most Holy Place**) will be perfected, the purpose for which God created the earth and sky in the beginning will have been fulfilled. Then the former will be disappeared and the new heaven and new earth void of Sea, sorrow, crying, pain and death will be replaced. They that will enter there, those who belong to the city of the living God and the Temple that is in the New Jerusalem are not from other creation, but they are the descendants of Adam, chosen from time to time of those on earth ‘until the end of the Millennium. When the chosen of God will enter into God’s ‘eternity’, those who join the Satan’s fold ignoring God’s Word will be thrown into the lake of fire burning with brimstone known as the **second death** in the company of Satan and his angels. Those on the earth must never ignore the fact that those who love darkness will be thrown into eternal damnation with the devil in the Hell of fire.

The time periods on earth have been divided into seven depending upon each spiritual dispensation from which men on earth depart. This helps us in our study of after-death ranks. In order to get a clear picture of after-death ranks, we need to study about the departure of each person belonging to each particular spiritual dispensation because it plays an important role to determine the after-death ranks. The excellent saints of the Old Testament and the most excellent saints of the New Testament are far different from each other. Jesus our Lord spoke to the disciples about the blessedness of the N.T, saints that the O.T. saints had never attained.

*“Then He turned to His disciples and said privately, “Blessed are the eyes which see the things you see; for I tell you that many prophets and kings have desired to see what you see, and have not seen it, and to hear what you hear, and have not heard it” (Lk. 10:23:25), (Mtt. 13:17).*

Though the prophets and kings of the Old Testament had waited for the coming Messiah, they could not see Him. But the New Testament saints had the privilege to have Him. Peter the apostle has spoken about it thus: “Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow...” (IPet. 1:10-12).

All these show the fact that there are after-death ranks suiting to each spiritual dispensation. For example, now (the New Testament time) the earth dwellers have the privilege of attaining the position of Bride which is the greatest rank, while those of former or latter dispensation cannot have it. All people from the beginning of the world to the end of the Millennium are classified into seven depending on each spiritual dispensation in which each one departs from here.

- 1 Those who have departed from the beginning of the world to the point of the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ.**
- 2. Those who have departed from the death of Christ to the beginning of the Church (approx.. 50days)**
- 3. Those who depart from the beginning of the Church to the coming of Christ in the mid-air.**
- 4. Those who depart from the coming of Christ in the mid-air to the beginning of the Rule of Antichrist (Approx. 3 ½ yrs.).**

5. Those who depart from here from the beginning of the rule of Antichrist to the glorious appearance of Christ (Approx. three and a half years)
6. Those who depart from here from the beginning of the glorious appearance of Christ to the beginning of the Millennium. (Approx. a few days only).
7. Those who die from the beginning to the end of Millennium (one Thousand Years).

The above points are the classification on the basis of one's departure from here during a particular spiritual dispensation. If you look at the following columns you can find people having different spiritual ranks in each spiritual dispensation and where they reach after death i.e., details regarding after-death ranks.

**Table-1**  
**After-death ranks from the beginning of the world to the Lord's coming in the mid-air**

<b>Spiritual dispensations on earth</b>	<b>The spiritual rank at the time of departing from the earth</b>	<b>After-death rank into which souls reach after death</b>
1. From the beginning of the world to the atoning death of Christ	1. Those who are worthy of eternal life	1. In the upper hades
	2. Those who belong to the rank of the O.T. saints of excellence.	2. In the bosom of Abraham in upper hades.
	3. The sinners	3. In the lower hades.
	4. Hard core sinners	4. In the hell that is death.
2. from the atoning death of Christ to the beginning of the Church in the New Testament	1. Those who are worthy of eternal life	1. In the sea
	2. Those who belong to the rank of Old Testament saints of excellence.	2. In the first heaven of the heavenly paradise
	3. The sinners	3. In the lower hades
	4. The hardcore sinners	4. In the hell that is death

3. From the beginning of the N.T. church to the time when the bride the pure virgin is taken up (The present after death ranks on earth)	1. All righteous worthy of eternal life (of both the O.T. and N.T.)	1. In the sea.
	2. Those who belong to the O.T. saints of excellence.	2. In the first heaven of the heavenly paradise
	3. Those who are worthy of virgins in the N.T. church	3. In the second heaven of the heavenly paradise
	4. Those who are of the pure virgin	4. In the third heaven of the heavenly paradise
	5. The sinners	5. In the lower hades.
	6. The Hardcore sinners	6. In the hell that is the death

The greatest mystery of the spiritual dispensation in which we are today has not yet been revealed. It can happen at any time. We are living now at the point of time period when Christ's coming in the mid-air should occur. If that takes place today, those belonging to the rank of Pure Virgin- those who slept- and are in the third heaven will rise up, those living who are of the Pure Virgin will be transformed and will be caught up together to the heaven of heavens. If Enoch's translation to the Upper hades in the Old Testament was a shadow, those saints who are the Pure Virgins shall, without seeing death be translated to the heaven of heavens being transformed not as shadow but as substance. After the mid-air appearance of the Lord, none of those of the Pure Virgin will remain either in the third heaven or on the earth. Their resurrection will be completed by the appearance of the Lord in the mid-air. It is for the mid-air appearance of the Lord that saints of the New Testament Church belonging to the top rank daily look forward to. The greatest mystery of the Scripture will be union of the Bride the Pure Virgin with the Bridegroom the Lord. That great event will occur at the mid-air advent of the Lord. Be ready perfecting holiness for that!

**Table-2**

**From the Mid-air appearance to the end of Millennium**

<b>The spiritual dispensations on earth</b>	<b>The spiritual position or rank at the time of departing from the earth</b>	<b>The after death rank ushered into after death</b>
1. From the mid-air appearance of the Lord to the beginning of the Rule of Antichrist (The post rapture after-death ranks)	1. All the righteous saints worthy of eternal life.	1. In the sea
	2. The Old Testament saints of excellence	2. In the first heaven of the heavenly paradise
	3. Those who belong to the rank of virgins in the New testament Church	3. In the second heaven of the heavenly paradise
	4. Those who are sinners	4. In the lower hades
	5. The hard core sinners	5. In the hell ie., death

In the resurrection series taking place at the beginning of the Rule of Anti-christ, all the Old Testament champions and the virgins of the New Testament Church will be resurrected and taken up to the highest heaven. None will be left in the first heaven and the second heaven later. Neither shall anyone enter Paradise thereafter. It is further explained in the chapter titled '**Resurrection of two witnesses**'.

2. From the beginning of the Rule of Anti-christ to the glorious appearance of Christ.	1. Those who are worthy of eternal life	1. In the sea
	2. The martyrs in Israel	2. Under the earth (beneath the altar)
	3. The martyrs in the New Testament Church	3. Under the earth (beneath the altar).
	4. The sinners	4. In the lower hades
	5. The hard-core sinners	5. In the hell ie., death

Prior to the glorious appearance of Christ, the resurrection of the martyrs (the after-death-rank beneath the altar will take place. We will discuss about it in detail in the **first resurrection**. By then, all the saints having part in the New Jerusalem will have been transferred to the highest heaven. Those who remain

will be resurrected only after 1000 years are over. In the glorious appearance of Christ when Christ shall be seated on the glorious throne, all the nations shall be gathered before Him (they are not resurrected) the sheep on the right and the goats on the left. Those on the right will be ushered into the eternal kingdom of the Father alive as the 'blessed of the Lord', while those on the left will be thrown into eternal fire alive as 'cursed'.

3. From the glorious appearance of Christ to the beginning of the millennium	1. those who are worthy of eternal life.	1. In the sea
	2. the sinners.	2. In the lower hades
	3. the hardcore sinners	3. in the hell ie., death
4. From the beginning to the end of Millennium	1. The righteous	1. In the sea
	2. The sinners	2. In the lower hades
	3. The hard core sinners	3. In the hell that is death.

Well, it has been made clear through the two tables given in the chapter titled "Those on Earth" that each spiritual time span in which men live and their spiritual position corresponding to their after-death-rank. The tables have been prepared on the basis of scriptures such as Rev. 5:13 and Rev. 20:13.

If we look at the tables given here carefully a clear picture is available of all the people born on earth from the beginning of the world to the end of Millennium and their spiritual time-span as well as their spiritual positions corresponding to after-death-ranks. Enough explanations are provided in each chapter and therefore no more explanation warrants here.

Prior to the satanic tribulation, the Bride Church of the Lamb will be caught up from here. Thereafter none enters the third heaven, whereas souls enter the first heaven and the second heaven till the beginning of the rule of Anti-Christ. With the start of the rule of Anti-Christ, their resurrection is over. Thereafter no single soul enters the heavenly paradise.

The Place called 'Under the earth' is where the souls of martyrs killed during the rule of Anti-Christ- those of Israel and of the New Testament Church are kept until their resurrection takes place. The next chapter deals with them. To continue with the study of after-death-ranks, let us go to chapter four.

### **Lesson Summary**

- All men born in the family of Adam are sinners.
- Though all are born alike, each one is different in life and death, based on their spiritual position acquired in the earthly life.
- The matter of eternity is determined by the temporary life of man on earth.
- The rank or position of each man in eternity is determined by everyone's spiritual position attained at death as decided by God who weighs human hearts. The souls are sent to each after-death rank commensurate to the spiritual position right away.
- From the beginning of the world to the end of Millennium sin and death will persist among men on earth. Until then those who belong to various after-death ranks will remain on earth both righteous and sinners.

## Chapter - IV

# THOSE WHO ARE UNDER THE EARTH

*“When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, how long, O Lord, holy and true, until you judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth? Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed” (Rev. 6:9-11).*

In the previous chapter titled ‘Those who are on the Earth’ we discussed about the location where all the departing souls reach in each spiritual time span with various spiritual ranks. In view of the spiritual ranks of the saints, we have discussed about the first heaven in which are the Old Testament champions, the second heaven in which are the maid servants of the Bride and the third heaven in which are the highest rank i.e. those who belong to the Bride of the Lamb. We have so far been discovering where the soul reaches after man’s death from the Scripture; now what we are going to do in this chapter is different. We are going to find out whose are the souls whom John saw clearly under the altar and explain by

the scripture the place meant by “under the altar”. By the statement “the Souls of those who had been slain for the Word of God confirms here the fact that after death the souls of men and their different ranks exist. There are those who think and teach that the teaching of Christ about life after death by the Rich man and Lazarus in the New Testament is only a parable and not reality and therefore it is not pertinent to teach from it about souls after death. But each parable that the Lord has told is the revelation of truths. It has been said here that the souls of the martyrs were found under the altar and not in heaven (Paradise) and that until those would-be-martyred servants and brethren are gathered in, they must remain a little while more. This statement implies that in each spiritual time span those of different spiritual position will belong to each of their ranks after death. Furthermore it is confirmed here that souls speak even after death; and they don’t speak to mediators but to the Lord who is true and holy and is the Master of Souls and their resurrection will take place before long.

Since it is written that the souls of the martyrs were seen under the altar, we need not search for their location. But we need to look for some important things such as where is the after-death rank that which is under the altar and who are these saints dignified as fellow servants and brothers as two different spiritual ranks and in which spiritual time span they are martyred. At first we are going to look at where the after-death-rank is such as that which is ‘under the altar’.

*“Then I was given a reed like a measuring rod. And the angel stood, saying, “Rise and measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who worship there. But leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the Gentiles. And they will tread the holy city underfoot for forty-two months” (Rev. 11:1-2).*

*“Then another angel, having a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne” (Rev. 8:3).*

The above quoted verses are three references to altar in the Book of Revelation. First is the reference (Rev. 6:9-11) to the altars under which souls are seen that which is our subject of discussion. Second is the altar in the courtyard of the Temple of God (Jerusalem) trodden down by the Gentiles 42 months. Third is the Altar in the heavenly Temple of God. From these scriptures it is clear that in the heaven of heavens there are undoubtedly the Temple of God, the ark of the covenant and the altar (Rev. 11: 19, Rev. 15:5, Rev. 8:3-5, Is. 6:6). The altars recorded in the scripture are given here because the altar discussed here i.e., the one under which slain souls were seen is neither of the heavenly temple nor of the earthly temple.

Revelation is a book which must be spiritually interpreted and confirmed internally by the Scripture itself. Though we do not primarily aim at a verse by verse exposition of the book of Revelation, our study of after-death ranks requires, to a considerable extent, a thorough sweep. In the vision about things to come, the altar that John saw was neither heavenly nor earthly but he saw the spiritual altar of the New Testament

The altar on which Jesus Christ the founder of the New Testament offered Himself as the supreme sacrifice was neither the altar of the heaven of heavens nor that of earthly temple according the Jewish law. But it was the altar in the courtyard which is the earth on which the sacrifice was fulfilled.

*“Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession” (Heb. 4:14).*

Jesus the son of God about two thousand years ago was offered as the Lamb of God on the altar of the earth

which is the courtyard for the remedy of man's sin. With His atoning blood He went up from the earth which is the altar (courtyard) passing through Paradise the Holy place (Heaven ) as the Great High Priest entered the holy of holies or the Most Holy place the presence of the Father. No doubt it is proved here that the earth is the altar on which Jesus was offered as sacrifice. It is recorded with clarity in the book of Hebrews which one is our altar.

*" We have an altar from which those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat" (Heb. 13:10).*

It is clear that the altar in the New Testament points to the earth on which Jesus' sacrifice was offered. Therefore when we compare Rev. 5:13 wherein it is recorded about the creatures under the earth praising God and Rev. 6:9 wherein is recorded about the souls under the altar, we can reach the conclusion that both are the same.

It is written in Rev. 5:13 that every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea and all that are in them worship God the Father and the Lamb. There are creatures under the earth that worship and obey God. 'its description is given below which maybe found recorded in Revelation.

*"And he opened the bottomless pit, and smoke arose out of the pit like the smoke of a great furnace. So the sun and the air were darkened because of the smoke of the pit. Then out of the smoke locusts came upon the earth. And to them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. They were commanded not to harm the grass of the earth, or any green thing, or any tree, but only those men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. And they were not given authority to kill them, but to torment them for five months. Their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it strikes a man. In those days men will seek death and will not find it; they will desire to die, and death will flee from them.*

*The shape of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle. On their heads were crowns of something like gold, and their faces were like the faces of men. They had hair like women's hair, and their teeth were like lions' teeth. And they had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the sound of their wings was like the sound of chariots with many horses running into battle. They had tails like scorpions, and there were stings in their tails. Their power was to hurt men five months. And they had as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon, but in Greek he has the name Apollyon" (Rev. 9:2-11).*

There are angelic hosts that are ever ready to obey God's commandments in all places. God's angels at all times remain at the beck and call of God willing to keep His commandments (Ps. 103:20). Pharaoh who rebelled against God and disobeyed, him and his land Egypt as well as the Egyptian gods were judged by God the judgement was executed by angels.

*"He cast on them the fierceness of His anger, Wrath, indignation, and trouble, by sending angels of destruction among them" (Ps. 78:49).*

Just as God sent angels of destruction to Egypt to rescue Israelites from the bondage of Egypt (Ps. 78:42-51), at the end of the world also divine creatures will appear to punish those who disobey God. The locusts coming out from the bottomless pit are not like the ones on earth, they are different creatures. The locusts on earth have no king yet they all advance in ranks. But the locusts like creatures coming out from under the earth will be led by a King called Abaddon or Apollyon. The angel of the bottomless pit spoken of here is neither Satan nor Satan's angel; he is the chieftain of the creatures of God under the earth. The name means 'destroyer' but it doesn't mean devilish power.

*"There is one Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy. Who are you to judge another?" (James 4:12)*

Just as God is the creator and Saviour, He has power to destroy too. But Satan and his angels have power only to destroy for a certain time. They can't create or save. But once he and his angels are cast into Lake of fire forever, his works will completely be brought to an end. God has created various places. For instance, some are given here, angel of the waters (Rev. 16:5), angel who has power over fire (Rev. 14:18), Michael the archangel (Jude 9), Gabriel the messenger (Lk. 1:19, 26; Daniel 8:16, 9:21). There are innumerable angels having power over God's creation and they have their captains. It is not into bottomless pit where Satan is put in chains for one thousand years, but into deep. That is got done by an angel coming down from heaven.

*"Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while" (Rev. 20:1-3).*

There is a teaching about Abaddon (Apollion) who is an angel of God the creature and the chief of the Bottomless pit picturing him as devil or his angel. It is due to the wrong perception that Satan is put in the bottomless pit instead of deep. The lowest depth into which Isaiah in the Old Testament spoke of Satan being thrown is not the "bottomless pit" but under the Sheol the lowest depth of pit" (Isa. 14:15) that is the deep.

Sheol the lowest depths of the pit is what is spoken of here as the lower Hades ie., Hades. It is made clear that until the devil is cast into the lake of fire forever at the end of Millennium the devil will be thrown into deep which is

the place between Hades and Hell. It is also made clear that the bottomless pit under the earth is full of creatures worshipping God and those creatures obey the Almighty God.

It is clear that the bottomless pit under the earth is the place where there are creatures who praise God and those creatures obey the Almighty God, it is also made clear that they torment not the people of God but those who are on the side of Satan not bearing the mark of God, and that the duration that they torment the wicked people on earth is five months (Rev. 9:4).

It is proved here that under the earth there are places like bottomless pit where there are God's creatures who praise God. The proofs about the places underneath the earth and about God's creatures are scriptural. Therefore, we can arrive at the conclusion that the souls under the altar or under the earth are the souls of the slain. This death row is temporary only for the souls who had become martyrs during the period of Antichrist's rule proclaiming the testimony of God.

Now we are going to discuss about those who represent the two groups of martyrs such as "fellow servants" and "brethren".

*"Then a white robe was given to each of them" (Rev. 6:11).*

They are qualified to put on the white robe. Another passage says (Rev. 7:9) that they have obtained the same robe that was obtained by those who belonged to the similar spiritual standard. Here it does it mean so much as the souls wearing robe but it shows their spiritual standard or level of glory which they are going to receive in resurrection.

*"Now she had on a robe of many colours, for the King's virgin daughters wore such apparel" (2 Sam. 13:18).*

The king's daughters mentioned in Ps. 45 in plural belong to the rank of Virgins which we have already discussed in previous chapter. Though the Old Testament saints of excellence and those of N.T. Virgins' rank are worthy of inheriting the Holy Place, there is a difference in both of their spiritual standards or level of glory.

Revelation chapter 14 verses 1-5 speak about the 144000 of the Jews who were sealed. They are redeemed from the earth and follow the Lamb wherever He goes. They were redeemed from among men, being first fruits to God and the Lamb. These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. Since they are spoken of as 'virgins' and 'first fruits,' some think that they are the true Bride of the Lamb. Because of this mistaken belief some of them forbid the marriage that God has permitted and claim themselves to be the Bride of the Lamb; this is absolutely wrong. If only the unmarried are the Bride, no others will be taken up at the coming of Christ is it not so? Then what will become of all those who are otherwise? The fact of the matter is that 144000 are exactly those who are set apart and sealed from the tribes of Israel and their number is perfected only during the rule of Antichrist (Read Rev. 7:1-8).

It has already been proved in the part titled "Those who are in the third heaven" that the Bride is Pure Virgin and not virgins. Those who are perfected in the Church are not in the rank of maids who are the Virgins but are in the superlative rank of Pure Virgin is the bride of the Lamb. Well, in order to get a clear picture we need to discuss a little about the first fruit is none other than Christ, who took the form of man and became the first fruit from among the dead (I Cor. 5:23; Colo. 1:18).

Born into the sinful world as man, Jesus Christ alone ascended to the heaven of heavens overcoming sin and death- the holy one of God. It is Jesus Christ Himself. He is the first born from among the dead (Rev. 1:5).

Second point in our line of thought is about the 'Church of the firstborn' who are registered in heaven the First fruit of the Church established by the Lord (Heb. 12:23). James the apostle has said about this: "of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of first fruits of His creatures" (James 1:18).

The purpose by which the Lord brought us forth by the Word of truth is that we might be a special kind of first fruits from all His creatures. The Church of the first born registered in heaven are those who are chosen as first fruits to God from all His creatures. Only if we fathom its depth can we comprehend about whom it is written. The whole creation groans and travails for the revealing of the sons of God now (Rom. 8:18-25). The first fruits or the firstborn of the New Testament Church are those who attain the position of adoption as Sons (Sonship).

Thirdly, the mention of first fruits is made regarding the first fruit taken from among men for God and the Lamb. The mention made here is regarding those who are taken as first fruit from Israel from the earth during the rule of Antichrist (Rev. 14:4).

*"Israel was holiness to the Lord. The first fruits of His increase" (Jer. 2:3).*

*"Israel is my son, my firstborn" (Exo. 4:22).*

So far we have discussed here about three first fruits.

**Let me put forth each of them below:**

1. First fruit from among the dead- That is none other than Jesus Christ. He is not a creation; He is God the creator. Neither is He firstfruit from the creatures Christ is the first fruit of the Heaven of heavens.
2. The first fruits from all creatures- They are the first fruit to God from all creatures that are included in the Pure virgin of the New Testament Church. They are termed as the Church of the firstborn registered in heaven. Those who attain son ship or adoption rise to this position.

3. The first fruit of the earth (first fruit from among men). Israelites are the first fruit of the earthly harvest. Prior to the final harvest the end of the world 144000 of Israel are chosen as the first fruit of the earth.

Since the scriptural references are presented here as the basis, these are all reliable facts. Don't mistake those excellent ones of the Old Testament (those who are in the first heaven) for Israelites. Abel didn't belong to Israel that was a high rank of similar Old Testament saints of excellence. They also belonged to the rank of Virgins. The mention made here is about the Israelite martyrs as the first fruit taken from among men at the end time harvest of the earth. The final harvest of the end of the world takes place only after this (Rev. 14:14-19). Hopefully, it is very clear that the Bride of the Lamb taken up at the Lord's coming in the midair is not the first fruit of Israel taken from among men prior to the end of the world.

"The fellow servants" are the martyrs of the tribes of Israel on whose foreheads was the seal of God. That they are taken from among men means that they are first fruits to God. Their number will be 144000. They sing the song of Moses and the Lamb (Rev. 15:2) and obey God's commandments. They are the souls from all the tribes of Israel martyred during the rule of Antichrist who are termed as 'servants (fellow servants) under the altar the earth.

"The brethren "are combined with "fellow servants" in order to show that both the groups are martyred during the same period. Let's discuss the term 'brethren' as to which group they represent.

*"... I saw under for the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they hold ... Until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren. ..."* (Rev. 6:9-11).

Though the number of Israelite martyrs perfected during the rule of Antichrist is fixed to be 144000, the number of brethren from all the nations is not given in the Scripture. However, that number is also one that can be figured. But only God knows that. The reason why the number of Heathens (Gentiles) is not disclosed here is that the value of the priceless blood of His Son must not by any means be figured out by calculation.

*“For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in “ (Rom. 11:25-26).*

The divine mystery is set forth in this verse. It is made clear that God’s people thrive until the end not only from Israel but also clear that both during the Tribulation and under the rule of Antichrist it is not Jews only who fight against Satan. Heaven knows the number of all people born on earth as well as the after-death rank of each one.

Details of the occupants of New Jerusalem and how their number gets perfected:

1. When the number of Pure Virgin gets perfected very secretly the Lord’s coming in the mid-air happens. With that Christ Jesus the head which is the first fruit that is the temple of the living God and the Body the Pure Virgin which is the first fruit from all creatures will be united thereby the most Holy place in which God the Father dwells getting perfected.
2. Next perfection that happens is that of the Holy place. Though they that are in there are not attached directly to Christ the Head, they follow the Lamb wherever He goes. As the two groups are taken up into heaven in the resurrection during the beginning of the rule of Antichrist such as the Old Testament saints of excellence and those who belong to the Virgins of the New Testament Church the number of those who follow the Lamb on the left and front gets perfected.

3. The number of those who follow the Lamb on the right and rear side gets perfected at the end of the rule of Antichrist. Their resurrection is the first resurrection which is mentioned in the book of Revelation (Rev.20:1-6). It is at the catching up of these to heaven that the numbers of the Holy Place get perfected.

Thus the number of those who appear along with the Lord on the earth in the glorious appearance gets perfected in three phases.

By the phrase that the whole Israel shall be saved, don't mistake that everyone in Israel shall be saved, don't mistake that everyone in Israel will be in the Kingdom of God. The biblical interpretation must be contextual. As soon as the number 144000 entitled for the Holy Place also shall be full, the number of all the saints gathering to Jerusalem the city of the living God as fixed by the Heavenly council will be perfected. Even after this the remnant of Israel and the New Testament Church whose number remains to be perfected will be on earth till the public glorious appearance of the Lord. The details of them are given in the chapter titled "Those who are in the Sea."

These are martyred during the rule of Antichrist because of the Word of God and the testimony they held (Rev. 6:9). To make it clearer, events since the Tribulation period must be described.

*"And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Rev. 12:17).*

We are not going into all details here now, but we'll look at who are the rest of the offspring of woman that keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

Since John's writing deals with only about what is still going to happen, doubtlessly we can reach the conclusion that it is not about anything that relates to the matter of

Old Testament or beginning of the New Testament but about the things happening after the pure church the Bride of Christ has been taken up.

*“..... I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held” (Rev. 6:9).*

As we compare Revelation 12:17 and 6:9 we can see that the contents of both are the same. In Rev. 12:17 it is pictured as happening after the Church the Bride has been taken up. Satan unleashes the great tribulation upon only two remnant groups left after the woman delivered the male child. Both the statements in 6:9 and 12:17 such as those slain for the word of God and those who keep the commandments of God are the same. The statement in the book of Daniel (9:4) of those who keep the commandment of God is about those who belong to this group such as ‘servants’ (Rev. 7:3) and fellow servants (Rev. 6:11). We have no doubt as to who are ‘brethren’, because it is clear that those who are martyred for the testimony are those who hold the testimony of Jesus (Rev. 6:9; Rev. 12:17). It is quite clear beyond any doubt and does not need further evidences.

Since the notion prevails that during the rule of Antichrist none from the New Testament Church will be present and that those who hold the testimony will be from Israel, if this notion is scripturally right, our present treatise under the title “Those who are under the earth” will be absolutely unscriptural. Therefore, which one is worthy of acceptance in scriptural light must be proven without leaving any room of doubt. May it be asserted that this attempt is only for the benefit of our spiritual growth and not for any other motive.

During the Tribulation period soon after the pure Church of the Lord has been taken up, the Jews do not accept Jesus as the Messiah. Likewise throughout the rule of Antichrist they will be resisting the Gospel. It is at the glorious appearance of Christ that the tribes of Israel look

to the one pierced and will accept Him as their Messiah. The fact that it will not be prior to that is evidenced by the Old New Testament Scriptures.

“Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him” (Rev. 1:7). This statement is not about the mid-air appearance of the Lord coming to take up the Church. But this is about the Lord’s glorious appearance to the earth. Given below is the scriptural support to confirm this “There is no one like the God of Jeshurun, who rides the heavens to help you (Deut. 33:26).

The 33<sup>rd</sup> chapter of Deuteronomy is a prophecy of the man of God Moses whom God used as a master builder of the nation Israel. The prophecy uttered at the very beginning of its founding tells us that the nation would continue till the end of the world. This nation founded upon God’s own constitution would have a pivotal role to play at the end of the world. Only part of the subject is being dealt here.

*“..... And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitant of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieved for a first born .....” (Zec. 12: 9-14).*

*“O Lord our God, masters besides You Have had dominion over us; But by you only we make mention of your name” (Isa. 26:13).*

The above quoted lines are description of events happening at the glorious appearance of the Lord. It is proved here that Israel do not accept Jesus as their Messiah till His glorious appearance. Now let us examine another scripture in the Gospels where the Lord Himself has said:

*“Jesus said to him, “It is as you said. Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at*

*the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven” (Matt. 26:64)*

That the Lord said “**you will see**” is in relation to Israel. The nation Israel founded by God shall be in existence on earth till the end of the world. No power can eradicate the nation from the earth completely. Israel is like the fig tree that sheds its leaves in the winter and blossoms again sending new shoots of tender leaves before summer. Here it shows that there will be people who abide by the law given by God at all times in Israel. Thus it is clear that the nation Israel does not accept Jesus as the Messiah during the Tribulation period or the rule of Antichrist. They will look to Him whom they pierced will accept Him as their Lord and Saviour at His glorious appearance.

In the light of the above- said scriptures, it is clear that the Gospel of Jesus as a witness will be proclaimed among all nations till the end of the world not by the Jews but by the remanent of New Testament Church.

In answer to the question by the Lord’s disciples regarding the end time signs, the Lord’s discourse in three Gospels was at first to the Church and secondly to Israel.

*“..... Tell us when will these things be? And what will be the sign of your coming, and of the end of the age? .....Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for my name’s sake..... And this gospel of the Kingdom will be preached as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come” (Mtt. 24: 3-14), (Mk. 14:9-13; Lk. 21:11-19).*

*“But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons. You will be brought before kings and rulers for my name’s sake. But it will turn out for you as an occasion for testimony” (Lk. 21:12-13).*

The Lord who promised to the Church saved by the Word of God His continued presence even to the end of

the world said that not a hair of their head would be lost (Lk. 21:18).

The proclaimers of the gospel at the end of the world and the last days will be those who have Jesus' testimony. It is after this that the Lord said concerning Israel to the disciples. As a matter of fact, those who are in the Church of the New Testament must know everything to the minute details about Israel and the New Testament Church.

In the next part in the Gospel we can see what will happen to Israel in those days.

*"But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near..... for these are the days of vengeance. There will be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people..... And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled" (Lk. 21:20-24), (Mk. 13:14-25, Mtt. 24:15-27).*

The phrase "upon this people" spoken by the Lord is regarding the people of Israel for sure. Our Lord has made everything clear in His Word. It is our duty to understand them as we ought to.

The manner in which the Lord commanded His disciples regarding the events of the end of the world is the same manner that the Lord commanded the disciples while sending them at the beginning of the gospel.

*"Behold I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. .... But when they deliver you up, do not worry about how or what you should speak. For it will be given to you in that should speak. For it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak, for it is not you who speak but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you..... But he who endures to the end will be saved." (Mtt. 10:16-22).*

The entire chapter of Mathew 10 is the commissioning charges of the Lord to the disciples as He sends the twelve out. Then the Lord sent them specifically to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Mtt. 10:5). However, after the resurrection, the Lord commanded them to preach the gospel to all nations make them disciples (Mtt. 28:20). In these days of nearing the fulfilment of the end time signs, the task then entrusted by the Lord has been getting carried out down through the generations to the ends of the earth. The gospel will be preached as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come (Mtt. 24:14). The assurance that we get from the Word of God is that no matter what amount of opposition may arise against the gospel, the divine plans will be fulfilled without fail. Now and then, the people of God have faced strong oppositions to the evangelisation, which may continue till the end of the world. But we have the word from the Lord as encouragement that His promised presence will be with us to deliver us from all distress.

Even before the Holy Spirit descended and established the Church, the Lord had sent out His disciples with the task of the Gospel to the tribes of Israel. After the Pentecostal outpouring and Holy Spirit baptism at Jerusalem the Gospel was propagated through them to all the nations. It is still continuing. At the Lord's coming in the mid-air there will still be God's people left out on earth even after the rapture of the Church and the Holy Spirit. Just as the disciples evangelised prior to inception of the Church, gospel will be preached even after the Holy Spirit leaves the earth and the Lord's words to the disciples will be fulfilled. Those who proclaim the gospel then will have to suffer persecution from all nations as well as Jews.

The phrases the Lord predicted "you will be hated by all nations" concern the nations and "they will deliver you up to synagogues and prisons" concern the Jews who oppose the Gospel witness of Jesus.

They belong to the rank of brethren who are born again by the gospel and have become members of the house of God. Since Israelites do not accept the gospel, they are put in the list of servants. All those who are born again by the Word of God in the New Testament are sons of promise. We have already realized that among those there are different ranks.

Those who are babes in the Word of God are no better than slaves (Gal. 4:1). Those who reach the greatest rank among these are those who belong to the Church of the first born receiving the adoption as sons (Gala. 4:5-7). Those whom the Lord addressed as brethren are the saints who reach the rank of virgins; the Lord at the beginning had called the disciples as friends and brethren. They having been baptized with the Holy Spirit, go on to spiritual growth and get elevated to the standard of receiving adoption as sons.

*“.....but go to my brethren and say to them, ‘I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God.’” (John 20:17).*

As soon as the purification was over, the Lord addressed the disciples as brethren. Here we can understand the difference between fellow servants and brethren; can't we? Though the Old Testament saints belonged to the position of virgins, they are shown in the scriptures as 'friends, servants etc., never as 'brethren'. Abraham was called the 'friend of God' (James 2:23). However, we see that before the death of Christ He had elevated the disciples from the level of slaves to the position of friends.

*“No longer do I call you servants, for all things that I heard from my Father I have made known to you” (John 15:15).*

It is after the death and resurrection of the Lord that the disciples are addressed explicitly 'brethren' (John 20:17). John the Baptist addressed himself as 'the

friend of the Bridegroom' (Jn. 3:29). Moses to whom the Lord talked face to face was servant. "And Moses indeed was faithful in all his house as a servant, for a testimony as those things which would be spoken afterwards" (Heb.3:5). Hope it is clear that the martyrs of Israel martyred under the rule of Antichrist are 'fellow servants' as also the martyrs belonging to the virgins who are the left over chunk of the New Testament Church belonging to the rank of '**brethren**'. Their souls are those who were found under the altar after death.

*"And I saw thrones and they sat on them, and judgement was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the Word of God, who had not worshipped the beast or his image, and had not received his master on their foreheads or on their foreheads." (Rev. 20:4-6).*

The statement uttered at the beginning of the Antichrist rule is reiterated here, the souls under the altar are crying to God for judgement whereas here we can see that after disclosing judgement seats and recording everything about throwing Antichrist and his aides out into the Lake of Fire they are once again brought to light. This is to shed light on those who have part in the first resurrection. Here we have focussed attention on only brethren and fellow servants in the rank of those who are 'under the earth' because its details are given elsewhere in the section of resurrection and here our focus is only on after-death ranks. In Rev. 20:4-10 it is clearly mentioned that they were beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the Word of God as also that they had not worshipped the beast and its image.

Those 144000 martyrs of Israel (fellow servants) during the rule of Antichrist and those of virgin's rank in the New Testament Church (**Brethren**) are resting under the earth (**under the Altar**). With their resurrection, the Holy Place of the New Jerusalem the city of the Living God also gets completed. The after-death rank under the earth is the

temporary and shortest of all after-death ranks. It is an improvised under earth chamber into which souls enter only for a period of three and a half years during the rule of Antichrist.

Well, we are coming to the close of the study of the after-death ranks of the saints reaching where the creatures praise God such as those who are in heaven, those who are on the earth and those under the earth. Let us go to the next chapter titled "Those who are in the Sea" in order to study the last of all ranks among the after-death ranks of the **saints**.

### **Lesson Summary**

- The rank 'under the earth' is the shortest after-death rank.
- Under the earth or under the Altar is the place about three and half years from the beginning of Antichrist's rule to the end where the souls of the martyrs to the first resurrection are kept.
- Under the Altar (under the earth) there are creatures who praise God. Among those who enter there after death there are two groups.
- The martyrs of the last remnant of the virgins from the New Testament Church belonging to the position such as '**Brethren**'.
- Those Hundred and forty four thousand redeemed from among men for God and sealed from Israel are the first fruit of the earth. They are of the position of '**fellow servants**'.
- Those martyrs who go through great tribulation and fight tooth and nail against the Antichrist and are cut off. They are of the rank of Old Testament saints of excellence and of the rank of virgins of the Church that are maids. Under the earth are kept their souls.

## Chapter - V

### THOSE WHO ARE IN THE SEA

*"The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged each one according to his works." (Rev. 20:13).*

As we finish the entire study of after-death ranks of saints by this chapter 'those who are in the sea', we get a clear description of the abode of all the saints from the beginning of the world to the end of the future Millennium as to where they rest after death. In the study of after-death ranks we have taken two verses from the book of Revelation as basic text. One of them is quoted above. So far we have been discussing on the basis of Revelation 5:13, our present study of after-death rank which is 'those who are in the sea' is covered in both the verses.

*"And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are **in the sea**, and all that are in them, I heard saying: "Blessing and honour and glory and power Be to Him who sits on the throne, And to the Lamb, forever and ever!" (Rev. 5:13).*

We have already understood in detail the three after-death ranks classifying the three divisions of heavenly Paradise as first heaven, second heaven and third heaven. Haven't we? In continuation with that we also discussed

about the short-term after-death rank of 'under the earth' in which the martyrs of Israel and the remnant of New Testament Church during the rule of Antichrist are kept. Now in this chapter, we are going to discuss about who they are in that after-death rank the creatures in the Sea who praise God.

The statement 'the sea gave up the dead who were in it' is distinctly given whereas Death and Hades are combined. The souls delivered by the sea have nothing to do with the sinful ranks of Death and Hades. The three ranks in this verse are mentioned together because the resurrection of all the three ranks occurs at the same time. That is the mystery this unfolds before we get into the study of the after-death ranks in the Sea we would need to look at some contemporary interpretations to see if they have scriptural authenticity.

The prominent notion among the scriptural interpretation of the Sea delivering up the dead in it is that those who were killed at the sea are delivered by the Sea to the White throne. If this notion is correct, then what of the dead delivered by Death (Hell) and Hades? Are they also went there and died? Surely it is not so. The fact of the matter is that man can be born and can die anywhere. Birth and death do occur even in the sky. In future there is likelihood of man finding township in other planets also. Then birth and death will happen there even. At present we hear of spacecraft disaster and death in space! Where does God keep all these souls? If the dead are delivered up by the same region is there any mention about such after-death ranks in the Bible? The answer will be in the negative to be sure. If it is so what is the speciality of those who are killed at the sea so that they are kept in the sea? Since these questions cannot be answered in the scriptural basis, we who are like the Bereans (Acts 17:11) can't afford to accept the notion that the sea delivers up those who are killed at the sea. No matter where and how man is born, brought up and dead, the truth prevails on

earth till the future Millennium that man is God's creation from the dust of the ground as the son of Adam. The fact that everyone will appear before the Judgement Seat of Christ that each one may receive the things done whether good or bad, is to determine the after-death rank on the basis of the kind of life lived and not at all on the basis of where one took birth and where one died etc.

When God judged the ancient world by flood all the populace except eight souls drowned in water- strangled to death. If those who died in the sea were kept would have been a large throng of after-death rank ever since the flood. But the Lord has not uttered a single word regarding them in the parable given in the Gospel. There we find only a description of Hades. We have already discussed about it in the chapter titled "Those who were in the Upper Hades". We have already discussed in detail that all righteous souls from Abel had according to the after-death rank gone down into the Upper Hades. There had not been an after-death rank above the Upper Hades i.e., in the Sea. The new after-death rank in the Sea came into existence since Jesus went up on high after descending into the lower parts of the earth and taking along the captives.

*"you have ascended on high, you have led captivity captive; you have received gifts among men, even among the rebellious" (Ps. 68:18).*

Paul the apostle has quoted the same portion in the New Testament like this:

*"When He ascended on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men. Now this, "He ascended" -what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is also the one who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things (Eph. 4:8,9).*

Our Lord descended to the lower parts of the earth and freed the people who were captives there and

ascended on high. The Scripture gives clear evidence of Jesus' going down to the lower parts of the earth.

*"The Lord kills and makes alive; He brings down to the grave and brings up." (I Sam. 2:6).*

The above quoted verse is the spirit-filled prayer of Hannah about Jehovah who brings up from the grave descending to it. It was fulfilled when Jesus our Lord at his death two thousand years ago descended to the grave and brought up the captives to heaven. Let's also look at another scripture from Hosea the Prophet in this connection:

*"I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death. O death, I will be your plagues! O Grave, I will be your destruction! Pity is hidden from my eyes." (Hos. 13:14).*

How discreetly does the Holy Spirit quote the Old Testament prophecies in the New Testament? He does not copy and paste it. Only the gist that is needed has been reproduced. That which is fulfilled needn't be written again. Regarding that which is to be fulfilled this is how Hosea 13:14 is reproduced in I Cor. 15:55.

*"O Death where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law" (ICor. 15:55).*

The part in future tense 'I will ransom' has been avoided because it has already been fulfilled. Paul the apostle quotes the scripture from Hosea in connection with the mid-air coming of the Lord emphasising the importance of resurrection power triumphing over death.

The prophecy from the Old Testament and its fulfilment in the New Testament presupposes that since the precious blood of the Lamb was given as ransom for sin the souls of the righteous ones in the Upper Hades received salvation. They are in rest up above, which is evident in this scripture:

*“for to this end Christ died and rose and lived again’ that He might be Lord of both the dead and the living” (Rom. 14:9).*

He is Lord even to those who died before His coming. That is why He descended to the Hades and rescued them from there. The Lord rescued them from the Hades and brought up on high those who were written in the book of life and those righteous who were of far greater spiritual standard. Among them those who were worthy of eternal life, those of such a rank were admitted to the Sea just above the Hades.

*“The dead tremble, those under the waters and those inhabiting them. Sheol is naked before Him, and destruction has no covering” (Job. 26:5,6).*

The above quoted verse of Job is an Old Testament evidence for the three regions such as sea, Sheol (Hades) and death (Hell) as found in Rev. 20:13. Similarly, the statement in Rev. 5:13 that every creature which is in heaven and on earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, corresponds to the statement in Job about the creatures in the sea such as ‘those under the waters and those inhabiting them’. Here it is elucidated that Lower Hades and Hell, where the dead tremble are under the sea and its inhabitants. When the Lord ascended on high freeing the captives from the Upper Hades, placed those who were worthy of eternal life in the Sea just above the upper Hades or Sheol. Ever since then, anyone whose name is written in the book of life dies, the souls of such as are that enter into the sea until the end of Millennium (when the particular rank space is filled). This is what is made clear by the Scripture.

**It is hoped that the matter is clear that the creatures of the Sea do praise God and the beginners of spiritual life who are worthy of eternal life find their way to the Sea.** Anyone outside the New Testament i.e., those who are in the Old Testament can attain spiritual growth and

qualify for either eternal life (Sea) or for a still higher rank such as first heaven. The New Testament believers begin their preliminary stage of spiritual life with eternal life (Sea) and can qualify for second or third heaven commensurate with their spiritual growth. Those who are martyred during the rule of Antichrist are worthy of Holy place and their souls are kept under the altar (under the earth).

**The After-death ranks of all may be like this:**

1. **Sea** - those written in the book of life who are worthy of eternal life from the beginning of the world to the end of the Millennium.
2. **Under the earth** - the souls of those who fight against Antichrist and are martyred during the Tribulation.
3. **First Heaven in Paradise** - the souls of the Old Testament saints of excellence.
4. **Second Heaven in Paradise** - those who are of the rank of Virgins that are maids of the Bride of the Lamb.
5. **Third Heaven in Paradise** - The Bride of the Lamb.

When one of the male factors crucified with Christ repented, Jesus Christ had elevated the spiritual rank of that person from death (Hell) to the Paradise in a matter of few hours. His soul had entered the very Heavenly Paradise because Christ had said to him he would be in Paradise. The reason why it is written in Psalms and Epistle that He ascended on high freeing the captives, rather than He ascended to the Paradise is that He has put those of the old Testament worthy of eternal life into the Sea just above the Upper Hades or Sheol. Those of the Old Testament who belonged to the excellent rank were entered into Paradise. By the bodily sacrifice of the Lord all the righteous ones who had died before it got spiritual deliverance. They thus had got elevated from the bondage of Upper Hades or Sheol to the after death ranks of sea, first heaven.

The after-death rank in the sea that is for those who begin the spiritual life having their names written in the book of life will remain on earth till death is fully done away with. That is why they will emerge resurrected in the final day resurrection. Their names are written in the book of life and that is the reason those of the rank delivered up by the sea will not be cast into the lake of fire when Death and Hades are cast into the lake of fire.

*"Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of Fire; this is the second death. And anyone not found; written in the Book of Life was cast in to the lake of Fire."* (Rev. 20:14).

Naming three things such as Sea, Death and Hades, only those of two ranks such as Death and Hades are cast into the fire excluding those of the Sea. From this we can prove without controversy that those who are in the Sea are of the rank being written in the book of life.

The book of life is a book in which writing was started off since the world began and being sealed at the end of Millennium and will finally be presented and opened at the last resurrection before the White Throne. Since the names of these belonging to the rank found in the Sea are in the book of life they are the ones attaining eternal life in the World to come and will inherit the courtyard which is the New Heaven and New Earth.

*"And all who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."* (Rev. 13:8).

*"..... And those who dwell in the earth will marvel, whose names are not written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world."* (Rev. 17:8)

From this it is very clear that during the rule of Antichrist there will be righteous people whose name will be written in the Book of Life. The meaning of the Book of Life being started entry since the foundation of the world

is to prove that the names are entered in the Book of Life only in relation with mankind. (The names of all men are written in the Book of Life before the foundation of the world; in the post sin-ridden earth the names of those who sinned from the beginning of the world have been erased from the Book of Life and the names of those who turned to God have been re-entered in the Book of Life).

The book of Life is termed as the Book of Life of the Lamb that was slain. No single person on earth takes birth or dies without the knowledge of God the Creator. Therefore all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him. And no creature is hidden from His sight (Heb.4:13). The first names entered in the book of Life were of Adam and Eve the names of all who were to be born with theirs as well). The names were written so because of the fact that men were created for eternity. But when sin was committed, each of their names was blotted out from the Book of Life. Whoever turned to God, their names reappeared in the Book of Life. We have already discussed that the first parents will not be cast into the Lake of Fire. In the post sin-ridden earth, the first name re-written in the Book of eternal life was of Abel.

God did not create man to cast him out into the Lake of fire which is the second death. What God desires of every man is that each may inherit eternal life and that each may go through the path of spiritual growth and attain the greatest possible spiritual rank. The burning hell is prepared by God for the devil and his angels (Mtt. 25:41).

But if man neglects the light of salvation God provides from time to time and does not repent, such a one will, no doubt, be cast out along with Satan the darkness and his angels.

All men take birth into this earth with their names being written in the Book of Life of the Lamb that was slain. At the beginning of creation, God blessed the first man and woman not just them only but all who would be born into the earth through them.

*“Then God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth” (Gen. 1:28).*

*“This is the book of the genealogy of Adam. In the day that God created man, He made him in the likeness of God” (Gen. 5:1,2).*

When the first humans sinned and became subjected to spiritual death, God did not curse them. God’s blessing conferred on them was perpetuated and thus God has given them the promise regarding the Spiritual life that was lost. Therefore God had providently prepared the way of redemption for the mankind brought out through Adam. That has got accomplished through Christ Jesus. The names of all the mankind of Adamic race are in God’s register i.e., the Book of Life. That is under the custody of the Creator God who is the Master of all Souls. When spiritual death happened through disobedience God had not blotted out the names of all who would be born through them. Only the names of those who commit sin are blotted out from the Book of Life. The mankind created for eternity came to a tug of war between eternal life and eternal death at the very beginning of creation.

*“Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, And not be written with the righteous.” (Ps. 69:28).*

We have already discussed that the names of those who sin are blotted out. The son of Man came to seek and save that which was lost. Though all are born into the world with their names written in the Book of Life, the Adamic sin spreads to all. At the creation of man the spirit inside was glorious, and there was no darkness in him, but the death of darkness was outside. as man went through what is called the experience of knowing good and evil, the light of life was lost and he turned into darkness, afterwards, whenever darkness dispels the spiritual life reappears.

To Adam and Eve who lost the glory of God Cain and Abel were born with their names written in the book of eternal life. Since the spirit of man is the lamp of God, both of them were innocent with divine spark in them. For they had started as infants in life. But when the knowledge of the world came into them they were led to sinning and subsequently to eternal death and inevitably to the blotting out of their names from the Book of Life. This is what happens to all men. As the infants grow older they seem to lose innocence, though nobody teaches them such evils as lie, jealousy, malice and pride etc., appear because of the widely spread sin-seed. Man is born as God's lamp (good) and grows to be darkness (evil). No man born into the world is different from this.

Scripture says that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Here it is made clear that the infants who die without committing sin are not blotted out from the Book of Life.

Though Cain and Abel born with their names written in the Book of Life got blotted out from the Book of Life because of sinning, Abel got justified by the better sacrifice than that of Cain by faith and his name reappeared in the Book of Life. This explains why it was written above that the first **re-entry** in the Book of life was Abel's name. Man commits sin by unbelief and becomes sinner and gets blotted out from the book of life; God has provided the opportunity for all men to get justified thorough faith in God without works and get registered in the Book of Life. By this it is confirmed that the just God does not show favouritism or partiality to any man. Life's beginning on earth to every human being is alike. No difference. The salvation of man's spiritual salvation is universal. It is not attained by human effort but by faith in God who justifies.

We have already understood that all men born as infants and divine purity is seen in every child as light. The meaning of what the Lord has said is made clear here.

“Let the little children come to me and do not stop them, for the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these”. Man is born with his name written in the Book of Life gradually grows to adulthood and becomes subjected to the spirit of lie thereby Sin and death lifting up its head and it results in blotting out the name from the book of Life. When a life is formed in a womb and even if it dies inside, such a soul will not be lost because their names are written in the Book of the Master before the heart begins to beat.

*“For there is not a just man on earth who does good and does not sin” (Eccl. 7:20).*

Solomon the wise has clearly said that as all men become active in work they get exposed to sin and subsequently get enslaved to death that is the wages of sin. **This emphasizes the fact that except Jesus Christ there is no one born into this world who can be considered to be righteous in deeds.**

*“They have all turned aside, they have together become corrupt; there is none who does good, no not one” (Psa. 14:3), (Psa. 53:3, Rom. 3:10-24).*

It is clear from this that all become sinners, isn't it? Of those written in the Book of Life most part will be infants. Not because the infants are holy but because they are gone from the earth without doing either good or bad. How many infants are killed in the womb? Similarly, how many parents kill their innocent children mercilessly and commit suicide? About such incident the Lord had beforehand said that even the mother that gave birth might forsake the child whom she nurses. The Word of God gives comfort to the mankind that even though your father and mother may forsake you, I will not forsake you.' When the devil by his evil schemes eliminates myriads of innocent infants on earth God will never forsake their souls. They will enter into eternity being resurrected, it is sure and just that God will, by no means, cast them into the lake of Fire. It is a matter worthy of acceptance that anyone in this manner

having lived anywhere on earth dies without being free from the corruption of the world, God will consider them worthy of the life eternal. We have discussed so far that such souls rest after death now in 'the Sea' belonging to the rank of those who are heirs of eternal life.

The power to write or blot out names in the Book of Life only vests with the Living God.

*"Yet now yet now, if you will forgive their sin – but if not, I pray, blot me out of Your book which You have written. And the Lord said to Moses, "Whoever has sinned against Me, I will blot him out of my book" (Exo. 32:32, 33).*

When a person sins against God his name is blotted out from the Book of Life instantly. That is why David who committed sin had conviction cried to God, "... against you, you only have I sinned". The above quoted verse from Exodus is a reflection of Moses' ardent love and responsibility towards the people of Israel. God emphatically told Moses that whoever commits sin, his name will be blotted out for sure, God's law is still unchangeable in the New Testament not only it was in the Old Testament.

*"He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels" (Rev. 3:5).*

There is sin leading to death (I Jn. 5:16, 17). Never forget the fact that whoever does it at any time, such a one's name is liable to be blotted out from the Book of Life. As far as a man is concerned, God considers as God's wisdom on the part of man to give no chance to such a plight but to please God perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

So far we have discussed about infants who are worthy to be written in the Book of Life and about such as are like

that in general. But in this context if some other instances also different from this are not brought out, it might cause doubts in the minds of readers; hence a look at such things.

*“ and what He did to Dathan and Abiram the sons of Eliab, the son of Reuben: how the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, their households, their tents, and all the substance that was in their possession, in the midst of all Israel” (Deu. 11:6).*

This is a strange incident of not only humans and infants, but also animals went down into the Hades alive because of the wickedness of men. There is evidence that there were infants also with them.

*“ ..... So they got away from around the tents of Korah, Dathan and Abiram; and Dathan and Abiram came out and stood at the door of their tents with their wives, their sons and their little children ..... so they and all those with them went down alive into the pit; the earth closed over them .....” (Deu. 16:26-33).*

Here a question may arise whether God showed justice to the little children taken into the bowel of the earth. It is quite impossible to give a clear answer to this. Since this is a shadow and that which is substance will occur at the glorious appearance of Christ; analysis of the events happening at that time tells us that the left side group that is rejected as cursed does not include infants. The reason being that those are the left side group who do not answer the Lord’s questions and they are the ones whom the Lord casts into the Lake of fire (Mtt. 25:31-46).

Here we can arrive at the conclusion that the little children who went down into the lowest part of the earth in the company of the wicked people their souls might have been transferred to the upper Hades if found innocent. God who is just could do it because nothing is impossible to God.

Another thing to note here is God's choice of some prior to their birth to the earth and God sets them apart. This too is on rare occasion, not always.

*"And not only this, but when Rebecca also had conceived by one man, even by our father Isaac (for the children not yet being born, nor having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of Him who calls), it was said to her, "The older shall serve the younger." As it is written, "Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated" What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? Certainly not!" (Rom.9:10-14), (Gen. 25:23).*

*"Even a child is known by his deeds, Whether what he does is pure and right"(Prov. 20:11).*

If we look at the actions of a young man we can determine to certain extent whether he will be an upright person in future. If it is so, the great God could determine Esau and Jacob when formed in the womb how they would be and choose accordingly. Before one's birth even before one did good or bad, God can understand the person's whereabouts. Esau who was a smart hunter had already started troubling the timid Jacob even in the womb. Jacob was not a quarrelsome person. At birth he came out of the womb taking hold of Esau's heel. Later on, he did the same thing to God and obtained God's blessing.

*"He took his brother by the heel in the womb, and in his strength he struggled with God. Yes, he struggled with the Angel and prevailed; He wept, and sought favour from Him. He found Him in Bethel, and there He spoke to us" (Hosea 12:3-4), (Gen. 32:22-32).*

Jacob received blessings weeping and humbling himself before God. God had not told any of them to do like this in the womb. But they became what they were at birth naturally. Therefore, God cannot be taken into account for partiality here either. God is righteous in all His acts.

If God had chosen Jacob in the womb, some were set apart even before formation in the womb.

*"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations" (Jer. 1:5).*

It is a strange thing that God appointed Jeremiah who was born in Israel as a prophet to the nations. At the time when Israelites were going to Babylonian exile God was in need of a prophet through whom He could speak to both His own people and to the nations. Thus God had sanctified Jeremiah in the womb for a special purpose. Similarly, John the Baptist was filled with the Holy Spirit in his mother's womb (Lk. 1:15,44). In this manner, God has set apart certain persons for His mission and sent into the world. But it must be noted that this is not common. The life of Jeremiah whom God had sanctified in the womb and sent into the world was full of afflictions.

*"Why did I come forth from the womb to see labour and sorrow, that my days should be consumed with shame?" (Jer. 20:18).*

The reason why God had fore-ordained Jeremiah before birth and had set him apart in the mother's womb was that unless he had not been prepared in advance, he could not have spoken the divine oracles at such a crucial time as that. With such exceptions, God does not pre-destine some to be born as sinners and some as holy. If one was pre-destined by God to be born as a sinner, then he would not be guilty. In that case how a just God could judge him?

The Gospel the heavenly calling is not specifically meant for some but to all creation. Gospel is meant to lead sinners to eternal life; the fact of the matter is that all are born in sin and there is no difference at birth; but a person through sinful deeds loses spiritual life and becomes darkened. At the same time, all are provided with equal opportunity to come back to God through the work of faith.

*“For if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things” (1 Jn. 3:20).*

God does not send anyone to the earth specially to do evil, neither to do well. It is the human spirit in each one that decides whether to do good or evil. In the same way it is not a meaningless talk that God does not want any single person to perish.

God’s desire for all His children is that they should repent and be born again in the family of God and their names be written in the Book of Life. That is why there is joy in Heaven when a sinner repents, the joy of finding that which was lost.

A moment of joy when once name is written in the Book of Life. That is the purpose for which our Lord opened a new way for mankind giving his very life.

Another strange thing that should happen in relation to infants is with regards to a certain thing in the New Testament. That is a question whether at the coming of the Lord in the mid-air the children also will be taken up when the Church the Bride that is the Pure Virgin will be raptured. Paul the apostle has recorded his opinion on this in the epistle of Corinthians beforehand.

*“But to the rest I, not the Lord, say: If any brother has a wife who does not believe, and she is willing to live with him, let him not divorce her. And a woman who has a husband who does not believe, if he is willing to live with her, let her not divorce him. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; otherwise your children would be unclean, but now they are holy” (1 Cor. 7:12-14).*

While Paul the Apostle has given an opinion like this is a matter of concern. Peter the Apostle also has pointed out a similar thing.

*“Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a*

*word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear” (IPet. 3:1,2).*

It says here that they may be won without a word, by the chaste conduct of their wives accompanied by fear. When the life of a person having believed in God is an example by the Word of God, it will impact the life partner. Here evangelisation is carried out by conduct or life not by word and it has great power. Christian life should transform another for sure.

Paul has opinionated in the epistle of Corinthians about the children born to a believer and unbeliever. Here the doubt about the children being unclean or holy is because of its relevance to the mid-air coming of the Lord. The first epistle to the Corinthians is written in relation to those who wait for the secret coming of the Lord in the air (ICor. 1:7). The epistle is brought to a close with a detailed description of the mid-air coming of the Lord and of the death and resurrection in the 15<sup>th</sup> chapter.

*“In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed” (1 Cor. 15:52).*

At the time of this, Paul wrote this as if it was likely to occur instantly. But the mysterious matter has not been fulfilled so far. To summarise the epistle, Paul the Apostle, with the view of preparing the church for the coming of the Lord, pointing out each of the setbacks and finally brings it to a close speaking about the mystery. As we read the first chapters of the epistle of Corinthians we can understand that there were people of various spiritual standards and views in the Churches of those days.

As Paul was pondering over the happening of Jesus’ mid-air coming and the saint’s imminent transformation his thought included the state of children as well as the

state of those children whose both the parents are not saved. Analysis of these things produced result; the children of believers (both fully partly) are holy.

At the mid-air coming of the Lord not all children on earth will be raptured. If that happens, then no child will be left on earth. Those taken out from the earth of the state of children belong to the rank of being written in the Book of Life worthy of only eternal life. Rather than that, they are not included in the New Jerusalem the city of the Living God. In order to partake of that greatness, one should attain through strict discipline in day-to-day life and experience of God's grace. When Jesus the Bridegroom will come in the mid-air and take up His Bride the Pure Virgin to the heavenly throne, their children also will be transformed; Paul the apostle says that they will not be left out. Since those saints who will be taken up are those who belong to the highest rank, Paul the apostle asserts here in this context that the children will be taken up only if they are holy.

What is stated here about children with the mid-air coming of the Lord is only a strange happening that occurs in a tinkling moment. If parents are worthy of being transformed, their children also will be transformed along with them, otherwise their children would be left as orphans. In divine program, God would never allow it to happen like that. **If one is believer and the other unbeliever, yet their children will be taken up.** In the mid-air coming of the Lord unbelieving partner will definitely be left out.

The reason why it is said here that even if one of the couple is unbeliever, the child is holy is to show them as belonging to a rank of purity. In the contrary, if it is given other distorted interpretation, it would not fall in tune with God's laws. Paul has not given over emphasis to children in his epistle while discussing about the coming of the Lord. He has only asserted that they will be taken up as holy.

Why we are discussing this subject so seriously here is because children have great importance in the study of those belonging to the rank of eternal life though this subject is to be emphasized in relation to resurrection. Let us also discuss about some probable state of affairs likely to be occurred at the coming of the Lord in the mid-air. One among them is there will be those sisters in the rapture who bear children in their womb. Of course, there will be children not only who are born but also in the womb. In that case, will God reject the human entity that is formed in them? Not at all! The children in their womb will surely be transformed along with them. Another possibility also can be cited here. Children are born to unbelieving parents and after their birth one or both to unbelieving parents and after their birth one or both of the parents get saved and reach perfection to be ready for the Lord's coming, will their children be left as unholy? The children were not born after the parents got sanctified, they were born before. The just and reasonable thinking is that God will consider such children also. Here the most pertinent notion is brought out taking into consideration all circumstances of all people in every state to come to faith and grow to maturity any time.

The common thinking is wrong that only the children of believers are holy and those others are otherwise. This thinking is relevant only to the coming of the Lord in the mid-air. All children are alike before God. Asked if the children born to the saints reaching the highest spiritual rank have any speciality, the answer will be yes at this juncture. For that is the reason why their children alone are being transformed and are taken up to heaven at his coming along with them. If so, some may argue that God did partiality with respect to other children. To this also, answer may be found from the scriptures.

*"Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution" (II Tim. 3:12).*

Those who live godly waiting for the Lord's coming will have to suffer many persecutions every day. Their children also partake of the sufferings at their tender age. Though many examples can be cited here, time and space fail me here. If a sister who is pregnant strives for spiritual perfection, the child in the womb will also participate in all happy and sorrowful experiences that the mother goes through. What distinguishes the children of the saints of the greatest rank from other children is the suffering they partake of right from the time they were formed in the womb along with their parents.

One of the things that is accounted to the children of the perfected saints is the rule of the kingdom "if you suffer with Him, you shall also reign with Him," by which the children of the saints also, will be transformed and taken along with them to the heaven of heavens. In this God does not show favouritism to any at all, which is very clear.

We have already seen who will be included in those who are in the Sea among the after-death ranks. **It consists of all the innocent children who cannot discern between their right hand and their left and those who are new born spiritual babes who believed in the gospel (regardless of caste-creed), all such souls whom God witnesses as innocent in His right will be in the rank worthy of eternal life transferred to the Sea.** We have learned that those who are from the beginning of the world to the end of the Millennium are in the rank and that they remained in the Upper Hades till the beginning of the New Testament and when the Lord descended to the Upper Hades and freed the captives ascending on high, the Lord placed the saints belonging to the preliminary ranks **in the Sea**. Ever since then, many are enrolled to this rank after death. Entry to this region is open until the final day when they all will be presented before the White Throne.

At the end of the rule of Antichrist the resurrection of the martyrs under the earth will take place; with that only one rank of the righteous will be left, that is the rank of those in the sea. A question may arise as to where God keeps the righteous souls who die during the Millennium, the answer is that such after-death rank will be in the Sea. The reason why such a rank is mentioned in the scripture and perpetuated is for the purpose of the Millennium also. A description of Millennium is not ventured here through it must be proved that birth and death occur during that period also.

*"I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people; the voice of weeping shall no longer be heard in her, nor the voice of crying. "No more shall an infant from there live but a few days, Nor an old man who has not fulfilled his days; For the child shall die one hundred years old, But the sinner being one hundred years old shall be accursed. They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat; for as the days of a tree, so shall be the days of My people, And My elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labour in vain, Nor bring forth children for trouble; For they shall be the descendants of the blessed of the Lord, And their offspring with them. "It shall come to pass that before they call, I will answer; and while they are still speaking, I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and dust shall be the serpent's food. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain," Says the Lord" (Isa. 65:19-25).*

From this scripture we can understand that during that time also there will be birth and death but there will be a difference from what is at present. Then the righteous will be majority and wicked sinners will be very few. Those who make houses to live during the Millennium will be not the resurrected saints, but ordinary humans made of

dust living in houses of clay wicked men and sinners will be present in the Millennium and at their death no single soul will happen to go to any higher than the King Jesus' head. Moreover, it has already been proved that no after-death-rank left in paradise will be present in the Millennium. During this period only three after-death ranks remain of which Rev. 20:13 says such as Sea, Lower Hades and Death. All righteous souls will enter into the Sea whereas the sinner's soul will enter into the Lower Hades and sordid sinner's soul will enter into Death or Hell. As the study of the after-death rank in the Sea comes to a close, **the study regarding after-death ranks including the ranks of all saints from the beginning of the world to the end of the Millennium is completed.**

As a humble servant of God, my desire and prayer is nothing but that at the minimum all may become worthy of eternal life and be written in the Book of Life. **In doing so, the message through this is that all can escape the Lake of Fire and get salvation from the eternal damnation.** "What shall a man benefit if he gains the whole world and lose his own soul?" The Scripture revealed here is that you will know the truth and the truth will set you free. Don't despise the study of after-death ranks. Live on with the thought that we will all face it at the end of life. In the next two chapters we will discuss about where all the wicked men who are sinners will be thrown. Let us go to the chapter unfolding the largest rank of wicked men who are sinners under the heading "Those who are in the lower Hades."

## Lesson Summary

- God had prepared after-death rank for men even in the Sea where there are creatures praising God.
- The Lord placed those worthy of eternal life in the Sea when He freed the captives from the Upper Hades and ascended on high.

- The souls gather into this rank from the beginning of the world to the end of the Millennium. Since sin and death are there in the Millennium, the souls of the righteous at their death go to the after-death rank in the Sea.
- It is not those who died at the sea that the Sea delivers up before the Lord's White Throne Judgement, but the Sea delivers up the particular group of people who are worthy of eternal life, whose names are written in the Book of Life.
- All the infants who just started thriving in the womb and died and all innocent souls of the same rank go into the after-death rank of the Sea.
- Those who are in the Sea are the preliminary rank in the after-death rank of the righteous. This is the long-spanned and the largest rank. Since Millennium is the Lord's rule, the number of those who enter into it will be too great. During that period there will be only one rank for the saints on the earth.

## Chapter - VI

# THOSE WHO ARE IN THE LOWER HADES

*"Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire." (Rev. 20:14,15)*

Death and Lower Hades are two ranks different from the after-death ranks we have discussed so far.

There are only two places where the whole mankind destined for eternity will go after death such as eternal life or eternal damnation. Before we discuss about the After-death-ranks of all the wicked ones thrown into the eternal hell, let us proceed refreshing memory of the hitherto-learned after-death-ranks of the blessed righteous.

1. **In the third heaven of heavenly paradise:-** The third heaven is the place where the saints of the highest rank i.e. the Bride of the Lamb of the Pure Virgin of the New Testament Church rest after death. The souls of the saints from the beginning of the New Testament Church to the mid-air coming of the Lord go to this place. They are worthy of joining Christ who is the Temple of the most holy place in New Jerusalem the city of the Living God.

2. **Those who are in the Second Heaven:-** The soul of the saints belonging to the position of Virgin in the New Testament Church rest here. From the beginning of the Church of God to the beginning of the rule of Antichrist souls will enter into this rank. They are worthy of the holy place in the city of the Living God.
3. **Those who are in the first heaven:-** The abode of all the souls of all the excellent saints of the Old Testament. Prior to the first coming of Christ they were in the Upper Hades. Now they rest in the first heaven. Entry to this place will be open till the beginning of the rule of Antichrist. They also are worthy of the holy place in the city of the Living God.
4. **Those who are under the earth:-** The abode of the saints of Israel and the Churches martyred during the short period of three and a half years right from the beginning to the end of the rule of Antichrist. They also are worthy of the holy place in the city of the living God.
5. **Those who are in the Sea:-** Here is the large chunk of souls worthy of eternal life qualified to live in the New Earth and New Heaven. All the righteous souls whose names are found in the Book of Life belong to this rank. They also were in the Upper Hades prior to the first coming of Christ. The Lord freed them and while ascending placed them in the Sea. From then on, the souls worthy of eternal life live in the Sea till the end of the Millennium. These inheritors of eternal life are worthy of the courtyard of the world to come.

To the question if man breathes his last where is he? The answer is given above. More precisely, the preceding pages unfolded the abodes of all the saints from the beginning of the world to the end of the Millennium. The Spirit of God that has revealed the ranks of the saints in the light of the scriptures will now reveal where is the abode of all the wicked souls from the beginning of the world, which we are going to see in the next two chapters.

So far we have been discussing that the abodes of righteous souls after death are in places where God's praises and adorations ring on the basis of Rev. 5:13. The souls of the righteous depending on their spiritual ranks go after death to various places ranging from Sea to the Third Heaven in the Heavenly Paradise. If so, the souls of the wicked or sinners must necessarily go to places where God's praises and adorations are not, right? There are several scriptures to support this notion. Some of them are given below:

*"For Sheol cannot thank You, Death cannot praise you; those who go down to the pit cannot hope for your truth" (Isa. 38:18).*

If the righteous has a refuge in his death (Prov. 14:32), the wicked as soon as he dies his expectation will perish (Prov. 11:7). It is clear from the Scripture that the souls of all the wicked who die desperate, rid of all expectations go to Lower Hades or hell that is death where no praises of God are heard, which is clear from the Scripture: "For Sheol (Lower Hades) cannot thank you, death cannot praise you".

*"The dead do not praise the Lord, nor any who go down into silence" (Ps. 115:17).*

*"For in death there is no remembrance of you; in the grave who will give you thanks?" (Ps. 6:5).*

The spiritual meaning of silence is not 'lack of noise but it means not being able to talk to God. Until the Word of God opens the heart and taps awake the human soul that is asleep or dead, man is spiritually dead. Unless the soul is awake all prayers and praises are mere din and noises!

Those who live on earth without remembering God and praising Him during their life will finally land in similar places such as Lower Hades and Hell that is death. Only those who worship the true God while in body will be

able to worship God and reach the suitable after-death-rank after leaving the body.

*“The living, the living man, he shall praise you, as I do this day; the father shall make known your truth to the children” (Isa. 38:19).*

Hezekiah has written his own life experience. Those have attained spiritual lives who praise God during their earthly life. They are not dead to God even after death.

*“ I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living” (Mtt. 22:32), (Mk. 12:26)*

*“ But even Moses showed in the burning bush passage that the dead are raised, when he called the Lord ‘the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. For He is not the God of the dead but of the living, for all live to Him” (Lk. 20:37, 38).*

This is a passage from the Old Testament (Ex. 3:6) quoted by the Lord in the New Testament of the word of Jehovah while appearing to Moses at the burning bush, the Lord quoted Jehovah to have said that none of the saints who died were in silence but were alive for ever.

The statement, “I am not the God of the dead but of the living” is not about all those who died and disappeared from the earth or those who are alive on earth. It must be viewed in the light of what God commanded to the first humans “on the day that you eat of it you will die,” speaking of spiritual death. The spiritual death was caused by unbelief in God and belief in the words of the devil, whereas believing in the living word of God men can regain the spiritual life that was lost. Those who have thus attained spiritual life and are gone from here are alive to God forever. But those who have neglected eternal life while in body and have got separated from body, they can never find opportunity to get eternal life by any means. All such will be found among the numbers of those who are spiritually lost in the sight of God.

No matter where on earth one is born and brought up and where and when one may be dead, if that person dies without getting eternal life the name of that person will not be in the Book of Life. All men, whose names are not in the Book of Life, are regarded as sinners in the Bible. Those who are sinners are classified into two. Anyone whose name is not written in the Book of Life will be cast into the lake of fire. Since this is spoken of as second death, it is clear that they are wicked sinners. It is Death and Lower Hades that are cast into the Lake of fire (Rev. 20:14, 15). Revelation 20:13 is giving evidence that Death and Lower Hades are after-death-ranks of the wicked sinners. We had this text as the basis for those who are written in the Book of Life as worthy of eternal life in the chapter titled 'Those who are in the Sea.'

*"The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works" (Rev. 20:13).*

Just as the Sea was found as a place of creatures worshiping God, Death (hell) and Lower Hades are two different places where there are no praises and adorations of God. That's why it is written together that Death and Lower Hades delivered up their dead.

Hell and Lower Hades are the after-death-ranks wherein the whole lot of souls emerging from spiritually dead state from the beginning of the world to the end of the millennium are kept. Born in the first spiritual death and having lived in sin, the soul has separated from the body and gone to its after-death-rank. In that case such a one's name will not be in the Book of Life. Their life is led by death and finally led to eternal death.

*"Now "If the righteous one is scarcely saved, where will the ungodly and the sinner appear?" Therefore let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls*

*to Him in doing good, as to a faithful Creator" (I Pet. 4:18-19).*

The precious life must be committed to the faithful Creator. Such are those who do good alone and get perfected for the salvation suffering according to the will of God. They that do not commit their own life during this fleeting life, into the hands of God, are ungodly and sinners. Those who fall prey to the most rigorous punishment of God are they that have hobnobbed with Satan and his agents during life on earth. Let us study about them in the last chapter titled "Those who are in Death". What we are going to discuss in this chapter 'Those who are in the Lower Hades' is about Lower Hades where those whose names are not written in the Book of Life and those who have not committed sordid sins in agony after death. The Lower Hades in the Old Testament is named normally as Hades in this chapter. In the New Testament, only sinners go to the Lower Hades that is in the lower part of the earth. Therefore by Hades we mean the Lower Hades which is needless to repeat again.

Of the two divisions of all wicked souls not written in the Book of Life the first division of wicked is in the Hades. Though they are sinners, they are not hard-core sinners. God will determine the kind of sinners that are flung into the after-death-rank of Hades. It is not possible to say on which criterion it will be determined. However, one thing can be said that God does not consider all the wicked in one rank alike. The righteous God shows His justice even in this. God has prepared judgement and after-death-ranks for each of the wicked according to their deeds.

*"The wicked shall be turned into sheol, even all the nations that forget God" (Ps. 9:17 ASV).*

Here it is made very clear who will be placed in Hades after death. The phrase "The wicked and all the nations that forget God" is used to figure out all the wicked people from the beginning of the world that are turned into

Hades. If the phrase “all the nations” only was mentioned, then the wicked people of the ancient world would not have included in it. The reason being that it was after the flood of Noah that the nations were divided (Gen. 10:32).

It is specially mentioned here that under the wicked sinners, the hard-core sinners are not being discussed, but about the souls that are sent to the Hades after death. The flood of Noah is a principal proof of the fact that before the nations divided there were wicked men doing corrupt things forgetting God from the beginning of the world. In that flood all were drowned except eight-souls while innumerable people went into the after-death-ranks of Hell or Hades.

By the Hades here it is meant as the lower part of the Hades which is the **place of torment**. It may not be mistaken as the lower part of the earth that Jacob generally said. It has already been discussed in detail in the first chapter under the title ‘Those who were in the Upper Hades’. We have already discussed that the lower part of the earth which is the Hades was divided into two by a gulf in between as Upper Hades and Lower Hades and the righteous souls were in the Upper Hades and the wicked were in the Lower Hades. From the beginning of the world to the Lord’s bodily sacrifice which is the atonement for sin there were only four after-death-ranks. Until then all men after death used to go to the lower part of the earth. There were two rows or ranks in the Upper Hades for the righteous souls and the Lower Hades row for the wicked souls and the row beneath the Lower Hades i.e., death or hell for those who committed the most serious sins.

By the supreme sacrifice of Jesus Christ, the righteous souls in the Upper Hades promoted, their condition was bettered. They were promoted to the Sea and the first heaven, whereas the condition of those who were in the lowest Hades and Death or Hell did not undergo any change. Their fear and despair

rather increased and the countdown for their final throw into the Lake of fire is on.

Given below is the scriptural evidence that the souls of the wicked were sent to the Lower Hades, which is beneath the Upper Hades.

When the names of those who come near God are written in the Book of life, they are saved from the depth of Sheol (Psa. 86:13). Hezekiah has written about it from his own experience in more elaborate way:

*“Indeed it was for my own peace That I had great bitterness; But You have lovingly delivered my soul from the pit of corruption, For You have cast all my sins behind Your back” (Isa. 38:17).*

It is when a person has full confidence that God has forgiven all his sins that he is well assured that God loves him. Hezekiah has said here that God has cast all his sins behind His back; giving assurance that once it was cast it would not be taken again, which is characteristic of divine forgiveness. Man may forgive yet he may keep on reminding it. But God forgives forever. That is why the Lord commands His disciples to forgive deliberately. How blessed are those who get God’s forgiveness! Hezekiah is glad about it saying that it was good that he had affliction and he confidently says that God had forgiven all his sins and lovingly delivered his soul from the pit of corruption.

Whenever a term in the Old Testament occurred as ‘go down into the pit’ it spoke of physical death. But the ‘pit of corruption’ mentioned here is not death he was delivered from but speaking of salvation from the depth of Sheol. Moses the man of God has revealed where God keeps unforgiving sinners.

*“You have set our iniquities before You, Our secret sins in the light of your countenance” (Psa. 90:8).*

The reason why the faces of people who look toward God for salvation and deliverance, shine is that God has

wiped away all their sins and transgressions. The prophet Micah also has to tell the same thing. "He will again have compassion on us, and will subdue our iniquities" (Micah 7:19).

These scriptures tell us that those who get God's love and mercy get their sins and iniquities forgiven and their names are written in the Book of Life. Many do not bother about their hidden sins. The sins stay until they are forgiven by God, they don't go. Paul in the New Testament has written about it as hidden things of shame.

*".....in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel" (Rom. 2:16).*

*"But we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God" (II Cor. 4:2).*

All men must know that someday God will reveal all secrets that man has kept as top secret in the innermost part of heart. This knowledge only can make man's surrender complete. David the King of Israel had committed a great sin and though he kept it as a secret in his heart, God did not show him any favouritism. When the prophet pointed out his mistake, it happened that David admitted it and sorrowfully asked God's pardon. When mistakes are pointed out, the hearts of wicked men get hardened whereas those who want to live uprightly become heartbroken and repent of their sins.

*"Who can understand his errors? Cleanse me from secret faults. Keep back Your servant also from presumptuous sins; Let them not have dominion over me. Then I shall be blameless, And I shall be innocent of great transgression" (Psa. 19:12, 13).*

It is when forgiveness of hidden sins is attained that human spirit starts shining. When the door of the closed

heart is open to the purifying Word of God, the divine light sends its beacon to the inner soul; and the sin that is darkness vanishes. The more importance to the Word of God in the heart the brighter people shine. **The upright and victorious Christian life is the one in which no darkness remains.** It is Jesus Christ the true light that removes the death which is the darkness from life.

*“That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world” (Jn. 1:9).*

The Word of God is as True Light that gives light to the mankind manifested in the world as the Gospel. Those who believe in the Gospel have entered from darkness to light. If anyone has not entered into this marvellous light, such a person, after death, will go to the Hades of silence or to the Hell which is death. The way of life leads upward for the wise, so he may avoid sheol below (Prov. 15:24). Those who live delighting in foolishness will go downward in life; but the way of life for the wise goes upward. The evidences for this from the beginning of the world are given in the scripture. Those who were in the Upper Hades were promoted to the higher places. When they will further be promoted in resurrection, the way of death for the sinners will still be downward. That will finally lead them to the Lake of fire which is the second death.

*“And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted” (Mtt. 23:12).*

Those who continue their life un-yielded to the Word of God will be brought low forever. But those who have divine knowledge will humble themselves admitting that without God they can do nothing. God exalts such people in due time. Man has nothing to boast about. What do we have that which is not given by God? Then what is it that man boasts looking at?

*“For who makes you differ from another? And what do you have that you did not receive? Now if you did indeed*

*receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?" (ICor. 4:7).*

We should neither be proud of something that we possess nor be desperate over something that that we don't have. The best thing for us is to be content with what we have and thank God for it. Those who turn away from hell below will remember God in everything and admit the fact that without God nothing can be done. The main reason why they that go down to the hades below go is their haughty nature of self pride. God's children are rather those who find it their joy to please God than being haughty.

*"Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him" (II Cori. 5:9).*

Those who find it their goal to please God in life here and hereafter do it with great confidence to live in God's grace. The Lord's admonition that unless one is become like a child one cannot enter the Kingdom of God is about humility one should have.

*"Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven" (Mtt. 18:4).*

Hope it is clear that those who do not humble themselves will land in Hades that is the place of torment. We have already discussed about the life of the rich man who reached the place of torment in the lower Hades. He had lived while in body with the thought that he was wise. That was the cause of his downfall.

*"The rich man is wise in his own eyes, But the poor who has understanding searches him out" (Prov. 28:11).*

There are so many rich people in the world who have the misconception that they are wiser than all. This leads such people to high mindedness and arrogance. The rich man had thought himself to be wise until he reached the place of torment. But he had found out his foolishness of leading a haughty life on earth only when he had realized

the after death life of Lazarus whom he had deemed as a simpleton and fool. Then we see the rich man weeping over the fact that the plight of his five haughty brothers would be the same. But make no mistake there is no use of sorrowing after death. One should set his life in order while he is in body.

*“Whoever offers praise glorifies me; And to him who orders his conduct aright I will show the salvation of God” (Psa. 50:23).*

All the works of God glorify Him (Psa. 19:1). Only those who are spiritually alive can settle their lives and glorify God, discerning this. Fool says within the heart that there is no God (Ps. 14:1). As we read Psalms 10 we can see the nature of a man whose thinking is that there is no God. The wicked are those who are arrogant, brag about their evil desires, covetous and too proud to seek God, haughty and do everything with the thought that there is none to question them (Psa. 10:1-11).

Some think that there is no God and living in their own whims and fancies go to damnation while some others professing to be wise, changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like the creation and commit sin.

*“...because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man – and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things.” (Rom. 1:21- 23).*

To refrain from worshipping God is equally sinful to worship anything other than God. Some people worship god-men and similarly beasts that perish, which is scripturally wrong. Satan who is the god of this world prevents the worship of the true God and leads man to

other foolish type of worship void of knowledge thereby stealing the worship that belongs to God.

*“And he said to Him, “All these things I will give you if you will fall down and worship me.” Then Jesus said to him, “Away with you, Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve” (Mtt. 4:9-10).*

**All must be aware of the fact that the divine oracles are commandments and not human opinions.** The laws of the nature are also commandments; the nature has not been given freedom to act on its own. That is why everything has an order in which to move and act in a set pattern. God’s commandment is not to create gods of one’s own opinion and choice and worship them but to know the true God and worship Him only. It is revealed by the Holy Spirit in the Scripture who the true God is.

*“And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent” (John 17:3).*

*“Therefore concerning the eating of things offered to idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is no other God but one. For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as there are many gods and many lords), yet for us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we for Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and through whom we live” (I Cor. 8:4-6).*

The Spirit of God has revealed everything clearly by the Holy Spirit in the New Testament. Eternal life comes by knowledge. The knowledge of God the Creator and Christ the Saviour is eternal life. The knowledge beginning with eternal life reaching the knowledge of maturity means that we grow to the full stature of Christ. But the scripture records that all do not have this knowledge. God has given the revelation to man who God is not only in

the New Testament but it was given in the Old Testament also. The great multitudes who drowned and perished in the flood of ancient time were those who disobeyed the commandment of the Lord.

God determines whether one deserves eternal death or not considering each one's work. He weighs each one's works. No matter which period of time each one lived, it is God who searches the hearts determines one's after-death rank. God who is just does not show favouritism to anyone. The fact of the matter is that the sinful humans by their righteous deeds cannot get saved from sin. However, God looks at one's inner desire. If there is anyone who wants to live for goodness in the world of evil, God comes near to such and saves them by God's own initiative. This is the salvation project of God from the beginning of the world to the end of the Millennium.

*"Then Peter opened his mouth and said: "In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality. But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him" (Acts 10: 34, 35).*

The disciples who were Jews could scarcely accept at the beginning the fact that the Gentiles would come to the Church. Eventually, God sent Peter to the house of Cornelius and revealed the salvation for the Gentiles. That is the context in which the above verse was spoken. God has included all mankind in the Salvation project and its fulfilment. If anyone gets lost to the clutches of Hades and death, it is by their own neglect and deviation from the path of God.

*"As drought and heat consume the snow waters, So the grave consumes those who have sinned" (Job. 24:19).*

All sinners go after death down to the Hades. If we can put what is sin in a single word, it would be 'disobedience'. **The sin that is disobedience is to do what God has forbidden and not to do what He has**

**commanded to do.** Sin and death continue on earth right from the time man was created to the end of the millennium and therefore Hades the after-death-rank of sinners stands from the beginning of the world to the end of the Millennium.

It is written in Scripture that through the disobedience of one man Adam sin has entered into all humanity (Rom. 5:12). As the result, all the mankind who are sinners are transferred to the Hades and Hell after death. But we have learned that all do not fall into Hades like that. Just as sin **and death came to the world God introduced the way of salvation also to the mankind from time to time.** As several questions have been asked by men in the Old Testament, to which answers are found in the same Scripture.

*“Remember how short my time is; For what futility have You created all the children of men? What man can live and not see death? Can he deliver his life from the power of the grave? “ (Ps. 89:47-48).*

The question rises here is how empty and futile is the short life on earth whose end is in the Hades. The answer is given in Proverbs (16:4) that God has made everything for his own purposes. It is a fact all must know that during such a short life on earth the greatest thing to gain is one's own soul and the loss of it is the greatest loss one incurs. God the Creator does not desire of man's demotion but promotion. It is God's saving act that saves man who is doomed to Hades and death lifting up from there. Those who listen to God's voice and follow Him as His sheep will get saved from Hades and death or hell.

*“Like sheep they are laid in the grave; Death shall feed on them; the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning; and their beauty shall be consumed in the grave, far from their dwelling. But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave, For He shall receive me” (Psa. 49:14-15).*

The sons of Korah have great confidence to declare this. Why because as their parents went down to the Hades alive they got saved from that destruction keeping aloof from them in the fear of God.

*".. and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up together with Korah when that company died, when the fire devoured two hundred and fifty men; and they became a sign. Nevertheless the children of Korah did not die" (Numb. 26:10, 11).*

The sons of Noah got saved from the flood clinging to God whereas the sons of Korah stayed detached to their parents who did evil against God in rebellion thereby getting saved from the Hades. The Psalms penned by the sons of Korah speak volumes of God's dearness and approving of them. God the Creator alone can redeem and save one from the lowest pit the Hades that one might not fall into it. If one wants to get saved from the lowest pit, the way of salvation is Christ Himself. The Lord descended to the Hades and redeemed all the godly people of the Old Testament who had lived in the fear of God and died. But all the ungodly people who lived in their on way being led by the devil in the Old Testament are still undergoing torments in the lower Hades.

Even before the Law was given God had reckoned sin to mankind. But as the scripture in Rom. 5:13 raises some doubts it would be better to discuss a little bit about the divine law God had given to Israel here.

*" For until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law" (Rom 5:13).*

Anyone reading this may get the impression that in the absence of law God does not reckon sin. In that case, one might teach that until the law was given there was not a single sinner on earth. But that is far from truth. Actually, this is a translation mistake. It may turn out to be the cause of a serious error. No need here to present

evidences for the fact that there were sinners since the world began. Just as there were those getting justified by faith, certainly there were unbelieving sinners as well. The Law was given only to the nation of Israel, not to the entire mankind. Therefore, the Law had nothing to do with the Gentiles; it was not 'binding' to them.

*"Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God" (Rom. 3:19).*

Through the law we become conscious of sin (Rom. 3:20). It means that God, having classified the shameless acts of sin that prevailed among men till then, and the law was given forbidding Israel to commit such sins. The reason why God classified those acts that God counted as sins that all the mankind had been committing before the law was given and codified and given as law to Israel was that they might be a special people on earth.

*"Therefore be careful to observe them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes, and say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people'" (Deut. 4:6).*

The law given to Israel was touching all areas such as social, civil and ceremonial life, giving them clear commandments. The divine commandments having been received, when the recipients leave them unheeded, God counts it as sin. All the sins figured out in the law from the beginning of the world to the time Law was given had prevailed in the world. But those sins were reckoned to Israel only when the Law was in force. God's perfect Law concerning all the nations is commanded by God in the New Testament. Truly these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent (Acts 17:30).

The actual rendering of Rom. 5:13 would be: "As for sin, it was on earth till the Law was given; but in the absence of Law sin was not counted as sin" (Rom. 5:13).

*"For there is no partiality with God. For as many as have sinned without Law will also perish without law, and as many as have sinned in the Law will be judged by the Law" (Rom. 2:11,12).*

God looks at the state in which each one lived on earth. God deals with those who have the Law accordingly and with the Gentiles who don't have it accordingly. All the wicked people and all Gentiles who forget God and those who do not obey the law and those who know the law and reject it and in short all whose names are not written in the book of life will finally land after death the lower Hades of silence where there will be torment.

*"...tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek; but glory, honour, and peace to everyone who works what is good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek" (Rom. 2:9,10).*

Those who have got the Law and rejected it have had to suffer trouble and calamity on this earth itself. The trouble and calamity was sent to their life in order to turn them from their evil ways to the right path; if they did not return such souls would be entering into damnation.

"For God may speak in one way or another, yet man does not perceive it ..... In order to turn man from his deed, and conceal pride from man" (Job 33:14-17). God speaks not only to Israel but to all people in order to make them turn from wrong doing and keep them from pride. If they do not heed to what God speaks to them, it will be counted as sin on them. Since we have come to the close of the chapter titled "Those who are in the lower Hades", let us close this discussion revamping the study on who will go down to the Hades as sinners. Those who have known God and not obeyed Him will have their share

at the end with sinners and wicked people in the Hades no matter which period of time they lived on earth. What Jesus said in the Gospels has relevance to this topic.

*“If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. He who hates me hates My Father also. If I had not done among them the works which no one else did, they would have no sin; but now they have seen and also hated both me and My Father” (Jn. 15:22-24).*

*“Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you say, ‘we see.’ Therefore your sin remains” (Jn. 9:41).*

The Lord spoke this about the Jews. Though He came to the lost sheep of Israel and interacted to them, they did not heed to the words of Jesus because of their hardened heart. Moreover, their knowledge of the Law of God had made them proud and it further bound them to sin shackles. Paul the apostle also has spoken about it in his epistle.

*“ Indeed you are called a Jew, and rest on the law, and make your boast in God, and know His will, and approve the things that are excellent, being instructed out of the law, and are confident that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, having the form of knowledge and truth in the law. You, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that a man should not steal, do you steal? You who say, “Do not commit adultery,” do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? You who make your boast in the law, do you dishonour God through breaking the law? For “the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you,” as it is written” ( Rom. 2:17-24).*

Scripture speaks to each of us, not only to Jews. Neither can we say that we have not known the truth anymore.

Although we have the name that we are Christians, if we do not live according to the example that the Lord showed us, it is equal to bringing disgrace on the name of God.

**The Spirit of God clearly says that having known the Gospel, if we still live as though we had not known it, life is in danger.** Life has just a label of believer and Christian and yet life is altogether wrong. Those who have known the truth are obligated to live up to the mark of being a true Christian. If such people do not live in obedience to it they cannot get away from sin. Knowing that God speaks to us for our betterment; for a greater spiritual standard, let us commit ourselves to the hands of God joyfully forsaking sin and desiring holy life. May He build us up according to His will. Nothing else will distinguish us from others.

*“But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death” (Rev. 21:8).*

*“But outside are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie” (Rev. 22:15).*

It is written in Revelation the last book of the Bible who all will be those that are cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, those who will be partaking of the second death. In the book of Genesis the warning was given of the first death saying on the day that he ate it he would die, whereas in the last book a list is given of those who will partake of the **second death**. Those who are in this list will not be found in the book of life. Such go to the Hades or Death after death. They are those of whom it is written the Hades and Death delivered up their dead before the White Throne (Rev. 20: 13). All the wicked ones whose names are not found written in the book of life are kept in the after-death ranks of Hades and Death. In the last part of the book of Revelation, the Spirit of God has

clearly revealed who all will be cast in the eternal fire the second death. In different parts of the scripture it is recorded what is sin.

*“All unrighteousness is sin, and there is sin not leading to death” (I Jn. 5:17).*

We will look at it in detail in the next chapter. All unrighteous acts are sin before God. Whatever is not from faith is sin (Rom. 14:23). Therefore to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin (James 4:17). But if you show partiality, you commit sin (James 2:9). Jesus, who came to fulfil the law rather than abolishing it, revealed the real purpose of the Law. The Law was more to do with external things whereas the new commandment is rather internal. Christ taught in the Sermon on the Mount that let alone sinful acts committed by the members of the body, but even the attitude in the heart or thought realm is considered as sin (Mtt. 5:17-7:29). All of it is included in the list of sins revealed in the book of Revelation (Rev. 21:8, 22:15).

Will you pause for a moment in the busy life just to ponder?

- 1. Am I fearful not obeying the commandment of the Lord?**
- 2. Or an unbeliever doing sin by unbelief in the Word of God?**
- 3. Or though I have a form of godliness outwardly is my inward life disgusting as a stinking sepulchre?**
- 4. Though I do not commit murder, do I use my tongue as a sharp knife to painfully stab others and even kill?**
- 5. Am I a fornicator indulging in the sin of the world, interested to see, hear and do?**
- 6. Or a sorcerer and idolater rebellious and obstinate?**
- 7. Or a liar loving untruth and worshipping falsehood?**

After doing a self examination, if your conscience is pricked by any of the above-said points then sincerely pray to God asking pardon and forsaking the sinful ways and make a commitment to living for God. If not, God shows no favouritism to anyone. God will search each one's heart, and will cast them judging as liars into the eternal hell fire. Let it not happen to us. Make sure your name is written in the book of life daily.

All the souls of the wicked from the beginning of the world to the end of the Millennium who have committed sin and are not found written in the book of life will be put up in the after-death-ranks such as Hades and Death. Those among them that enter into the Lower Hades are condemned in the above said sins. Those who enter into the Hell that is Death are they that grieve the Holy Spirit by committing the most serious sin. In the next chapter titled 'Those who are in Death', we will discuss about those who will be put in the last row of after-death rank having committed serious sins in rebellion to God.

## **Lesson Summary**

- Hades and Death are places of Spiritual silence where no creatures worshipping God are found. Spiritual silence does not mean that they do not talk but they have no communication with God.
- Hades is the place where all the wicked (not hardcore sinners) souls from the beginning of the world to the end of the Millennium are kept.
- Those who will go down to the Hades are they that know about God's salvation and yet neglect it till death.
- The majority of the souls perished in the great flood during the days of Noah in the ancient world had reached Hades.
- In the parable of the Rich man and Lazarus, it was only when the rich man reached the place of torment

the Hades that he repented of his lost opportunity and his untimely request to get saved was rejected.

- Lust for money is the area in which Satan can influence most people. Covetousness is the idol Satan has installed in the hearts of the majority that is why the Lord has picked up the rich man as an example from among the sinners.

## Chapter - VII

# THOSE WHO ARE IN DEATH

*“For if God did not spare the angles who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgement.” (2 Pet. 2:4).*

Now we have entered into the last chapter of the study of After-death-ranks. In this chapter we are going to discuss who they are that are in Death. The mysteries of the creation of the universe were unfolded through Moses in Genesis of the Old Testament whereas through Peter the first of the disciples of Jesus the mysteries of events prior to the creation of man have been unfolded. Here Peter the apostle has written that even before the creation of man, the angels who sinned were put in **hell or death** and delivered into chains of darkness to be reserved for the great day of judgement. Hope it is clear that it was angels who had first sinned not man and that there existed sin, death (darkness) and Hell even before the creation of man. It is also clear that the creation of heaven (sky) Lucifer the chief of the angels and all the angels with him were not in the heaven of heavens because when the heart was full of pride and had sinned they were cut off and fell to the ground.

*“How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, You who*

*weakened the nations! For you have said in your heart: 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.' Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol' To the lowest depths of the Pit" (Isa. 14:12-15).*

Since it is written about Lucifer 'you who weakened the nations', no one should reach the wrong conclusion that before Adam was created there existed men on earth and these were the nations weakened or seduced by the devil. The scripture proves beyond doubt that there were no such creation on earth before (Since such topics as angels, sons of God, human creation, demons and spirits etc., have been described in the book "Revelation of Eternity", repetition of the same here is averted. Those desirous of knowing more about it may please read the first two chapters of the book). The phrase 'you who weakened the nations' has occurred because it is written in comparison of the King of Babylon to Lucifer. The prophet Ezekiel has written likening the King of Tyre to Lucifer (Ezek. 28:11-19). Just as Christ is pictured as the King of Shalom and in comparison to David etc., Lucifer is compared to King of Babylon and Tyre.

Here a question may arise as to why God has not given a second chance to Lucifer and his companions who sinned against God but put them in Hell right away. As we try to find out the answer to this question, we may get a clear picture of those who belong to the after-death-rank such as 'Those who are in death.'

Peter the apostle says that God did not spare the angels who sinned (2Pet. 2:4) but in the same epistle he says about God's attitude about mankind that He wants no one to perish but all to come to repentance (2Pet. 3:9). It is God the Creator of all creation who created angels and mankind, God has a clear purpose about each creation.

God does not leave any of his creation uninformed about his laws and about the consequence of breaking the laws. God had forewarned the angels who were the creation of heaven that they would be cast into the second death which is the lake of fire. The Lake of fire was prepared for them only not for the mankind (Mtt. 25:41).

The sin of Lucifer and his angels who were in Eden the garden of God in heaven was not by the persuasion of any others. Their sin was due to their own pride and self exaltation and being sin-stained within they sinned against God and that is why God did not give a second chance for the angels that sinned to return. Though Eli the priest lost the Lord's vision warned his meanest sons like this: "If one man sins against another, God will judge him. But if a man sins against the Lord, who will intercede for him?" (ISam. 2:25).

Those who were well aware of the Levitical priesthood laws and were supposed to honour the offerings of God had despised the divine commandments and sinned, then that sin was serious before the presence of the Lord (I Sam. 2:17).

The law of God that if we sin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, such a one will be thought worthy of the worst punishment, is applicable even to an ordinary man. The reason why God spoke that no sacrifice or offerings would be sufficient to atone for the sins of Eli's family was that they had rebelled against God. They had not sinned against man but against God (I Sam. 3:14). If an angel sinned against angel, it could be interceded to God for them, but the sin of angels was against God directly. That is why they were denied another chance to return.

The first humans committed sin beguiled by the devil, not on their own initiative. It was a creature deceiving a creature in Eden on earth while in the heavenly garden of God Eden the creature Lucifer and his companions had

got puffed up with pride within and sinned against God the Creator who knew even the secret thoughts of heart from afar off. Instantly God had cut them off by the sword of the Word of God. In the book of Genesis we have the hint of wicked angels being chained in hell and Lucifer who is the darkness which is death being pressed in deep with the spirit brooding over the waters.

Hope it must be clear why God did not spare the angels that sinned and why God gave man who sinned another chance to return. An example to illustrate this is given here. Though a criminal is given death sentence from the Supreme Court, he may have option to submit a mercy petition before the President who is the highest authority to give its final verdict. The President has power to take a discreet decision on the petition submitted before him. **Suppose some of the body guards of the President have trespassed against the highest authority directly, who would then give pardon to them? This is the same thing that has happened to the angels who sinned against God.**

Adam and Eve did not commit a serious sin direct to God. God's law lays it down that the soul that sins shall die. God breathed into the nostrils the breath of life after creating man with the dust of the ground, and he became a living soul. Until the first man fell under sin he had body, soul and life in spirit. Since the breath of God that was the life had illuminated his soul, the first humans had glory and honour. When sin occurred, their souls became enslaved to death that is darkness. This is what is meant by Spiritual death. Man lost his glory and honour; he began to comprise of body, soul and darkness (death). Though darkness entered into man, when the Word of God which is life comes into him, that person can be brought back to eternal life. **But in the case of Lucifer and angels, darkness was not coming from without. On the contrary, it was sprung up from within. Therefore,**

**eternal death had wrought in them forever so that they could not return.**

When darkness is dispelled from the man who sinned, they can be brought back to life. The Word of God is living and powerful piercing even to the division of soul and spirit and of joints and marrow and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart (Heb.4:12). The Word of God is powerful enough to quicken all things in man such as the body, soul and spirit. When the word of God is active in the life of such people life and vigour comes. The names of such are re-written in the book of life.

We have discussed already that God before the creation of man had put the wicked angels who sinned against God in the prison of death. Hope it must be clear from Scripture that all the wicked from the beginning of the world to the end of the Millennium not found registered in the book of life are kept in Hades and Death and after the final day judgement they will be cast into the Lake of fire which is the second death (Rev. 20:14, 15). We discussed about those who reach the Lower Hades after death in the previous chapter. **Those who are cast into the Hell that is death after death are the souls of humans who commit the most serious sins like the angels.**

The first among men to commit the most serious sin and was flung into hell (death) the last after-death-rank, was Cain who murdered his own brother. The wicked Cain went farther from God daily and gradually became the fertile soil for darkness. Cain who won the displeasure of God was visited by God yet unheeded to God's words and hardened his heart. Then grip of Satan on Cain was tightened. As the result, he killed his brother by his own hands and became subject to God's curse thereby being like the angels that sinned.

Here it doesn't mean that all the murderers will fall into the hell that is death. God has given everyone an opportunity to repent no matter how serious sins one may

have committed. If a person confesses his sins to God he shall be forgiven no matter how great his sins may have been. But in Cain's case what happened? He did not heed to God's voice but committed sin and courted God's punishment inevitably. Thus Cain who committed the most serious sin fell as the first victim into the last after-death-rank. Hope it is confirmed with scriptural support who will be cast into the Hell that is death. **The angels who have been denied pardon and those who commit serious sins like Cain are those who will be entered into the rank of Death.**

The instance of angels sinning and being put in hell was not just the time prior to creation. Even after human creation angels have sinned and been put in Hell.

*"And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day; as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire" (Jude 6-7).*

The incident spoken here happened before God had destroyed the ancient world through flood. The angels in question here are not those who had sinned before the creation of man. The angels spoken of here are those who left their own abode in heaven (sky) but have come down to earth after strange flesh. The passage in Genesis 6 is the context here. When the sin against divine ordinance through man-to-angel intercourse on earth, God intercepted and put the angels that sinned in chains. When God destroyed the world full of abominations by flood, the souls of the sinners were put into Hades and the sordid sinners were put into death, thus both groups were imprisoned by God. In the present world also when men indulged in unnatural activities, God poured out His fire

of wrath upon Sodom and Gomorrah burning the cities to ashes, and cast the souls of sordid sinners into the Hell that is Death. The scripture records that the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah was horrible.

*“But the men of Sodom were exceedingly wicked and sinful against the Lord” (Gen. 13:13), (Jude 7, 2Pet. 2:6).*

*“And the Lord said, “Because the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grave” (Gen. 18:20).*

Before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, it was a beautiful land like the garden of the Lord. This explains why Lot who separated from Abraham had chosen the well-watered land (Gen. 13:10-13). **Many a luxury spot that looks beautiful on earth has quite often turned into joy resorts of sinful abominations. There is no doubt wherever such sordid sin abounds, the cry out of the land will reach the presence of God and judgement will inevitably come.**

What we have done so far is picking up certain cases from the Old Testament and proving each of them in the study of the after-death rank in the Hell that is Death. In it we have discussed that the angels that sinned before and after human creation have been imprisoned in Hell and also that the first sordid sinner among men was Cain and he went to perdition being denied pardon. We have thus discussed so far that both in the flood of the ancient world and Sodom-Gomorrah disaster the sordid sinners were led as prey into the Hell that is Death.

There is record in the Bible things about individuals who have obtained divine pardon and those who have not in spite of committing sordid sins. Constrained by limited space, let me pick up two examples from the Bible David and Pharaoh.

*“Against You, You only, have I sinned, And done this evil in Your sight – That You may be found just when*

*You speak, And blameless when You judge" (Psa. 51:4),  
( II Sam. 12:13).*

Though David the King of Israel had kept his sinful episodes a top secret, God published it. The above quote is David's confession owning up his mistake when Nathan the prophet disclosed the sin committed by him. As a King, he could have reacted in arrogance or anger but he humbly admitted his sins. God forgave him because he had humbled himself before God. Yet he had to reap the results of what he had sown in the flesh. God had spared his life because God had found David's penitence to be sincere. Unless a person yields himself to God as He speaks, he will perish without excuse no matter who he is.

Take the case of Pharaoh who had confessed he had committed sins repeatedly yet he was not honest, his objective was mere temporary relief.

*"And Pharaoh sent and called for Moses and Aaron, and said to them, "I have sinned this time. The Lord is righteous, and my people and I are wicked" (Exodus 9:27).*

Though Pharaoh had admitted that the Lord was righteous, later we find him hardening his heart.

*"Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron in haste, and said, "I have sinned against the Lord your God and against you" (Exodus. 10:16).*

Here we see the reflection of the impenitent heart of Pharaoh. Confession of sin repeatedly and once the divine deliverance is obtained, if God's commandment is neglected again, life of such people will end up in great disaster. The life of Pharaoh and his comrades is an eloquent example. Mere confession of sin before God is not enough but only when God knows that one has forsaken the sinful ways does God give forgiveness of sins.

The people of God in the New Testament must live with utmost care. The study of the last rank among the after-

death-ranks is very crucial as far as God's people are concerned because in this dispensation the greatest and highest possible rank can be achieved; or if, in any way, error occurs the odds are that one may be thrown away to the last and lowest rank of curse. In the New Testament with regards to the New Testament Church we have not come to that which is shadow but to that which is substance. The true God appeared in the flesh and spoke, not only that He gave Himself up as an offering for the atonement of the sins of mankind. He defeated Satan on Calvary and made him surrender disarming him. He sent God the Holy Spirit to the earth to build up the Church that was bought with the Holy Blood of Jesus, and the building of the Church is on. During this period of the acts of the Holy Spirit which is the period of Grace, each believer must have the knowledge that if anyone rebels against the Spirit of Grace, such a one will be doomed to eternal punishment being denied pardon.

*“Assuredly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they may utter; but he who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is subject to eternal condemnation” (Mk. 3:28,29).*

Jesus our Lord has said that whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come (Mt. 12:31,32). That is why it was warned at the beginning that we must live our Christian life most soberly. If asked which the greatest and never-pardonable sin is, the answer in one word will be: **the greatest sin will be that which is against the Holy Spirit.** Sins against the Holy Spirit are given below:

1. To grieve the Holy Spirit (Is. 63:10).
2. To lie against the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:3)
3. To test the Holy Spirit (Act. 5:9).

4. To think that Holy Spirit can be purchased with money (Acts 8:20)
5. To insult the Spirit of grace (Heb. 10:29).
6. To blaspheme against the Holy Spirit (Mk. 3:29).

It has clearly been proved that the souls of those who are doomed to the worst punishment are cast into the Hell the after-death-rank. The scripture also gives us clear identity of such as are there.

*“ For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. Anyone who has rejected Moses’ law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace? For we know Him who said, “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,” says the Lord. And again, “The Lord will judge His people.” It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God” (Heb. 10:26-31).*

Any careful reader of this passage can understand who they are of whom it is written. Since the pronoun ‘we’ has been used here including Paul we can make out that the audience is within the Church, not without to whom it is addressed. It is inclusive of **all of us** who have received the knowledge of truth, not outsiders.

*“For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame. For the earth which drinks in the rain*

*that often comes upon it, and bears herbs useful for those by whom it is cultivated, receives blessing from God; but if it bears thorns and briars, it is rejected and near to being cursed, whose end is to be burned" (Heb. 6:4-8).*

### **It is about the gospel enlightenment that it speaks here.**

*"Whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them" (2 Cor. 4:4).*

Those who obtain the illumination of the glorious gospel do get the heavenly gift of salvation (Rev. 7:10). Here it is written that even those who have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the powers of the age to come or the power of the Kingdom of God (Mk 9:1) are liable to backslide by the viles of the devil. **Never forget the fact that Satan comes to take up a combat with those who are matured spiritually. Therefore, we should defeat Satan by the power of God within us and not get entangled by the devil's evil schemes.** Those who commit sordid sin and fall from the grace of God cannot be brought back to repentance. Such people are grabbed by the devil through deception and come to a state of delusion thinking that whatever they do is right. Gradually, their heart is hardened and loses the experience of repentance. This is what is meant by the term 'sin worthy of death'.

In the epistle the apostles of God have not laid stress on material things or its blessings; but on how to lead one to the highest calling of Christian life. Given below are some of the reasons why so many people set out, they miss the mark half way.

*"For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning. For it*

*would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them. But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: "A dog returns to his own vomit," and, "a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire" (2Pet. 2:20-22).*

The second chapter of II Peter and the epistle of Jude are identical passages. The Spirit of God tells here that it would have been better for them not to have known the truth than having known it. Jesus said about Judas also almost similar to this.

*"The Son of Man indeed goes just as it is written of Him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had never been born" (Mk. 14:21).*

Though he walked in communion with the loving Lord, his greed was no less; it was on the rise. That led him to do that which he was not supposed to. It seems whether he has taken birth just in order to earn the thirty pieces of silver that was the ransom money for betraying Jesus. This explains why the Lord said about him like that. How many miracles and great ministries he had witnessed! Yet his outlook in life was not spiritual enrichment; it was greed for money. And that paved the way for all the evils to spring up in him.

God forbid that it should happen to anyone who is born again that the Lord might wish he had not been born rather than putting Christ to an open shame and being the enemies of the cross (2Cori. 3:2,3).

*"For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ" (Jude 4)*

The spirit of God had foretold since the first century that certain ungodly men creep in unnoticed to the Church. In these days it is on the increase.

*“Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist who denies the Father and the Son. Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father either; he who acknowledges the Son has the Father also” (1 Jn. 2:22, 23).*

Judah the apostle has written about the ungodly men who deny the Lord through their works whereas John the apostle records about those who deny Christ doctrinally. Often times the interesting question is asked how we can know that a person denies Jesus Christ. Once the devilish power confronted Christ directly but now masquerades in spiritual circles with make-believe artificiality so that it has become very difficult to draw a line between the true worship with teaching of truth and false teaching with pseudo-worship. Since it is pure imitation those who carefully watch it can find out the ungodliness in them. Though it all looks alike outwardly, their activities will be diametrically opposed to each other. The scriptural record about life’s purity goes like this:

*“For there are many insubordinate, both idle talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole households, teaching things which they ought not, for the sake of dishonest gain. One of them, a prophet of their own, said, “Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons.” This testimony is true. Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith, not giving heed to Jewish fables and commandments of men who turn from the truth. To the pure all things are pure, but to those who are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure; but even their mind and conscience are defiled. They profess to know God, but in works they deny Him, being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work” (Tit. 1:10-16).*

There is no validity for mere words of those who profess to know God. It should be validated through repentance in life after having known God. Those who hold fast the Word of life must shine as lights in the darkened world. If one knows God as he should, surely God also will know him. If it is so he will definitely love God (ICor. 8:3). The Word of God has confirmed that the proportion in which one loves God is the proportion in which one keeps the commandments of God.

*“He who says, “I know Him,” and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked” (1Jn. 2:4-6).*

**Though the thief in the worldly sense got saved at the cross of Calvary, it is very hard for the thieves in spiritual circles to repent.** Hope by now it is clear how a person denies the Lord. While some are very eager to teach doctrines they will lack action in practical life. Another group will be world famous charitable workers but their teaching will have leaven in it (false teaching). Both are equally dangerous.

The last chapter of the after-death-ranks are a strong warning to the children of God who have known the truth more than to others who are in the world. Since time would fail me to go on writing about this, I am cutting it short. Since the main theme of all epistles and the book of Revelation is to emphasize and alert the believers about the coming of the Lord and prepare them, this book also gives emphasis on the same. The ungodly in the Church are the pests that surface while the Holy Spirit prepares the Church for the rapture. Godly men are not those who put on the form of godliness but have the power thereof. In the epistle of Titus it is written about those who deny God while Paul gives a long list of those who are

disqualified with regards to faith while writing about the perilous times of the last days (2Tim. 3:1-9).

*“Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you? – unless indeed you are disqualified” (2 Cor. 13:5).*

We must examine ourselves so much the more as the day of the Lord draws near. Only if we have assurance that Jesus is in us do we become qualified in respect of faith (doctrine) as well as of good things. Let us not deny the works of Jesus in our day-today life having received Him let us walk in His foot prints.

*“Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world. You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. They are of the world. Therefore they speak as of the world, and the world hears them. We are of God. He who knows God hears us; he who is not of God does not hear us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error” (1Jn. 4:1-6).*

It is written that by this you know the Spirit of God; every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God. If we do not understand its real spiritual aspect, we may mistake those who say and sing that Jesus is the Saviour of the world for those who are of God. As a matter of **fact, during Christmas season so many people are engaged in carol-singing and shout about Jesus’ coming as the Saviour of the world in the flesh. Do they all sing and cry out in the Spirit? If we carefully watch**

**their appearance and movement we can easily make out that it is not so. To some it is an empty ritual while money minting to certain others.** It is just an instance cited only.

Not those who just say Jesus Christ has come in the flesh; but those who have accepted the fact that Jesus has come in the flesh are the children of God. Only if we understand spiritual meaning in depth can we identify who they are that have the spirit of God. Why Jesus the Son of God manifested in the flesh to the world two thousand years ago was to fulfil the atonement sacrifice for the sins of the mankind that was not yet accomplished. His blood of sprinkling made the restitution for the sin of the mankind. Anyone who believes in this has all his sins forgiven on the basis of accepting the Lord and becomes a new creation being born again. The works of such person after being a new creation should not be denying the Saviour Jesus. Their life must be in obedience to the Word of God and an exemplary one. If a person has been named to be a believer or brother, does not show in any case change in character and life style, the spirit working in such a one is not God's but the spirit of falsehood.

*“I wrote to you in my epistle not to keep company with sexually immoral people. Yet I certainly did not mean with the sexually immoral people of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner – not even to eat with such a person. For what have I to do with judging those also who are outside? Do you not judge those who are inside? But those who are outside God judges. Therefore “put away from yourselves the evil person” (I Cor. 5:9-13).*

In view of this everyone must examine himself. In so doing all will become pure and the evil doers will be vanished from Church congregations of God.

After the final day judgement, all wicked souls belonging to the ranks Death and Hades will be cast into the lake of burning fire. The details of the aftermath of the final judgement are recorded in three parts of two closing chapters of the Book of Revelation. (Elaboration is given in the resurrection ranks).

*“But the cowardly, unbelieving,[e] abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death” (Rev. 21:8).*

*“But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life” (Rev. 21:27).*

*“But outside are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie” (Rev. 22:15).*

We have already seen from the Scripture who they are that are spoken of as dogs. As we compare Revelation 21:8 and 22:15 we can see that the three groups such as the fearful, unbelieving and abominable are comprised in one word as ‘dogs’.

“Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the mutilation” (Phil. 3:2). Those have come to the faith and deviate to go down the stairways of sinfulness are like dogs who will be among those who are condemned to the most rigorous punishment (2Pet. 2:22). Likewise, the evil workers are the deceitful workers and false apostles masquerading as ministers of righteousness (2Cor. 11:13). The mutilation workers are those who claim circumcision is necessary for salvation. They are those who brag about traditions and arrogant preachers (Rev. 3:17). God has given freedom to all people on earth.

*“ He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him be righteous still; he who is holy, let him be holy still” (Rev. 22:11).*

If we live indulging in sin and finding delight in it, we will be worthy of the most rigorous punishment. Those who become like the devil will be cast into the outer darkness with him and his angels forever. The Lord has given as a final admonition for the righteous to enter into the Kingdom of God and the Holy people to join with Christ perfecting holiness. Let us surrender our life to become like our Lord perfecting holiness. Why because that is what is the will of God who has saved us. Whoever wants to become more and more like Him the Spirit of the Lord will certainly help towards that direction. Making that our life objective let us forge ahead towards the highest calling of the spiritual life. May the Lord help us for that.

As we come to the close of the study of the last after-death-rank which is ‘those who are in death’, we must keep ourselves in the fear of God so that we may not be worthy of the most rigorous punishment. Let the understanding that before the Lord who knows us very well nothing is hidden, rule us always. **We have already proved that those who will get the most rigorous punishment are equal to the angels that sinned and their after-death abode will be the Death that is Hell. Death is the after-death-rank where the angels that sinned before and after human creation and all the souls of the humans who committed sordid sins are imprisoned.**

I give honour and glory to God for giving me grace to finish writing the after-death ranks in answer to the question ‘When A Person Breathes His Last,Where Will He Be?’

The first part is concluded here with the sincere prayer that all my readers may reach the highest rank and that

no one may enter into the lower ranks of death and Hades. Now let us go on to the resurrection ranks answering the question 'If A Human Being Dies, Will He Live Again? May the Lord help us to continue studying it. All are welcome to the second part in the name of the Lord.

## **Lesson Summary**

- The Death that is Hell is a place far away from the presence of God the creator where grim silence prevails.
- The after-death-rank of those in Death is the last of all and the most cursed rank.
- These hardest sinners have sinned in resemblance to the angels. They are such as have wilfully sinned in spite of knowing the will of God and that is why they are doomed to Death along with the angels that sinned.
- Condemned to the most rigorous punishment, Cain was the first person who killed his brother at the beginning of the world to be pushed to the last rank of Death.
- When one of the malefactors crucified beside Jesus repented and was ushered into Paradise obtaining the greatest possible bliss, the other reviled God and was flung into Hell enslaved by the hardest sin.
- Greatest and most rigorous punishment will come upon those who reject the true religion (true way). If those who were once enlightened and freed backslide to commit sin, they will be arriving at the Hell that is Death.
- The cursed after-death-rank of those who are in Death that is Hell belongs to all hard-core sinners whose names are not written the book of life right from the beginning of the world to the end of the Millennium.

## First Part- A Retrospect

While we are at the finishing point of the study of 'when a person breathes his last, where will he be?' as we ponder over the eternal truth that after I breathe my last where I will reach:

- In case of being a member of the Church perfect and mature such a person will be ushered into the **third heaven** of the Paradise of perfect delight.
- In case of a member of the Church in a state of not having attained full victory in the conflict with Satan daily while leaving the body, such a person will be ushered into the **second heaven** of the Heavenly Paradise.
- In case of remaining in the same condition in which one was born again (Spiritual senility) having accepted and obeyed the basic doctrines of the Church, such a one after death will be ushered into the preliminary rank of the righteous ie., **the Sea**.
- If persistent in disobedience and unsaved condition even after knowing the divine truths, such a one at death will be taken by the angels to the grim place of silence ie., **the Lower Hades**.
- If a person having grown to spiritual maturity left the knowledge of God and sinned for the temporary benefits in the world, he will be flung into **Death that is Hell** which is the last and final after-death-rank.
- Having studied about seven after-death-ranks, to the question where will I be if I breathe my last today, the answer will be one of the five above-mentioned ranks. God has given free will to choose where it must be during our life time.
- Entry to the **first heaven** now is permissible on the basis of how God approved of the greatest of the Old Testament saints, only those of the same rank. The New

Testament Church members are not allowed entry there.

- The place which is not in existence now where there are creatures that praise God ie., **under the earth** (under the altar) is a new after-death-rank for the martyrs which will come into being during the early part of the rule of Antichrist. Since the secret coming of the Lord will take place before that we need not exceed that point. What is imperative for us is to get ready for the rapture at the mid-air coming of the Lord.



## PART - II

# IF A HUMAN BEING DIES, WILL HE LIVE AGAIN?

### (Resurrection Ranks)

*"You turn man to destruction, And say, "Return, O children of men" (Psa. 90:3).*

This scripture makes it clear that death is not the end of human life and all men who are dead will come back to life at the voice of God. The explanation in the form of answer to the question 'When A Person Breathes His Last, Where Will He Be?', is the result of search according to the Scripture "search from the book of the Lord and read: not one of these shall fail; not one shall lack her mate (Isa. 34:16). It is such finds that are given under the title "after-death-ranks". In the previous chapters we have discussed that all the humans from the beginning of the world to the end of the Millennium who have returned to the dust will be attached to seven after-death-ranks.

*"In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground. For out of it you were taken; for dust you are, and to dust you shall return."(Gen. 3:19), (Job 34:15, Eccl. 12:7).*

God Jehovah has asserted to the man who is subjected to spiritual death what happens to his body by sinning. According to God's law man's body after the Spirit has departed will return to the dust from where it was taken. Like Solomon the wise that posed several questions from his human understanding, here also several questions may arise. All bodies are not necessarily buried in the ground after death. Death occurs in Sea, air and elsewhere and body may be mutilated and decomposed anyway. If that happens how the statement in scripture that it returns to the dust will be fulfilled? We must understand that this is a general statement in relation to human creation.

There are exceptional cases of departure from the earth without going through death. In such case soul doesn't depart from the body. It is transformation that takes place. However, it will not be relevant if we argue that the body didn't return to the dust. The presence of dust of the earth is not only in the ground but all over the universe in its minute molecules. It is in the human body and in everything handled by man. Even if the body is preserved that it may not decompose, still the presence of dust of the ground will be there. No matter where and how death takes place, the human body while decomposing will certainly return to the dust and at the voice of the Lord will be resurrected and return to life.

Solomon the wise at the beginning had raised several questions such as the speciality of the human soul and where would it go after death etc., (Eccl. 3:20-22) finally concludes with the things that the all-knowing God had said at beginning.

*"Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit will return to God who gave it."(Eccl. 12:7)*

By the statement that the human body created out of the dust of the ground returns to the earth itself and the spirit inside man returns to God it means that human souls are under the control of God.

The second part of this book 'Resurrection Ranks' is an answer to the question 'If A Human Being Dies, Will He Live Again?' which is written on the basis of the after death ranks explained in "When A Person Breathes His Last, Where Will He Be?" We have proved that the souls of all men from the beginning of the world will go to seven after-death-ranks. There is also scriptural evidence that the resurrection of all of them will happen.

*"I have hope in God, which they themselves also accept, that there will be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust" (Acts 24:15).*

From this statement that there will be resurrection of both the righteous and the unrighteous, we can understand that all people on earth will fall into either of these two groups. It means that all men have eternity and all will be resurrected. Now we are going to discuss about when the righteous souls from five after-death ranks and the souls of the wicked sinners from two after-death-ranks will be resurrected at the voice of God. For a convenient study the resurrection ranks have been divided into five chapters. A brief description of each of them is given below. Detailed study is given under each chapter.

## **1. THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST JESUS**

*"And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the pre-eminence." (Colo. 1:18).*

He who descended from the heaven of heavens took the form of man down on earth was born according to the Scriptures, died and buried for our sins and resurrected on the third day according to the scriptures and had appeared to the disciples. On the fortieth day, He ascended to heaven in sight of all the disciples. He is now seated on the right hand of the Father. Christ is the first fruit of heaven of heavens by the resurrection from among the dead. This chapter depicts the death and resurrection of

Christ Jesus which we will ascertain through old and New Testament references.

## **2. RESURRECTION OF THE PURE VIRGIN**

We have already discussed in this book part I chapter II under sub heading 'Those who are in the third heaven' that is the after-death-rank of Pure Virgin the bride of the Lamb. Those belong to the greatest rank in the New Testament Church who take rest in the third heaven of the Heavenly Paradise. Their resurrection will take place in the mid-air coming of the Lord. At that great event, the mature saints among the living will also be transformed. The resurrection of the Pure Virgin is proved on the basis of Book of Revelation Chapter-12.

## **3. RESURRECTION OF TWO WITNESSES**

In the resurrection of two witnesses the resurrection of two groups are completed. That is the resurrection of the Old Testament champions resting in the first heaven and one group among the Virgins who are of the New Testament Church resting in the Second heaven of heavenly paradise. The resurrection of these two witnesses will happen together. Here these two groups are portrayed as two witnesses in the word of God so that the witnesses of both the Old Testament and New Testament are represented.

This resurrection of two witnesses which takes place at the beginning of the rule of Antichrist has been clarified with reference to Revelation chapter 11 verses 1-13.

## **4. THE FIRST RESURRECTION**

Before the glorious appearance of the Lord all the saints belonging to New Jerusalem the City of God shall be resurrected and taken up to heaven. The souls of martyrs from the beginning to the end of the three and half year rule of Antichrist are kept by God under the earth that is

the altar of the Lamb. These include the Israelite martyrs and those martyred of the New Testament Church who belong to a group among the virgins. It is their resurrection that occurs at the first resurrection. This event is explained on the basis of Revelation 20:4-6.

## **5. THE RESURRECTION ON THE FINAL DAY**

On the final day the resurrection of all humans from the beginning of the world to the end of the Millennium both of those registered in the book of life and of those who are not, will occur. After death the souls of those registered in the book of life will be ushered into sea and the souls of sinners into Lower Hades and those who committed sordid sins into Death that is Hell. The final day resurrection will affect the largest masses belonging to the three ranks (such as the Sea, Hades and Death). All sinners appearing before the White Throne from Lower Hades and Hell will be thrown into the eternal Hell fire while all the righteous registered in the book of life appearing before the White Throne from Sea will be ushered into the New Heaven and New Earth for eternal life. This is explained with the help of verses in Revelation 20:11-15.

## Chapter - VIII

# THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST JESUS

*"Whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it" (Acts 2:24).*

The resurrection of Christ Jesus from among the dead is the greatest event in the history of mankind. Scientific discoveries and achievements as well as the new technological ventures of the modern world have found their worthy place in history. Moreover, how many more achievements are on the way! But there is only one person who has the most unparalleled and highest sort of history; that is none other than Jesus the Son of God who was born into the world for the salvation of mankind. The birth of Jesus, ministry, death and resurrection etc., are all great miracles and hallmarks in history. How great was the ministry of Jesus during the three and half years (1260 days)! The scripture records that it is impossible to describe all what Jesus did.

*"And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book;" (Jn. 20:30)*

*"And there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I suppose that*

*even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written. Amen" (Jn. 21:25).*

If we read the above verses carefully it might seem to us to be exaggeration! A doubt may arise what great things Jesus had performed during the three and a half years! If the universe created by God the Word in six days is beyond description in words or letters how much more indescribable would be the whole lot of activities by the Word that became flesh and dwelt among men during the 1260 days? In this chapter we are going to discuss about the resurrection of Jesus Christ who rose from the dead as the first fruit. Since the resurrection of Christ is a historic event it doesn't need proving; but what we do is unfolding certain pages that have been unclear so far.

When the Jews requiring sign (I Cor. 1:22) asked Jesus what sign do you show, and then Jesus replied:

*"Jesus answered and said to them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." Then the Jews said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?" But He was speaking of the temple of His body (Jn. 2:19-21).*

What Jesus spoke while in body could not be understood by the hearers well. Even today there are so many who do not grasp the things recorded in the Scripture. Jesus did not say that He would build another in three days; if He was to build another literal Temple, He had not to have the one in existence destroyed. Though the people could not understand that the temple in question was His own body that was God's temple, the disciples could grasp the mystery later on after His resurrection (Jn. 2:22).

Jesus had spoken the same thing about His death and resurrection to those who had reported Pharisees and Scribes to have expressed the desire of Jesus to have performed a sign.

*"Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered, saying, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from you." But He*

*answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." (Mtt. 12:38-40), (Jonah 1:17)*

The above quoted verse says about two things comparing His death and resurrection to two events that happened. The Jews who required sign could not grasp what Jesus said in connection with the Temple. Similarly, what Jesus spoke regarding Jonas also was not digestible to the Greek (Gentiles) who sought wisdom though none dared to ask anything about it. Yet, several questions rise up pertaining to this. The question now that is brain storming is whether Jesus remained inside the earth as He said three days and three nights. Well, Jesus the Lord who sees everything from the very beginning how it will end up may not have made this statement without anticipation of something meaningful, now let us discuss about what it might be.

Nowhere in the scripture is it recorded that Jesus would remain inside the earth three days (72 hours); but it is recorded that after death He would rise on the third day, the proof of which is Jesus' statement in the Gospel (Jn. 2:19) that He would raise it in three days.

*"From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day" (Mtt. 16:21), (Mtt. 20:17-21, Mk. 5:31, Mk. 10:34, Mtt. 17:23, Lk. 18:32-34).*

On both occasions Jesus said two different ideas. First He spoke in connection with the Temple; that the fulfilment of the Law would be done through Him and the things happening would be in three days. It is explained one by one below:

On the night of killing the Passover Lamb Jesus was arrested and handed over to be crucified (Mtt. 26:2, Mk. 14:12, Lk. 22:7).

He was sentenced to death on Friday morning (Mtt. 27:1).

He was crucified on Friday at the third hour (9 am) (Mk.15:25).

There was darkness in the land from sixth hour (12 pm) to the ninth hour (3 pm), (Mtt. 27:45).

Jesus breathed his last (gave up His ghost) at the ninth hour on Friday (3 pm) (Mk. 15:34, Mtt. 27:46).

Jesus was hanging on the cross on three nails approximately 6 hours in excruciating pain (From the third hour to the sixth hour). He had fulfilled everything written beforehand in the scriptures in His life. Jesus had commended His spirit into the hands of the Father in full consciousness saying 'it is fulfilled'. His body was taken down from the cross only after the Roman officials had made sure that He died.

*"Now when evening had come, because it was the Preparation Day, that is, the day before the Sabbath, Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent council member, who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God, coming and taking courage, went in to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Pilate marvelled that He was already dead; and summoning the centurion, he asked him if He had been dead for some time" (Mk. 15:42-44, Mtt 27:57-61, Lk. 23:50-56).*

Joseph of Aremathea and Nicodemus had performed the burial of Jesus' body according to the Jewish rites in a tomb. Since it is recorded that it was the day of preparation and the Sabbath drew near (Lk. 23:54), we can confirm the fact that the time was probably after 12th hour (6 pm) on Friday.

The day in the Scripture begins from dawn to dawn (From the light to light). So the evening and the morning were the first day (Gen. 1:5). It means that the day began at dawn and ended at dusk and proceeded to the next dawn making a day. According to the world timing, one day starts at midnight and transpires at the next midnight.

Jesus the sun of righteousness defeated death and rose again after the Sabbath was over and the sun arose early morning. Here we understand that the resurrection took place when the Sabbath or Saturday was over and it had entered into Sunday the first day of the week. We can calculate three days and three nights during which Jesus remained inside the earth in connection with Jonah like this: on the day of preparation (Friday) Jesus dies. On the Sabbath (Saturday) Jesus' body lies in the tomb. First day Jesus gets resurrected. Three days may be figured such as **day of preparation, Sabbath day, and the first day.**

We can prove regarding the 39 hours which elapsed between the death (when the Spirit of Jesus departed from the body) and resurrection of Jesus. The details are given below in Table:

**Tabular Form of the Duration From Jesus' Death to the resurrection**

Jewish Time		International Time		Duration
From	To	From	To	
Friday afternoon 9th hour	Saturday afternoon 9th hour	Friday afternoon 3 pm	Saturday afternoon 3pm	24 hrs
Saturday afternoon 9th hour	Saturday Night 9th hour	Saturday afternoon 3pm	Sunday early morning 3 am	12 hrs
Saturday night 9th hour	Sunday morning sunrise 0 hour	Sunday early morning 3 am	Sunday morning Sunrise 6 am	3 hrs
			<b>Total Hours</b>	<b>39 hrs</b>
A Jewish day of 24 hrs consists of 12 hours day (starting from morning 6 am to evening 6 pm) and 12 hours night (starting from evening 6 pm to morning 6 am). So 1st hour of day means 7 am as per International Time and 1st hour of night means 7 pm as per International Time.				

Now let's see how long Jesus' body remain in the tomb. His body was laid in the tomb on the day of preparation Friday evening when Sabbath fell. So we can arrive at a time on Friday evening 12th hour (6pm).

Friday (12th hour) evening (6 pm) to  
Saturday (12th hour) morning (6 am) ==> 12 hours  
= 1 night

Saturday morning (6 a.m.) to  
Saturday (12th hour) evening (6pm) ==> 12 hours  
= 1 day

Saturday (12th hour) evening (6 pm)  
to Sunday morning (6 a.m.) ==> 12 hours  
= 1 night

**Total = 36 hours = 2 nights and 1 day.**

Jesus' body remained in the tomb in Jerusalem about 36 hours, i.e., two nights and 1 day on scriptural basis. Just as three days have been proved, three nights and three days that Jesus spoke of himself being inside the earth like Jonah who remained in the belly of the fish also needs proving. Though Jonah was the Lord's prophet in Israel, God had commissioned him to bring the message to Nineveh the city of Gentiles. The mystery of Jesus' statement of Jonah in relation to His own death and resurrection is: that Salvation through the Gospel is not only for the Jews but for all the mankind on earth. This is undoubtedly sustained in the world today through the Gospel. Jonah had to remain alive in the belly of the great fish because of his aversion to obeying God's commission. However, Jesus the Son of God by his complete submission to God's mission of salvation for all mankind had to give up His life and remain in the tomb two nights and one day. All are aware of the fact that Jesus' birth, death and resurrection was not just for a particular place but for all the world. Since it is God's mission for all the mankind it cannot be measured or done by human calculation or calendar but everything is done by God's programme. For

example, regarding Israel's life each and every activity (festivals, Holy days, Sabbath, etc.) days and times are fixed even to the minutest detail.

In the New Testament, the exact date and time of the birth, death, mid-air coming etc., of Jesus are not exactly given because these are not sporadic events but are of universal importance. The New Testament is an all inclusive book appealing to all mankind, rather than for a particular nation or society. As a matter of fact, on the face of the earth, various time zones are found by virtue of which days differ from place to place. When Jesus' body remained inside the earth two nights and one day (36 hrs.) how does it correspond to three nights and three days on the globe? Let us see.

The Time table of events occurred in connection with the death and resurrection of Jesus at Jerusalem the central part of the earth (Isa. 19:24, Ezek. 5:5).

		At Jerusalem	On the other side of the globe
1	Time duration of 12 hours Friday evening (6 pm) to Saturday morning (6 am) when the Lord's body remained in the tomb	Night	Day
2	12 hours from Saturday morning (6 am) to Saturday evening (6 pm)	Day	Night
3	From Saturday evening (6 pm) to Sunday morning (6 am) till resurrection occurred.	Night	Day

When the Lord's body remained at Jerusalem one night and to those on the other part of the globe was one day. Thus one night and one day was fulfilled. When the day broke at Jerusalem night fell on the other side. When night fell at Jerusalem day was on the other side. Accordingly, in global view Jesus body remained inside the earth 3 nights and 3 days. Thus we can conclude that what Jesus said then was not error. Globally speaking, **the body of**

**the son of Man remained inside the earth three nights and three days.**

With regards to the death and resurrection of the Lord there are several figures of Speech in both Old and New Testament. A few of them will be discussed here now.

*"But those things which God had foretold by the mouth of all His prophets, that the Christ would suffer, He has thus fulfilled" (Acts. 3:18, 26:23).*

The salvation project through the death and resurrection that God the father had prepared for the mankind through His darling Son was foretold by all the prophets.

*"For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures" (I Cor. 15:3, 4).*

Both the Old and New Testament Scriptures testify that the sin of all mankind was laid on Jesus.

*"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all" (Isa. 53:6).*

Paul the apostle has recorded in the New Testament like this:

*"...but also for us. It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification" (Rom. 4:24-25).*

THE DEATH AND RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST IS THE CAPSTONE OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH. Hence the hardest opposition rose against the same. On the very day that Jesus rose again, scandals on the resurrection also began. Paul called them as Jewish myths.

*"...not giving heed to Jewish fables and commandments of men who turn from the truth" (Titus 1:14).*

The false tales circulated among the Jews since then were fabricated by the high priests and the elders who had been responsible for the crucifixion of Jesus.

*"Now while they were going, behold, some of the guard came into the city and reported to the chief priests all the things that had happened. When they had assembled with the elders and consulted together, they gave a large sum of money to the soldiers, saying, 'Tell them, 'His disciples came at night and stole Him away while we slept.' And if this comes to the governor's ears, we will appease him and make you secure.'" So they took the money and did as they where instructed; and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day" (Mtt. 28:11-15)*

Ever since God the Father had anointed Jesus at the beginning of His public ministry, the strongholds of the devil were pulled down one by one. In the same way, the traditional powers as well as Gentile forces were shaken. Since then the scheme of getting rid of Jesus at any cost was hatched out. Even after this was accomplished, they were not at peace and that was why they had got Pilate to make the tomb as secure as possible by Roman seal and guard by soldiers. The reason why they had taken so many precautionary measures was that the statement that the disciples had told about Jesus' resurrection on the third day had reached the ears of the high priests. They had never expected that Jesus so mighty in word and deed would yield Himself to death like a lamb. That is why they went to arrest Jesus with swords and clubs. When things went beyond their expectation, they had presumed that He might have chalked out some secret plans to the disciples to fulfil the prediction of resurrection on the third day. They had made the tomb secure by strong guards with the fear that the disciples after stealing the body of Jesus would spread the false news that Jesus was resurrected.

Among the disciples of Jesus, none except Judas was unloving or fearful. They had run away from Him by God's determination. Otherwise they would all have been killed with Him and the heavenly mission of evangelisation would be impossible.

*"I will strike the Shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered" (Mk. 14:27, Zech. 13:7).*

There are those who simply babble devoid of understanding; such as "Mary Magdalene and other women were more loving and courageous than Jesus' apostles". Such is not the case at all. The tale cooked by the Jews after resurrection makes the matter clearer. The Jews bribed the guards to spread the news that the disciples had stolen Jesus' body when they were asleep (Mtt. 28:11-15). Here it is clear why God hid the disciples from the arena, isn't it? If the disciples had reached the tomb at first, the story spread by the Jews would be truer. That is why Jesus had commanded the disciples to go to Galilee before His death. He had never asked them to come to the tomb (Mk. 14:28).

The death of Christ on the cross was more sorrowful than the disciples could bear. It had caused great mental agony in them. They were ruled by the thought 'what next?'. It took some days to recover from the great impact it had struck their mind with. That might be the reason the news of resurrection had seemed to them to be a fairy tale (Luk. 24:11). Yet, the fact that Peter and John ran to the tomb shows their exceeding love towards Him.

When the New Testament Church was established by the Holy Spirit, the apostles filled by the Holy Spirit bore witness of the resurrection with great might. The powers of the world dread or oppose nothing but the resurrection power of Nazarene Jesus which is the power of the world to come. Anyone who reads the history of the world today can understand it. The power of resurrection, which is the power of the Gospel, is the formidable power even

after two thousand years. It is continuing its carrier of conquest unfurling the banner of love.

From the beginning of the first century, opposition arose banning the preaching of Jesus' resurrection. Peter and John were also imprisoned by them.

*"...being greatly disturbed that they taught the people and preached in Jesus the resurrection from the dead. And they laid hands on them, and put them in custody until the next day, for it was already evening" (Acts 4:2,3).*

Next day as the council of all the rulers and elders and teachers of religious law including the relatives of the high Priest met to try the apostles, Peter full of the Holy Spirit spoke the following words.

*"By what power or by what name have you done this? Then Peter filled with the Holy Spirit said to them.....Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:4-12).*

The defence that day was not just a reply to their question, but the Holy Spirit spoke through Peter strong statements relevant to all times. It was declared that salvation is in no other except Jesus Christ who died and rose again from the dead by whose name all mankind could be saved.

Little did they know that the injunction of the Jewish Sanhedrin never to speak about the name of Jesus (Act. 4:27. 5:28, 5:40) was against the roaring of the lion of Judah. No one has so far or neither been able to still the exceeding power of the cloven tongue of fire that fell on the disciples on the day of Pentecost.

*"Because of the fragrance of your good ointments, Your name is ointment poured forth;" (Song. 1:2).*

The name of Jesus, as a poured forth ointment, has been spreading the fragrance of life, yielding fruit and increasing day by day (Colo. 1:6).

How many ideologies and movements that arose in the world have gone outdated! There is a reason why the church bought by the blood of Jesus has not undermined her power or stunted growth but has been on the increase; it was established by the resurrection power of the One who said, "I will build my Church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against her." Many become righteous by the gospel that testifies to the resurrection power of Christ Jesus. Those who come to Jesus Christ the Living stone which is the foundation Stone become in turn living stones. The gates of hell shall never be able to defeat the Temple of the Holy Spirit that is built up of such stones. The words of the one who spoke this are ever irrevocable.

The fathers before their death bless children and bid farewell whereas Jesus the victor after His death and resurrection lifted up His hands and ascended to heaven blessing them. It is the same blessing coming down on generations perpetuating the divine power even today. Who else has stronger hand of blessing? None else! All other blessings and curses on earth are temporary. But we have such a source of blessing in Jesus that never changes or dries up. Those who belong to the church humble themselves under His strong hands so as to be exalted in due time (I Pet. 5:6).

Gamaliel the religious teacher once said to the Jewish rulers that no one could ever destroy the counsel and work of God.

*"And now I say to you, keep away from these men and let them alone; for if this plan or this work is of men, it will come to nothing;" (Acts. 5:38).*

Paul who learned the Law under Gamaliel studiously and had determined to do much against the name of Jesus bound by his religious fervour (Acts 26:8) could only understand the gist of what his guru said later when Saul was intercepted by Jesus the Nazarene at the gate of Damascus whom he had opposed and tried to defeat, he

understood that the gospel was not of man. Later on, he became Paul and wrote like this.

*"But I make known to you, brethren that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man" (Gala. 1:11).*

Since the gospel is not of man but of God it must be spelled to both the small and great and the evangelism established by the first coming of Jesus must be led on by the Holy Spirit and will be consummated by the second coming of Christ which is the end of the world.

*"...teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Amen" (Mtt. 28:20).*

The true gospel must be proclaimed by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven (I Pet. 1:12). All other work outside of it will be human or devilish innovations. From the very first century there were so called gospel activities against the true gospel. Even now we can see them in newer forms and styles evolved by time. But the New Testament Church or true gospel needn't undergo any timely change of doctrinal compromise or revision of worship pattern. Why because the Scripture is unchanging and it will ever be so. The true gospel and other pseudo activities will be strikingly different. Though its true colour may escape the attention of many, it will surely surface in the long run. In those whom the exceeding power from above works the respective wisdom will be found, the kind of wisdom working in the false teachers will not be divine wisdom but will be worldly and devilish, so says James the apostle.

*"This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy" (James. 3:15-17).*

Jesus had commanded the apostles to be witnesses after being endued with power from on high. Ever since the power of resurrection started working in them, jealousy and hatred departed from them. They were transformed from the state of one of partiality and falsehood to that of purity, peace, gentleness, obedience, mercy and fruitfulness. It was the Spirit of God that moulded and shaped the disciples. Since then, many of those who wanted to follow Christ sincerely arose from all over the world and have been leading the Church in a powerful manner. Today what we need to do is discern the spirit that is at work in crowd pullers rather than believing anything that we see and hear in the spiritual world to be of God.

St. Paul has written about false workers who do not work with pure motives but with earthly wisdom and devilish power (Phil. 1:17, 3:19, I Cor. 14:5, 3).

Though strong opposition rose against evangelism in the early century from the Jews, it was overcome easily and it happened that Jerusalem was filled with the Gospel teachings in a short time. Those who opposed the truth of the Gospel strongly later on accepted it publicly.

*"saying, "Did we not strictly command you not to teach in this name? And look, you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this Man's blood on us!" (Acts. 5: 28).*

After Saul who had opposed the gospel came to the grace of God, he spoke about Jews he hailed from like this:

*"...who killed both the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they do not please God and are contrary to all men, forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they may be saved, so as always to fill up the measure of their sins; but wrath has come upon them to the uttermost" ( I Thes. 2:15, 16).*

Paul has written elsewhere that it was the antagonism of Jews that paved the way for the deliverance of the Gentiles and it was by the purpose of God.

*"Concerning the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but concerning the election they are beloved for the sake of the fathers. For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. For as you were once disobedient to God, yet have now obtained mercy through their disobedience, even so these also have now been disobedient, that through the mercy shown you they also may obtain mercy. For God has committed them all to disobedience, that He might have mercy on all" (Rom. 11:28-32).*

It was God's plan to take the gospel the Word of life to all the nations. When the Jews opposed the gospel strongly the apostles turned to the Gentiles and a large number of gentiles accepted gladly the gospel that they preached (Act. 13:44-55). In the Biblical history we see records that wherever opposition arose against the church, later peace flowed into congregations and gained momentum through spiritual edification.

*"Then the churches throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and were edified. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, they were multiplied" (Act. 9:31, 16:5).*

The central theme of messages to the Jews was to portray Jesus as the Messiah the Christ. To the Jews who waited for the Messiah, stress was laid on Jesus Christ as the Messiah on the scriptural basis of His death and resurrection.

*"...explaining and demonstrating that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead, and saying, "This Jesus whom I preach to you is the Christ" (Acts. 17:3, 3:15).*

The message to the Gentiles was rather this: To portray the only true God worthy of worship; obtain eternal life

securing salvation of soul by faith rather than by religion of works.

Though some of the Epicureans and stoics called Paul as a babbler, the preaching on Jesus and resurrection seemed to be a new teaching and they had shown interest to know more about the new topic of death and resurrection. Paul's preaching on the Mars' Hill (Public square) at Athens is recorded in acts 17: 22-23. Some points are given below:

Paul says that the men of Athens who were Gentiles were very religious. He spoke about the inscription to an unknown God whom they worshipped without knowing. He added that the God who is the Lord of heaven and earth does not dwell in man-made temples and that He does not need service by human hands. He made it clear that out of one man He made all the nations throughout the earth and determined their boundaries for the time being. Since the Gentiles are in darkness and are those who grope for God (Acts. 17:27), the Jews were not those who groped for God. As they were in possession of the divine law they earnestly and zealously served God by the law trying to reach out to God (Acts. 26:7). After proving that all are God's offspring, he also refuted the kind of imaginary worship that the Gentiles practised.

*"Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, something shaped by art and man's devising" (Acts. 17:29).*

He let them know about the commandment of God to all men everyone that they must repent since God does not take into account the sins of the past as they did it ignorantly ( Acts. 17:30). As he continued his discourse hinting about the day God had set to judge the world in righteousness if God's commandment was neglected and that human life would not end with the earthly life but emphasized on the resurrection of all citing the example

of Jesus' resurrection. Then some mocked while others expressed interest to hear more about the resurrection of the dead. People have mixed responses to the gospel. Some will **accept**, others **mock**, still others **oppose**. In this way, the Church of God from the early century has been surviving all such reproaches and antagonisms all through and having attained growth wait for the coming of Christ.

The movement of the Churches through the centuries can be compared to the movement of a needle in a clock. The clockwise movement of the needle at the beginning is downward and then it goes upward and reaches where it started from. After the inception, the Churches in the first century as the time passed by, the Churches experienced spiritual declension and lethargy to certain extent. It was during such times that several false doctrines and practices crept into the Church according to human notions. However, if we look into history any period we can see small groups of puritans who have yielded themselves to the work of the Holy Spirit. Through them the work of the Holy Spirit surely went ahead. Just as the Spirit of God brooded upon the waters, God's Spirit has been working in the groups of people.

When the needle of the spiritual clock began to travel upward, darkness and light got separated. That is what happened to the church in the fifteenth century. Any reader of the Church History can easily understand that from that time on the Holy Spirit began to restore souls to the pure fundamental doctrines of the Church. By 19th cen. the people of God transformed again to the state of allowing the Holy Spirit to work inside of them and the church grew resilient to the experience of the first century.

Ever afterwards, the New Testament Church has been shining in glory by the Holy Spirit daily. The clock shows that the time is fast approaching for the clock to complete its running. We are living at a time of spiritual perfection by which the New Testament Church is moving towards

the impending rapture of glorification leaving the earth to meet the Lord in the mid-air.

While the New Testament Church being strengthened grows in the world, on the other side we can see a parallel development of pseudo church and false doctrines on the rise. The Lord pictured false teaching as 'leaven' while talking to the disciples. The Holy Spirit gave warning to the Churches through the epistles to guard against it. The false teaching in the midst of teachings of the Word of truth is like the grain of yeast that leavens the whole lump. The Children of God must take it as a very serious thing. Otherwise, it will be like a drop of poison in a pot of milk and a dead fly that defiles the oil of the perfumer (Eccl. 10:1). Although it is very hard to distinguish the false teachers and their wrong teaching at the outset, if we carefully watch through the mirror of the Word their life, worship, and preaching we can find out the ingredients of the recipe of their false teaching. If we allow the leaven of evil and malice to enter into the church and individuals, the New Testament Church will be mutilated. Therefore God's people must give heed to only the exhortation of the Holy Spirit. Our lives must be set aright in accordance with it as well.

People of the world accept Jesus as a historic person, great leader and prophet, but that does not do any good to them. In order to gain the soul that is costlier than the world, one has to fully accept and believe on the death and resurrection of Jesus. If we remove the fact of the death and resurrection of Jesus from the New Testament; it will be like a lifeless body. Oh, how important is the death and resurrection of Christ Jesus!

*"Now if Christ is preached that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen. And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also*

*empty. Yes, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ, whom He did not raise up-if in fact the dead do not rise. For if the dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen. And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins! " (I Cor. 15:12-19).*

It is by faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus that mankind gets delivered from the rule of sin over the mortal body and led into the path of eternal life with the power of sanctification. Gospel is not just about the death of Jesus Christ which is the propitiation for sin, but rather about the Living Christ having risen from the tomb overcoming death. The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is the spinel chord of the Christian faith. God's people must overcome by prayer and fasting and by the knowledge of the word of God all evil tendencies and notions against the death and resurrection of Christ.

The death and resurrection of Christ Jesus can never be finished describing how much ever we may write, the reason being that his works are unfathomable. The death and resurrection account is clearly given in all the four Gospels. The four Gospel writers by the spirit of the Lord have written the same thing though in presenting the subject matter different views are emphasized. Therefore, as we read the four Gospels and compare them it may seem to us whether contextual descriptions vary. If so, how much more will it seem to those who critically read the Scripture! They could find out several inconsistencies. However, the Holy Spirit has committed no error in the writing of the Scripture. The reason why men commit error explaining the things in the Scripture is their hasty conclusions without proper analysis.

Now we are going to discuss about the right explanation of the subject of resurrection of Jesus Christ presented in various ways. In the four Gospels all the four Gospel writers have written in order about the resurrection. Since

each has emphasized on a particular context, the combination of four accounts presents an accurate and complete portrayal of the entire events. Let us try to grasp each of them contextually. Since the resurrection of Christ is a great mystery it is recorded in the Gospels in a complicated way as the book of Revelation. As a matter of fact, the book of Revelation is not interpreted chapter wise. Similarly, we have not put the account of Jesus' death and resurrection in the sequence of verses in four chapters of the four Gospels, but in the contextual setting and when its coils are uncoiled we can see the glory of God.

St. Matthew has emphasized on the beginning ending episodes of Jesus' resurrection in his gospel. In other three Gospels it has escaped mention. St. Mathew has recorded in his Gospel the beginning episodes happened on the day of resurrection (Mtt. 28:1-7) and the end (Mtt. 28:8-20). To put it in brief, Mathew has started the account of resurrection in his Gospel and travelling through the Gospels of Mark, Luke and John and ended where he had started. See below the details of the context.

### **Context- I**

*"Now after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb. And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it. His countenance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow. And the guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead men. But the angel answered and said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead, and indeed He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him. Behold, I have told you" (Mtt. 28:1-7).*

On the first day of the week after the Sabbath when Mary the Magdalene and the other Mary (Mary the mother of James Mk. 16:5) reached the Tomb they witnessed the event of resurrection. Though there were women in the company who started out, Salome who is Johanne escaped mention in Mathew's account because she had not reached the tomb yet. Later her name also appeared in Luke's account because she had reached then (Lk. 24:1,10). Mathew gave an account of the episode when she was absent. When the women had started out towards the tomb, the great burden in their heart was the stone at the entrance of the tomb. On the day of burial they had seen the stone being rolled to cap the mouth of the tomb (Mtt. 27:60-61; Mk. 15:46,47). They had not known what happened later such as posting guard at the tomb and putting the Roman seal on the command of Pilate yielding to the pressure of the Jews etc (Mtt. 27:62-66). Had they known it, the women would not have ventured to go to the tomb by fear.

When Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James reached the tomb they were frightened by the earthquake that occurred. The big stone that was a great concern in the hearts of the women was rolled out by the angel that came down from heaven and the angel had sat on it (Mtt. 28:2). At the sight of the angels in dazzling light the soldiers fell flat, they were as good as dead (Mtt. 28:4). They only got up returning to their consciousness when the whole event had happened (Mtt.28:11).

The heavenly angel encouraged the two women who stood frightened at the tomb by seeing the earthquake. The angel informed them that Jesus had arisen and invited them to come and see the tomb where He had lain and instructed them to quickly go and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead and asked them to go to Galilee so that they will see Him (Mtt. 28:5-7). These are the things that happened at the beginning.

## **Context- II**

It is Mark who gives details in his gospel of what the woman saw inside the tomb after entering there on the angels' invitation.

Generally, Mark gives an introductory narration of the first day after Sabbath.

*"Now when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, that they might come and anoint Him. Very early in the morning, on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb when the sun had risen. And they said among themselves, "Who will roll away the stone from the door of the tomb for us?" (Mk. 16:1-4).*

St. Mathew has recorded in his first Gospel how the large stone at the tomb had been removed. We have already discussed about that. Then St. Mark gives us the description of events inside the tomb

*"And entering the tomb, they saw a young man clothed in a long white robe sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. But he said to them, "Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He is risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid Him" (Mk. 16:5-6).*

When the women entered the tomb the second angel had shown the place where Jesus' body was laid (Mk.16:6). This angel also instructs the women to tell the disciples that they may go to Galilee (Mk. 16:7, Mtt. 28:7).

## **Context III**

Luke emphasize on the later events writing about the exact event of resurrection. That is why he skips narration of the stone being rolled away and the women entering the tomb, etc (Lk. 24:1-2).

*"Then they went in and did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. And it happened, as they were greatly perplexed*

*about this, that behold, two men stood by them in shining garments. Then, as they were afraid and bowed their faces to the earth, they said to them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen! Remember how He spoke to you when He was still in Galilee, saying, 'The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.' " And they remembered His words. Then they returned from the tomb and told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest" (Lk. 24:3-9).*

The women after entering the tomb had been perplexed not knowing what to do and had hung their heads down. Then two angels of the (first and the latter contexts) encouraged them by recalling the word of the Lord to their remembrance and sent them back to the disciples. This is the third context.

#### **Context IV**

*"Now on the first day of the week.....Then the disciples went away again to their own homes" (Jn. 20:1-10).*

St. John begins his resurrection account saying that on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene went to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. Then she ran and came to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him." Peter therefore went out, and the other disciple, and were going to the tomb (Jn. 20 :1-3). This context of event needs a thorough analysis in order to eliminate the doubts completely.

John the apostle mentions only Mary Magdalene, the reason can be understood from what we have been discussing so far. It was Mary Magdalene who first reached the disciples from among the women who had run from the tomb by the word of the angels. She reported to John

and Peter that the body of Jesus had been taken away from the tomb and that they did not know where His body was laid. It is clear from the pronoun '**they**' instead of 'I' that it was not a single woman who had gone to the tomb. It means that Mary Magdalene ran to the disciples first and without revealing the whole matter of context she had just told that his body was missing; somebody had taken Him away. By the time, Mary the mother of James and Salome had reached there and that's why it was reported that we did not see.

The disciples of the Lord were ruled by great grief and fear that the Roman soldiers had crucified their dear Master by the Jewish pressure. Yet hearing the news from Mary, Peter and John had run to the tomb, the motive behind it being their exceeding love for Jesus. Though Peter and John started out together, John had outrun Peter reaching the tomb first. He bent down and kept peeping into the tomb mean while Peter arrived and entered the tomb. He saw the swaddling clothes intact that Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus had used for the burial of Jesus (Jn. 19:5-8), which was wrapped up and kept there. Then the other disciple also went inside and found it for himself. Here their find was not regarding the fact of resurrection but regarding what was reported by the women that it was true.

They had believed that someone might have taken Jesus' body. Peter and John had returned home not knowing what had happened there. Mary Magdalene had reached the Tomb again after the disciples left (Jn. 20:11). In the meantime, the women who had been with her were spreading the news to others in Jerusalem (Lk. 24: 10). According to the news the women who had been with Jesus also started out to see the tomb. Before those women had reached the tomb Jesus' first appearance to Mary Magdalene happened. That is what John emphasized and elucidated.

## Context V

*"But Mary stood outside by the tomb weeping, and as she wept she stooped down and looked into the tomb. And she saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. Then they said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him." Now when she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, and did not know that it was Jesus. .... Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that He had spoken these things to her (Jn. 20:11-18).*

Mary Magdalene who had run to Jesus' tomb was in great agony. She had a thought in her mind that if the disciples had reached the tomb they would certainly have searched for and found out Jesus' body but she became desperate because when they reached the tomb they helplessly returned home without doing anything. With tearful red eyes she stooped down looking into the tomb when two angels in white robes showed up there; sitting one at the head and the other at the foot. To their question 'woman why are you crying', she replied,

*"Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him" (Jn.20:13).*

We will be surprised by the fact that in spite of having the vision of heavenly angels on four occasions why Mary could not understand the reality that Jesus rose again! Another intriguing fact is that Peter and John did not have this vision.

Naturally, when humans have the visions of heavenly angels they get disillusioned, as if by a fantasy. It takes some time to come to terms with natural sense. In order to understand it clearer we must look at another event similar to this.

*"Now behold, an angel of the Lord stood by him, and a light shone in the prison; and he struck Peter on the side and raised him up, saying, "Arise quickly!" And his chains fell off his hands. Then the angel said to him, "Gird yourself and tie on your sandals"; and so he did. And he said to him, "Put on your garment and follow me." So he went out and followed him, and did not know that what was done by the angel was real, but thought he was seeing a vision. When they were past the first and the second guard posts, they came to the Iron Gate that leads to the city, which opened to them of its own accord; and they went out and went down one street, and immediately the angel departed from him. And when Peter had come to himself, he said, "Now I know for certain that the Lord has sent His angel, and has delivered me from the hand of Herod and from all the expectation of the Jewish people" (Acts12:7-11).*

Likewise in the Old and New Testament we can see the record of men have a feeling of fantasy at the visit of angels (Lk. 1:11-12, 1:29; Dan. 8:17-18). So we can imagine the feelings of the women especially Mary Magdalene when they visited the tomb of Jesus' resurrection. That is why they would not comprehend the reality of Jesus' resurrection.

When Peter and John reached the opened tomb of the Lord, they did not have vision of the angels because Jesus had already told them before His death that after resurrection He would go to Galilee where they would meet (Mk. 14:28). The angels sent the women folk to communicate that. The disciples were never instructed to visit His tomb but rather to go to Galilee. That explains why they didn't have the vision of angels.

Since John's main focus in his Gospel was to portray Jesus as the son of God, leaving the former episode he emphasized the latter episodes of resurrection. The notion was very strong in Mary's mind that somebody might have

taken away Jesus' body. Moreover, she could not believe what the angel said to her about the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. Besides she began to reason out if He had arisen where He could have been; thus she was altogether in confusion. The fact of the matter is Jesus who rose again from the dead was very much dear, but their eyes were blocked to see him.

Mary after talking to the angels turned and saw another standing there whom she mistook for the gardener. The gardener asked why she was crying. Then she replied like this:

*"Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?" She, supposing Him to be the gardener, said to Him, "Sir, if You have carried Him away, tell me where You have laid Him, and I will take Him away" (Jn.20:15).*

Mary the Magdalene who was possessed by seven demons before and her life was such a hell that she could never forget the deliverance that the Lord had given her. Her love for the Lord was so great that she said, "I will take away". The moment Jesus called her 'Mary', she recognised Jesus who was the 'Master because behind the address was the power of the Almighty Jesus which worked in her soul. It was a true and pure master-pupil relationship that Mary had. When Mary drew near Jesus to bow down at His feet, He prevented her because He had not ascended to the Heaven of Heavens after resurrection. Mary Magdalene who was seeking the Lord with tearful eyes, was fortunate to have the first vision of the risen Lord.

*"Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to Him, "Rabboni!" (which is to say, Teacher). Jesus said to her, "Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, 'I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God " (Jn. 20:17).*

The remedy of the sin of the mankind was completed by the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ. He was resurrected on the third day and since then the thitherto relationship of the Master- pupil was promoted to that of **brethren**.

The angel had told the women (Mtt.28:7, Mk. 16:7) to bring the news to the disciple while Jesus had a greater relationship of brethren in the New Testament through His blood. That is why Jesus addressed the disciples as brethren. The position of the New Testament believers is greater than the Old Testament saints and angels because of the fact that we have the right of adoption as sons. What a great position to which the mankind has been exalted by the death and resurrection of the Lord! Hence it was stated in the beginning that the death- resurrection is the milestone of the mankind. Man may be able to reach Moon or Mars by scientific advancements and make nest in there. **But the day of resurrection was the time that marked the beginning of the great salvation project of heaven providing those who believe in Jesus Christ the protection and the privilege of crossing the expanse of starry sphere to reach the heaven of heavens and being with Him forever and ever.**

For the past two thousand years what is carried out in the Church is the great work by the Holy Spirit the work He began moves towards its completion.

Since its completion is very likely, the Lord wants everyone in the world to get ready for it and He is waiting for it. We will discuss about it in the next chapter. To put it in brief, the beginning of the great project was marked on the day of resurrection while its completion begins to set in at the rapture when the resurrection of those who have been adopted as sons will occur in the mid-air.

## **Context VI**

Christ who is the first-fruit of resurrection from the dead appeared to Mary Magdalene and then had

ascended to heaven. When Mary was returning from the tomb gladly, the women who had already accompanied her at first and other women had arrived at the tomb. She shared the great joy of having seen the risen Lord with them. The details of their return journey are recorded in the first Gospel by St. Matthew.

### **Context VII**

*"So they went out quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to bring His disciples word. And as they went to tell His disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, "Rejoice!" So they came and held Him by the feet and worshiped Him. Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go and tell My brethren to go to Galilee, and there they will see Me." (Mtt. 28:8-10).*

It is not the first instance of women returning from the tomb instructed by the angels (Mk. 16:8; Lk. 24:9-12) that is recorded here. On this occasion, the women folks returned with great joy. The reason was that Mary the Magdalene having seen the risen Lord directly was in their company. Jesus who had ascended to the Father to the heaven of heavens returned to the women folks who fell at His feet and worshipped. Jesus had allowed them to touch Him since He had returned from the Father up above. After giving the women task to tell His brethren to go over to Galilee, Jesus disappeared.

### **Context VIII**

It was when the women folks having seen the risen Lord were running to the disciples that some of the guards went to the High Priest to inform of the current affairs. It means that the Roman soldiers were down on the ground as dead (Mtt. 28:4).

*"Now while they were going, behold, some of the guard came into the city and reported to the chief priests all the things that had happened. When they had assembled with the elders and consulted together, they gave a large sum*

*of money to the soldiers, saying, "Tell them, 'His disciples came at night and stole Him away while we slept.' And if this comes to the governor's ears, we will appease him and make you secure." So they took the money and did as they were instructed; and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day" (Mtt. 28:11-15).*

Though it is not recorded here what they had informed, there are evidences that the guards were keeping diligent watch at the tomb. Reason being that the High priests had instructed to make the tomb secure for three days (Mtt. 27:64). It was early on that day that a great earthquake happened and an angel from heaven came down to roll down the stone from the mouth of the tomb breaking the Roman seal. His face shone like lightning and his clothing was as white as snow. It was this horrifying sight that made the guards fall on the ground. When they got up they saw the women running with great joy saying they had seen the risen Lord. May be, they had told the High Priests this matter. The Jews woke to the fact that Jesus was risen and all their schemes against Him were foiled. That's why they had arranged for a heavy bribe to be given to the guards for spreading the fabricated story of falsehood against truth that very same day (Mtt. 28:11-15).

## **Context IX**

The women who saw the risen Lord had let the disciples know that news of great joy. On this occasion also it was Mary Magdalene who took the glad tiding of having seen the Lord to the disciples ahead of other women (Jn. 20:18). The brethren of the Lord could not fully take in the news of the resurrection of Jesus. From the circumstances the fact comes to light that they were not at all ready to go to Galilee as Jesus had told. Therefore Jesus was seen by Cephas among the disciples and then by the Twelve (I Cor. 15:4; Lk24:34). Later, He had proved to them that He was actually alive on many occasions. I am not

venturing to go into all details. However, let's conclude this chapter after writing the reason why Jesus had constrained the disciples to go to Galilee.

"Now after John was put in prison Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the Kingdom of God" (Mk. 1:14).

*"But they were the more fierce, saying, "He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee to this place" (Lk. 23:5).*

Jesus had begun His gospel campaign at a place called Galilee of the Gentiles (Mtt. 4:14). Jesus began His ministry in a region called Galilee of the Gentiles. Jesus had begun the ministry in Galilee of the Gentiles because the gospel was meant for all the nations. Jesus had instructed them to reach Galilee because of the purpose of God that at the time of commissioning His disciples (brethren) after the resurrection it was to be right there (Jn.21:1). It was quite clear that as we read about the account of resurrection in four Gospels in order there is no inconsistency. Let's see how St. Mathew who began writing the first episodes of resurrection finishes the account himself recording beautifully.

### **Context X**

*"Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had appointed for them. When they saw Him, they worshipped him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, 'All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.' Amen." (Mtt. 28:16-20).*

The Lord commissioned the disciples AT THE SAME PLACE Galilee where He had begun His gospel preaching and appeared to them on various occasions revealing the

mysteries of the kingdom of God. On the fortieth day after His passion, the Lord took his disciples to the mount of Olives near Jerusalem and commanded them to stay in Jerusalem until they receive the promise of their Father and after receiving the power they should preach the gospel from Jerusalem to all the nations of the world (Lk. 24:14-49). He had given them the blue print of the project of the New Testament Church before His ascension that it would be established in Jerusalem to reach all the nations by the Holy Spirit (Acts. 1:8). As He ascended to Heaven they gazed upward when two men in white robes came down to give the message.

*"Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11).*

Jesus born as the seed of David, died buried and resurrected on the third day was the only **begotten** at birth and the **first born** at death- resurrection. In the light of the scripture it has been proved that Jesus rose again from the dead as first fruit and as victor overcoming death and He ascended to heaven in the sight of His disciples. The message given on the occasion "**He will come again as you saw Him go**" is resounding in the world today. In the next chapter titled "Resurrection of the pure virgin" we are going to discuss about the subject that the Lord will descend to the mid-air before His second coming that is the end of the world to take up His pure virgin.

## Lesson Summary

- If after death ranks came by man the resurrection ranks of men came by Jesus Christ.
- In the resurrection from among the dead, Christ Jesus is the first fruit of the Heaven of Heavens.
- The birth death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is the milestone of the history of Mankind. It has divided the world history into two.

- The resurrection of Christ is the capstone of Christian faith. All church activities without resurrection power are dead.
- On the cross of Jerusalem Jesus was hung 6 hrs, for the salvation of mankind, the duration from the time Christ gave up His spirit to the time He rose again was 39 hrs., and the time duration His body remained in the tomb was 36 hrs.
- (i) Jesus died on the day of preparation (ii) on the Sabbath day he finished His work and rested (iii) on the first day He rose again defeating sin and death. Thus we can work out the three days that Jesus had pronounced in connection with His death and resurrection
- The body of Jesus remained in the tomb two nights and one day. As we calculate it in view of the whole world or globe, it is proved as three nights and three days.
- The resurrection episodes are recorded in the four Gospels in a complicated manner. As we learn them contextually, we can understand that the resurrection account was begun in the gospel written by Mathew and continued through the gospels written by Mark, Luke and John and finally closed in the Gospel written by Mathew.

## Chaptre - IX

# RESURRECTION OF THE PURE VIRGIN

*"Behold, I tell 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 trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptibe, and we shall be changed" (ICor. 15:51-52).*

*"For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord" (I Thess. 4:16, 17).*

In as much as we discussed about the death and resurrection of Christ Jesus in the previous chapter, we have got the full assurance that if man breathes his last he will rise again. Since by man came death, by man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive (I Cor. 15:20-22). But each one in his own order (I Cor. 15:23). Paul wrote this epistle for the people of God waiting for Christ's coming at Corinth (I Cor. 1:7). It was through Adam the first man that the after-death-ranks came on earth while the resurrection ranks came through Jesus the last Adam.

In our study of after-death-ranks we understood that all souls of the humans from the earth through death are kept in seven after-death-ranks till their resurrection takes place.

We did not include Christ Jesus in our discussion of after-death-ranks because He is none to be compared with us and soon after His death his Spirit went up to Father in the Heaven of heavens (Lk. 22:69). Also because ever since Jesus died, He had the privilege of sitting on the right hand of the Father.

*"But the righteousness of faith speaks in this way, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?'" (that is, to bring Christ down from above) or, "'Who will descend into the abyss?'" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead)" (Rom.10:6,7).*

It is the Word worthy of acceptance that Christ Jesus rose again on the third day defeating death and on the fortieth day sat on the right hand of the father ascending to heaven. Since it is uncontroversially proved, Jesus himself is the first fruit from among the dead.

The matter for our next discussion in this chapter is whom when and how will the Lord take up in the rapture?

After the resurrection of Jesus the next row of resurrection due will be of the Church of the first born, the bride of Christ, whose names are registered in heaven. The scripture elucidates the fact that the bride espoused to Christ for marriage with the Lord is pure-virgin

*"For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ" (2 Cori 11:2-3).*

They that are of Christ are those who are transformed by the renewing of mind daily. Such are those who wait for the coming of the Lord with diligence and purity.

*"But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming" (1 Cor. 15:23).*

It is clear that they that are of Christ do belong among those who live diligently and purely according to the Scripture. They are never conformed to the world but conformed to the Lord Jesus.

*"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God" (Rom. 12:2).*

Those saints who live on earth like this are of the Lord. They are termed in the scripture by the word 'Body'; the relationship between Christ and Church is described in the epistles as Christ the Head and Church as the Body (Col. 1:7, Eph. 1:23, 5:23).

There are scripture portions that speak of the body of Christ resembling Temple. The Tabernacle and the temple of Jerusalem being the shadow in the Old Testament were lifeless, while the son of God appeared on earth as the Temple of the living Father. In Him dwells all the fullness of God head bodily (col. 2:9).

This statement is too profound to understand. In Christ we can behold all the divine fullness. At the same time we can comprehend about the divine trinity from this as well.

When the loving God was manifested in the flesh, He had body, soul and spirit. Body denotes the word, soul denotes the Holy Spirit and the Spirit denotes God the Father. It is written that we must know that the head of Christ is God (I Cor. 11:3). By 'Head' is meant God who is mighty in counsel and mighty in deed. The work as per

the counsel of the Father God is by the word the members of the body. The leading Spirit behind it is the Holy Spirit. The body of Jesus born of the Holy Spirit increased in wisdom and Grace (Lk. 2:52). He was about thirty years when He began His public ministry (Lk. 3:23) Jesus began His public ministry as He was filled with the Holy Spirit. Here Heaven was carrying out the counsel of God the Father through Christ Jesus the body of God the word through the power of the Holy Spirit.

The relationship between Christ and the Church also must be viewed in this sense.

*"For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function" (Rom. 12 :4), (I Cor. 12:11-20).*

Church the body of Christ has various members who are saints having fellowship with one another as members in body connected together, all grow together by God connected to its joints and ligaments (Col. 2:19).

Each individual join to the Church the body of Christ must grow in all things to the full stature of Christ through spiritual ministries; it means that all must reach the unity in faith and knowledge of God's son, that all will be mature in the Lord measuring up to the fullness and complete standard of Christ (Eph. 4:12). If the body has not grown to maturity, it cannot accomplish much however efficient it may be in thoughts and ideas.

It is through the Church that God's counsel is carried out on earth by the Holy Spirit through Church the body of Christ. Only those who are mature enough can work according to the power of the Holy Spirit. By the ministry of the Church we mean that the counsel of God the Father through Christ the Son who is the Word is poured out into the Church His body and brought into action by the Holy Spirit. This involves people of various calibres.

We can understand from this the meaning of what Jesus said that I and the Father are one and that I cannot do anything by myself independent of Him. The counsel of the Living God, the Word, power (Father, Son and the Holy Spirit) etc., work in absolute harmony with one another. Jesus has said to us that you cannot do anything independent of me desiring of us to reach complete unity. The Lord will come down to the mid-air to take His Church only when the number will be complete of those who have unity with Christ. At the same time, only those who belong to the church whose names are registered in heaven being perfected become one body with Christ the head.

The Lord comes in the mid-air not to take up all who are named as Christian and labelled as Church. All Christians on earth accepted the fact that the Church will be raptured at Christ's coming. But the sad part of it is that many who do not have a clear understanding as to which Church will be taken up. Is the secret coming of Christ the day when all men on earth named to be Christians will be taken away? All know that the answer is a big no. If so, who then will be taken up? Even if we answer that those who have set apart worshipping the Lord in truth and spirit another question remains whether all such be taken up? Only the genuine people of God will be taken up. We know that there have been false apostles and pseudo workers from the first century on earth and at the present time. Such are on the increase in spiritual world. It is sure that such people will be rejected.

Church of God consists of those who stand in the basic doctrines and who worship God in Spirit and in truth with pure conscience. It was this Church that was established pure conscience. It was this Church that was established by the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. God added daily to the Church those who were being saved (Acts.2:47). Asked how one can get saved and become a member of the church, it is explicitly given to those who believe In the name of Jesus Christ seeing that there is

only one name given under heaven and among men by which we can be saved. When we sincerely call on the name of the lord of all men, the blood of Jesus who died for the salvation of the mankind cleanses us from all our sins. Such people being dead to the worldly passions and buried and resurrected with Jesus by symbolic baptism, become the members of the Church. The names of all who are there saved are registered in heaven and they are delivered from the hell fire which is the second death. Such are termed as spiritual babes in the scripture.

In the chapter titled 'Those who are in the third heaven' explanation is given about those who are worthy of pure virgin. The fact that those who are not perfected will not be raptured is re-iterated here because the matter is very grave. From the state of infancy one should grow daily to reach the point of maturity and spiritual understanding. Those who are thus perfected in holiness in the fear of God cleansed of all impurities both of the Spirit and of the flesh, only those who stay ready in that manner will hear the trumpet sound at the coming of Christ. The pure virgin who is the Bride of the Lamb represents those who have written this truth in their plank of heart cherishing the single aim of Christ's coming and forging ahead.

The number of the firstborn (those who obtain the adoption as sons) joining the son who is the only begotten by his birth into the earth and the firstborn by his death and resurrection, is not known to us but is a matter of predestination. It is the top secret hidden in the heart of God the Father. At the outset of this chapter in four verses the description of the events occurring in heaven of heavens and earth in relation to the coming of the Lord in the mid-air when the number of pure virgin (body) due to be joined to one husband Christ (head) (I Cor. 15:52, I Thess. 4:16-17). Now we have entered into the pithiest subject regarding the human creation.

## **The events occurring at Christ's coming in the mid-air**

### **ICor. 15:51-52**

1. The mid-air coming of the Lord is divine mystery.
2. We shall not all sleep (resurrection and transformation will happen together)
3. It will happen at the last trumpet, in the twinkling of an eye
4. At the trumpet sound, the dead will be raised and we who are alive shall be changed

Here we don't get clarity about 'which trumpet' or who are represented by 'we' or who are the dead. But as we read first Thessalonians we can see Paul explaining everything clearly.

### **IThes. 4:16,17**

1. The Lord himself will descend from heaven (heaven of heavens) with a shout, with the voice of an archangel and with the trumpet of God.
2. In the mid-air appearance those who at first get resurrected will be the dead in Christ, those who are changed will be those who remain alive in Christ.
3. Both those who are resurrected and those who are changed from the earth will be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air.
4. After being caught up we or in other words those who belong to Christ will always be with Christ

## **Happenings in the heaven of heavens**

What we have seen above is an outline of the mid-air coming of the Lord that Paul wrote in the two epistles. The shout of the lord is the decree of God the Father about the perfection of the number of the firstborn ready to be joined to the Great High Priest who has been interceding sitting on the right hand of the Father. The trumpet of

God is to gather all the firstborn of the Church whose names are written in heaven. This trumpet is spoken of as the 'Last trumpet' in the epistle of Corinthians. Here the Holy Spirit has got Paul to write specifically about God's trumpet (I Thess. 4:16) so that the last trumpet of the seven angel recorded in revelation may not be confused with it.

*"And when the assembly is to be gathered together, you shall blow, but not sound the advance" (Num. 10:7).*

If the priests had to blow the trumpet to gather the assembly of Israel, there is no doubt the trumpet sounded to gather the Church of the firstborn registered in heaven will be by Christ Jesus the greatest High Priest by the order of God the Father (Details of trumpet are being given in the exposition of Revelation). These are the happening occurring in the heaven of heavens in relation to the mid-air coming.

### **The happenings on earth at the trumpet of God**

At the trumpet of God, the Holy Spirit who prepares the pure virgin on earth quickly leads to complete it. The souls of the dead in Christ from the Paradise the third heaven their after-death abode return to their mortal bodies by the command of the Holy spirit and emerge in their resurrected bodies while the living saints who are perfected get changed by the transforming power of God and join the risen saints so that together they are caught up by the Holy Spirit to meet the Lord in the air.

So far we have discussed about the events happening in the Heaven of heavens and on earth as well as the grim fact that only those who are of Christ will be taken up from here. Nowhere in the epistles is written what will happen in the mid-air at His coming there. It is written in the prophetic book Revelation in detail, which is given in the last part of this chapter.

### **Resurrection occurring at the mid-air coming**

*"But those who are counted worthy to attain that age, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor*

*are given in marriage; nor can they die anymore, for they are equal to the angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection" (Lk. 20:35-36), (Mtt. 22:30; Mk. 12:25).*

The Pharisees having tried to trap Jesus but not been successful (Mtt. 22:15) Sadducees who neither believe in resurrection nor in the angels and spirit (Acts. 23:7) came to Jesus and hurl a puzzle to Jesus. The three Gospel writers record about it. Here we take up only part of Jesus' reply for discussion.

The Lord at first rebuked them saying "you are mistaken, not knowing the scriptures nor the power of God (Mtt. 22:29). In order to comprehend the matter of resurrection one should have the understanding of the Scriptures and the power of resurrection. Though it is recorded in three of the Gospels, it is St. Luke who makes authentic statements about this topic. The revelations in this portion are very useful to us in the study of resurrection.

What is termed here 'that age' (Lk. 20:35) briefly talks about the new heaven and new earth that will never end followed by the Millenium. In this present age, there is marriage, reproduction and death. But the Lord says that in the age to come none of these will be. (all such things will be there even in the one thousand year reign in which the Lord will rule as great King with diadem on earth). Firstly, it is written here that those who enter into the new age that is to come wherein righteousness dwells the new heaven and new earth will be heirs of eternal life and will be like angels. Secondly, it says that those who will be worthy of resurrection from among the dead will be like the Sons of God. Though this does not reveal all facts about resurrection of the saints, it reveals only two groups of resurrection saints.

1. Those who are like angels counted worthy to attain that age entering into eternal life.

2. Those who are like the Sons of God counted worthy to attain resurrection from among the dead.

Should it be put in brief for a quicker comprehension it may be like this. It is clear that the age that is to come cannot be the Millennium during which death and reproduction will occur (Isa. 65:20). Similarly, if those who are counted worthy to attain that age are like angels, those counted worthy to attain resurrection from among dead will be like the Son's of God.

As we discussed about the resurrection of Christ Jesus we have proved with Scriptural support that the resurrection was from among the dead. If that is so, the resurrection of the pure virgin due to be joined to Him also must be resurrection from among the dead, which is vouched by Paul in his epistle.

*"if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead" (Phil. 3:11).*

Paul was well aware of the resurrection from among the dead. That is why he longs to attain it by any means. **Since it was guaranteed that Paul who departed from here being perfected would partake of it, we can confirm that the resurrection of pure virgin is resurrection from among the dead.**

Paul concludes the third chapter of his last epistle of Philippians writing about the coming of the Lord in the mid-air.

*"Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern. For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame-who set their mind on earthly things. For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,*

*who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself" (Phil. 3:17-21).*

Paul who lived until the end imitating Christ has enjoined the brethren to imitate him and also admonished to mark out those who walk according to the teachings.

The Lord comes in the mid-air as Saviour to change our vile body into His glorious body and the redemption of our body confirming to the sons of glory. There is a Chorus sung by those who are worthy to attain the resurrection from among the dead on the glorious occasion, that song of triumph is recorded in the Old- New testament prophecies.

*"For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory. "O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?" The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Cor. 15:53-56).*

" Death is swallowed up in victory" this statement doesn't mean that death has been abolished from earth forever. It means that just as death could not hold its tight grip on Jesus (Acts. 2:24) death cannot hold its grip on the pure Virgin the Bride of Jesus also. The song "O death, where is your victory" is sung by those who are resurrected in a tone of triumphing over death, whereas the line of 'O death, where is your sting' is sung by those who are conformed to the image of Jesus Christ without seeing death as a voice of triumph. Since the incident and voice are spiritual, others neither see nor hear it.

The prophecy of Hosea records about this like this:

*"I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death. O Death, I will be your plagues! O Grave, I will be your destruction! Pity is hidden from My eyes" (Hos. 13:14).*

None of those who are part of Pure Virgin are included in the Old Testament saints. It has been dealt with in the chapter "Those Who Are In The Third Heaven" that they are not under the controls of Hades but are ushered into the after-death-abode of third heaven. In the resurrection of the pure virgin belonging to the greatest rank in the third heaven, resurrecting from among the dead they are caught up to be with the Bridegroom conquering death. At that time the Scripture "they will be delivered from death" shall be fulfilled. The Holy Spirit has recorded only this particular thing incidentally as it is the prophecy likely to be fulfilled very soon. We have already discussed that of the three likely incidents recorded in Hosea 13:14 one has already been fulfilled and the second is going to be fulfilled soon. The third incident such as plagues of death (Rev. 6:8) and destruction of Hades are yet to take place in the time of God's vengeance.

In the other two incidents God delivers humans feeling sympathy towards them whereas in the third incident God, taking no pity, gives the wicked nations up to the destruction of Hades and plagues of death.

It has already been proved that in the mid-air coming of the Lord, the resurrection of Pure virgin the first born who are registered in heaven will occur and that resurrection will be from among the dead.

The common notion that the resurrection occurring at the rapture will be "The first resurrection" is deep rooted in all. But it has been disproved by the scripture. This is presented here not for debate or argument but for revealing the truth of the Scripture. It will be discussed in

more clarity in the chapter "The First Resurrection" saying who will be partaking in it.

### **Where will the pure virgin be taken to?**

*" 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 to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also" (Jn. 14:2- 3, 12:26)*

The word of God clearly tells us that the Lord will come to take us to be where He is seated that is the Heaven of heavens. The common teaching about the rapture is on the basis of Revelation 4:1.

*"After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, "Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this" (Rev.4:1).*

Will the greatest of the events yet to be happened on earth be triggered by just one word of imperative 'come up here'? Won't there be any further explanation? Leave that aside, we know very well that the Lord directly assured the disciples and the records about His coming are sufficient in the epistles. Isn't it absurd to say that just by the command 'come up here' the Church is raptured? In this verse the command is particularly to John then how come it is for the entire Church? Thus several questions arise in this connection. Nobody seems to give satisfactory reply with the scriptural support. In view of these facts it is clear that Rev. 4:1 is not about the rapture of the Church.

In the resurrection from among the dead about the death-resurrection -ascension of Jesus Christ the first fruit it has been accounted from Genesis through Gospels and epistles even to the book of Revelation in which the Lord

himself who is alive forever and is glorified has reconfirmed it.

*"I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death" (Rev. 1:18).*

After the resurrection of the Lord from among the dead, since all the remaining resurrections are yet to happen, it requires a thorough analysis of the book of Revelation for its full revelation.

Revelation is the only prophetic book in the New Testament which has recorded the things yet to happen. Its contents are revelations of God the father to His Son who in turn revealed to John the disciple whom He loved in the isle of Patmos through an angel.

The top secret behind the writing of the book of Revelation is that it is a revelation meant only for his saints. Hence the contents of this book are of much complex in nature. Since it is a hard stuff to comprehend, many a seeker/ student expresses curiosity to know about the things to come. Therefore, books, commentaries and preachings on the book of Revelation have great influence among God's people. If the books are not proper interpretations, it may do more harm than good resulting in unwanted prejudices from them. God's word is such that must be handled with gravity, especially the book of Revelation. No one has the right to add to it or take away from it. Warning is given that if someone adds to it God will add to him the plagues described in this book, or if anyone takes away from this book, God will take away from him his share in the **tree of life** and in the **holy city** (Rev. 22:18, 19). This introduction is written as a prologue to Revelation because the resurrection ranks are to be established through the evidential facts of this prophecy.

The book of Revelation is an invaluable gem handed over to the Church through John the apostle about two thousand years ago. Let us pray that the Lord may remove

the veil from the book so that His servants may be granted the grace to comprehend it as they should. God opens the storehouses of prophecy and divulges the impending things just because the current events are moving head on to a grinding halt. The saints like Stephen and Paul have been ushered into the third heaven in Paradise being perfected. They were not even seen the Book of Revelation then how many similar generation while not fathoming any of its depths might have get perfected and have gone by! Even if we have comprehended all the mysteries of the Scripture, it will not avail us any good if we are not faithful to the scripture. God gives us more and more revelations when we are faithful to what has already been revealed.

*"..... And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing....." (I Cor. 13:1-13, 14:1).*

It is obedience in the heart rather than study by the intellect that is the first step towards the readiness for the Lord's coming.

What the Lord reveals to us is certainly for our good, not for anybody else. Let us prayerfully enter into the closing pages of the study of 'Resurrection of the Pure Virgin' cherishing that God willing each one of us will be partakers of that greatest event in the near future.

Well our point of discussion is that God the Son descending in the mid-air, where will He enter with the Pure virgin prepared on earth by the Holy spirit. Now let us look at the chapter 17 of John's gospel. It is the communication of the Lamb who takes away the sin of the world, having finished the job of sin restitution and is about to ascend to the right hand of God in heaven it is the talk of the Son to the Father in the presence of the disciples. **The contents of the long chapter are**

**tantamount to the wish that those who belonged to him must be with Him at any cost.**

*"Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world (Jn. 17: 24).*

God the Son expresses the same desire that God the Father had. For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many **sons to glory**, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings (Heb. 2:10). As we think about the depth of God's love that delivered His own son without sparing Him so that we might be seated with the Heavenly Father as the Sons of Glory (Rom. 8:32) no amount of praises will be adequate.

Quite often we see that people who have power in the world become power mongers trying to retain it with themselves. But see what the power in Heaven does it is that loving the sinners giving the very life and after cleansing them seating them as heirs on the throne with God. Therefore beloved we should take care that we are not alienated from this greatest blessedness that the Lord has prepared for us. Should we be rejected out of this, let me remind you that this will be the greatest loss in eternity.

The counsel of God the Father is flowing through God the Son the word to Holy Spirit the steward and from him to the Churches now. John was in the spiritual trance by the holy Spirit, by virtue of which he was able to comprehend everything properly and write it down. The messages to seven Churches in the book of Revelation are meant for the universal Churches, and not only for those local churches. In all messages there is a tag attached to each 'let him who has ear hear what the Spirit says to the Churches' (Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22). We are aware that Revelation chapters 2 and 3 are concerning Churches. In those messages one fact is clear that there are

overcomers and those otherwise which can be heard by those who have ears and can be seen by those who have eyes and can be stored inside the heart. In the message to the Church of Laodicea the last Church of the spiritual Church calendar, the Lord concludes the message with the same that He had told the disciples while He was in body and the great important matter that He had requested the Father.

*"To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne" (Rev. 3:21).*

Hope it is clear that only those over comers whose names are registered in heaven who are Church of the firstborn will be raptured at His coming and will be worthy of sitting with Him on the throne. Those who are defeated by Satan and his schemes will be rejected. Therefore take care that Satan may not outwit us for we are not unaware of his schemes (2 Cor. 2:11).

The scripture elucidates that after the Pure Virgin prepared by the Holy Spirit and raptured, she will always be in the presence of God the Father with the triune God. (The vision of the Heavenly Throne and more details are given in the book titled 'Revelation of Eternity' in chapters such as sweet-Bridegroom, Great King, etc.).

When will the rapture (the Lord's mid-air coming) take place? All things about eschatology or in the other words the details of the things to come such as the secret-public comings of the Lord etc., are recorded in the scripture. If we do not study the scripture in connection with each topic and event discreetly, it will not be cleared of doubts. Some teach about the coming of the Lord mixing up altogether. For our clearer and smoother study of the scripture, we must take each event and study correlating the respective parts to it.

In order to know the time when the secret coming of the Lord will take place we have to first go to Psalms then

move on to New Testament pages and finally reach the book of Revelation. We find a prophecy in Psalm seeing Christ as the High Priest sitting at the right hand of the Father interceding for us; there we get a clue hinting at how long He will sit there before a great epoch making event. If we try to analyze it we can arrive at a conclusion as to when the Lord will come in the mid-air and the related events such as the resurrection of the Pure Virgin from among the dead and the war in the mid-air etc.. These important events will happen at such an hour as we do not think of or at a twinkling of an eye. It is for that beautiful moment that the Lord's Spirit and the Bride are waiting on earth.

The rapture of the Pure Virgin has a lot of significance. So before we go to touch the mystery let us begin our discussion based on Psalm 110:1.

*"Jehovah saith unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, Until I make thine enemies thy footstool." (Psa. 110:1 ASV).*

It is a matter worthy of note and established by quite a good number of Scriptures that in the first coming of Jesus to the earth, after finishing the work of salvation He had ascended to heaven and sat at the right hand of the Father.

*"Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us" (Rom. 8:34). (Lk. 20:42, 22:49, Mk. 16:19, Heb. 1:3; 12:2; 10:12,13, Colo. 3:1)*

Here David has prophesied the first prophecy figuring out a time frame until when the High Priest will sit at the right hand and intercede for us (Psa. 110:1). Given below are the passages where the prophecy has been quoted:

1. The Lord has quoted it in the Gospel saying that David Himself has said it in Psalms (Mtt. 22:44, Mk. 12:36, Lk. 20:42).

2. On the day of Pentecost when the Lord established the Church, Peter stood along with the eleven and shouted this verse (Act. 2: 24, 35).
3. Paul the apostle has quoted it at the beginning of the epistle of Hebrews (Heb. 1:13) while portraying Jesus who became greater than the angels. Also while declaring about the purification by the sacrifice of the body of Jesus fulfilling the will of God establishing the second law abolishing the first (Heb. 10:12, 13).

In the single verse (110:1) two appearances of the Lord are declared. That is why this is repeatedly quoted. Jesus quoted the statement of David at the last phase of His ministry that Jesus in the first coming, having finished the work of salvation would sit at the right hand of the Father. He fulfilled one part of the prophecy by His sacrifice on the cross even as it was foretold in the Scripture. When the Lord had spoken of it on the earth, both of them were to be fulfilled. **Peter the apostle in the book of Acts has asserted regarding the establishment of the New Testament Church that the former was abolished and the latter was brought into existence and that Jesus being freed from the agony of death resurrected from the dead and seated at the right hand of the Father.** Paul having quoted this verse says its importance and elucidates both the aspects of the same.

*"But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool" (Heb. 10:12, 13)*

*"Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool?" (Heb. 1:13)*

In Psalms 110:1 it starts with 'Jehovah (Lord) said to my Lord' but the title "Jehovah" cannot be found in all the New Testament. From the statement '**the Lord said to my Lord**' **the Holy Spirit here shows the equality of the**

**Lord (Jehovah) to the Son.** We have already seen that the Pronoun 'you' in Psalms is about the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul the apostle has given its clear interpretation to the Church like this:

1. By the statement 'Jesus having offered one sacrifice for the sins once for all and sat at the right hand of the Father it means that the purpose of Jesus' first coming was fulfilled and since then He has been seated at the right hand of the father.
2. The prophecy 'sit at my right hand till I make your enemies your foot stool' is yet to be fulfilled. That is the second thing whose fulfillment is awaited in heaven and on earth for the past two thousand years and still it goes on.

**The Lord's mid-air coming will take place on the day when this prophecy is fulfilled. Until then our Lord sits at the right hand of the Father as the High Priest interceding for us.**

The Holy Spirit on earth intercedes with un-utterable groaning for the saints yet to be perfected while the Lord who searches the hearts intercedes for us to God sitting at his right hand and matures spiritually enabling us to be glorified. **When the number will be perfected of the firstborn registered in heaven who will be glorified and caught up to heaven according to the predestination, God the Father will inform the Son and the Holy Spirit of the supreme secret of perfection. We have already discussed in detail about the aftermath such as the events happening in the Heaven of heavens in the mid-air and on earth and the rapture of the Church prepared by the Holy Spirit accompanied by the trumpet sound etc.** Now we are going to discuss about the prophecy to be fulfilled at the rapture of the Church the Bride in the mid-air.

## The prophecy fulfilled in the Mid-air war

In order to understand why the archangel Michael and the army accompanying the Lord descend to the mid-air, we need to discuss about the fulfilment of the prophecy recorded in the Bible beginning from Psalms as a mystery "**Till I make your enemies footstool.**"

Since the prophecy mentioned throughout the Bible is one that is yet to be fulfilled it is recorded in the middle of the last book of the Bible Revelation (Among the total 404 versus the prophecy is in 201 to 203). Given below is the description of the occasion when the prophecy is fulfilled.

*"And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him" (Rev. 12:7-9).*

The event of casting down Satan the power of the air has not yet happened. Had it happened, it would not have been recorded in Revelation. Among the things to be happened the nearest happening will be the enemies coming under His footstool. **Since it is scriptural revelation that until the fulfillment of the prophecy the Son of God must be at the right hand of the Father, it will surely be so.** It is proved beyond doubt by the scripture that this prophecy will be fulfilled at descend of the Lord to the mid-air to take up the Pure Virgin. The 12th chapter of Revelation is about the war between the Lord descending to the mid-air escorted by Michael and the army and the Great Dragon with his angels as well as its aftermath. Corresponding to the event of the resurrection of the pure virgin more details about the mid-air war are disclosed.

To discuss about the resurrection of the pure virgin, a direct entry would be possible. But the reason why this

type of presentation necessitated is due to the fact that various notions regarding these chapters are prevalent. It is with the strong scriptural support that the entry to Revelation 12:7-9 was made directly where it is mentioned about the heavenly war following the rapture and the expulsion of Satan and his angels down to the earth the footstool of the Lord.

The record of the appearance of the Lord in the mid-air which is a subject of paramount importance is not just confined to one verse, isn't it clear now? More precisely the entire chapter of Revelation chapter 12 is dealing with the subject. In the light of the epistles in the New Testament the gist of the subject is that the Lord accompanied by Michael the archangel and the army from the Heaven of heavens will descend to Mid-air (heaven), then the Bride that is all ears to the trumpet sound, will be prepared by the Holy Spirit and will be transported up to the clouds in resurrection body. This is how much we gather up from the epistles, whereas we have a different view in the 12th chapter of Revelation which we are going to focus on.

The Mid-air appearance of the Lord and the Rapture of Church the Bride and the resultant events in the light of Revelation chap. 12.

The 12 th chapter of Revelation is not about Mary the mother of Jesus, nor Israel, nor 144000. Neither is resurrection occurring at the mid-air coming first or last resurrection. (The interpretation of Revelation chapter 12 is given in detail in the book "Revelation of Eternity"). However, a brief explanation is warranted here. As a matter of fact, the 12th chapter is about two signs that John saw as would happen in the mid-air-one of great significance and another of less significance. Each of what he saw is given one by one

## **I. THE GREAT SIGN OF THE WOMAN (Rev. 12:1, 2)**

1. The Woman clothed with the sun, with the moon beneath her feet, and a crown of twelve stars on her

head. She was pregnant and cried out because of labor pains to give birth.

2. She gave birth to a son who was to rule all nations with an iron rod, and the child was caught up to God and to his throne.
3. The tribulation of 3 ½ yrs by Satan and things regarding the remnant of her offspring

### **1. The Sun-clad woman**

The description here is not literal, but spiritual. Since it includes the heavenly bodies such as **sun, moon** and **stars**, surely it is not earthly but heavenly. There are similar passages in both old and New Testament. Joseph's dream was that sun, moon and eleven stars did obeisance to hi, which later got fulfilled in his life and therefore it has nothing to do with this contest (Gen. 37: 9-11). There is another reference in the Songs of Solomon to a poetical allegory of Christ the Bride groom and Church the Bride.

*"Who is she who looks forth as the morning, Fair as the moon, Clear as the sun,..." (Song 6:10).*

Here spiritually sun stands for purity, moon stands for beauty and stars stands for glory. Those who belong in New Jerusalem the city of God are those who emerge resurrected from time to time from our mother (Jerusalem that is above). Paul the apostle names three groups in his epistle corresponding to the celestial glory they are to get in resurrection. The revelations in the epistle have much in common to the woman spoken of in Revelation chapter 12.

*"...There are also celestial bodies and terrestrial bodies; but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differs from another star in glory. ... (1Cor. 15:35-49).*

By heavenly bodies is meant those who are worthy of entering to the Heaven of heavens. It has already been

written in the after-death ranks. John saw as a sign in the mid-air Jerusalem that is above (the woman). By resurrection is meant here those who belong to New Jerusalem the city of the living God whom the woman gives birth from time to time.

Those who are joined to the Lamb who is the son of righteousness will be the Pure Virgin rising in the resurrection with the glory as of the sun. it is their resurrection that will take place at the appearance of the Lord in the mid-air at the trumpet of the Lord the souls of the saints who are of the highest rank resting in the third heaven of the Heavenly Paradise will be resurrected from the dead by the power of the Holy Spirit and those who are alive in Christ then will be transformed and caught up together to the Heaven of Heavens.

## **2. The Male child that the woman who bore (the Male Child who was to rule all nations with an iron rod)**

In Psalm 2 we see the Son of God who has power to rule the nations with an iron rod. Since those who are joined to Him also become sons like Him and both are partakers of the rule, the co-regents are also pictured as the Male child. The book of Revelation has inference to this in connection with the Church.

*"...And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations-He shall rule them with a rod of iron; They shall be dashed to pieces like the potter's vessels ..."* (Rev. 2:26,27), (Ps. 2:9).

While speaking of the over comers in the Church the singular pronoun 'He' is used and not plural. Though they are spiritual children at birth as they grow from that state to maturity emerging as Sons of Glory with power in resurrection they are said to be in singular 'Male Child'. The phrase 'the child was caught up to God' is similar to Paul's expression 'in a twinkling of an eye' (I Cor. 15:52). The unambiguous phrase 'the child caught up to the throne' (Rev. 12:5) leaves no room of doubt about who it

must be. None else has the right to share throne with the Son who is the victor (Rev. 3:21), nay, no other creature. Hope it is clear that only the pure virgin who is resurrected from the dead as the Male Child and ascended to God's throne is worthy of that position.

### **3. The Remnant of her offspring and Tribulation**

The description about this is included in the resurrection of two witnesses and the first resurrection.

## **II. ANOTHER SIGNIFICANT SIGN OF LARGE DRAGON (REV. 12:3, 4)**

Not entering into its detail here. We have discussed about the circumstances of the war in heaven. Now let us discuss about its aftermath and close this chapter.

When the Bridegroom descends to the mid-air with the trumpet of God, the shout of the Lord and the voice of the archangel from the Heaven of heavens to the mid-air which is the heavenly Paradise, Michael the archangel and the army will accompany them to fight the battle in the mid-air. The plan of the great Dragon the devil was to eat up the Male child that the woman bore (Rev. 12:4). The devil whose head was so bruised that it split into seven heads in the battle on the cross on earth could not prevent the Son of God's resurrection from the dead. In the same way, from the very beginning Satan and his angels have been acquainted with the information that the Bride of the Lamb would be caught up to heaven imminently. Ever since then, Satan has been trying to inhibit the progress of the children of God. Satan is eager beaver to cause hindrance to the saints in the third heaven that their resurrection should not happen.

In the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus a great battle was fought in which Satan had been completely defeated in all territories (in hell, earth and heaven). The picture of the Great Dragon stands with open mouth to devour the Male child that the woman bore represents

the fact that Satan who got defeated before the power of resurrection of Christ, or in other words, the Old Serpent that became the great Dragon now seeks to block the resurrection of the Pure Virgin who represents the overcoming saints getting resurrected from the dead. Satan ironically gets defeated again as he could not block the resurrection of Christ, couldn't block the ascension of the saints who were resurrected by the same power.

At that time, Satan and his angels being trembled at the voice of the archangel Michael turned to fight against the archangel and his army and by the command of God the enemies are cast down forever to the **earth** that is the **footstool**. By then the prophecy "until I make your enemies your footstool" gets fulfilled at the Lord's coming in the mid-air. Time is very near for this to happen. When the Bride of the Lamb gets transformed from the dust and is caught up to heavenly heights in the resurrection body bearing the image of the heavenly, Satan who was Lucifer the creation of the heavenly Paradise and all his angels falling under his seduction will be expelled from the mid-air Paradise to the earth. This is what will happen at the resurrection of the Pure Virgin.

Hope it is clear that the 12th chapter of Revelation is the mystery pack of the Lord's appearance in the Mid-air and its after-events. The greatest and most important event likely to happen is the Lord's appearance in the mid-air. The key verse with which to open the secret of Revelation chapter 12 given by the Holy Spirit is Ps. 110:1. Revelation chapter 12 is proved to be related to the mid-air coming of Christ on the basis of analysis of the scripture that the Son will remain seated at the right hand of the Father until the Son's enemies made His footstool.

*"And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev. 22:17).*

God the Holy Spirit has been preparing the Bride of the Lamb for the past 2000yrs. From the inception of the Church so many saints who attained perfection have departed from this earth after death and been resting in the third heaven of the heavenly Paradise. The Spirit and the Bride together say to the Bride groom 'come'. If this happens today, what all things we have discussed in this chapter will be fulfilled in a matter of seconds. Therefore let us be among the numbers of those who wait for the Lord's coming sincerely and wholesomely and say '**Amen, even so Lord come quickly**'. Let us live with the heavenly hope cherished that we join Him at His coming. Everything has been set in array for the spiritual battle in the mid-air. Let us awake; let us thrive.

When once the resurrection of the pure-virgin from the dead is over, the Bride reaching the Heaven of heavens will partake of everything happening there. As we study about the ongoing after death ranks, we are not as part of it; let us aim at the greatest and highest resurrection rank of Pure Virgin. Once the Church Bride has been raptured, what ensues on earth will be three and a half yrs., Great Tribulation. Now we are going to enter into "Resurrection of two witnesses" in the next chapter.

## Lesson Summary

- The resurrection of the pure virgin will be that from the dead even as the resurrection of the Bride Groom had been.
- The church Bride that is the Bride of the Lamb is the first fruit of all creation.
- Only the perfected saints will be raptured at the coming of the Lord.
- The Bridegroom Lord will not just say "come up here" but will descend to the mid-air and take along the pure virgin who should be with Him.

- While writing about the mid-air coming in epistles only the details of events happening in heaven and on earth are given. But the complete description is given in the book of Revelation.
- The key verse, 'sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool' is that which elucidates the resurrection event of the pure virgin.
- The Archangel Michael and his army descending from Heaven with the Lord will fight against Satan and his hosts and cast them down at the mid-air coming. This is recorded in Revelation chapter 12.
- That the Male Child the woman bore was caught up to the throne of God is an allegorical statement of the resurrection of the pure virgin.
- When the number of the pure virgin is perfected, the Heavenly father announces the mystery in heaven and at the trumpet sound the Holy Spirit who is on earth bring all the souls of the saints in the third heaven to their mortal bodies who in turn get resurrected and come by those of the same rank who remain alive are transformed and both taken together as one male child up to Heaven of heavens.
- As the Satanic host attempting to hinder the resurrection of the pure virgin will be cast down to earth forever, the enemies of Christ will be flung down to the earth that is the footstool and Christ's reign begins.

If not staying ready for the Lord's coming, we will be rejected. In order that such a tragedy should not be ours, yield ourselves to the Holy Spirit so that by any means resurrection from among the dead could be attained.

## Chapter - X

# RESURRECTION OF TWO WITNESSES

*"Now after the three-and-a-half days the breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw them. And they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, "Come up here." And they ascended to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies saw them" (Rev. 11:11-12).*

Here it is written that at the voice from heaven, they ascended to heaven in a cloud. Therefore, it is affirmed that they get resurrected with a heavenly body and are related to New Jerusalem the city of the Living God. The Glory of the Heavenly bodies is different from the glory of the earthly bodies (I Cor. 15:40). In accordance with this scripture, there are the righteous who are worthy of living on earth (those who are worthy of eternal life) and there are those who usher into the Heaven of Heavens getting resurrected with heavenly body (those of the glory of the Sun, those of the glory of the Moon, those of the glory of Stars). We discussed in the previous chapter about Jerusalem the mother above being represented as a woman on the basis of Revelation chapter 12.

In the previous chapter 'Resurrection Of The Pure Virgin' we discussed that those who belong to the rank of

Pure Virgin who have the glory of the sun go after death to the third Heaven in the mid-air and at the mid-air appearance of the Lord the resurrection of these and transformation of the same rank would happen and both would be taken together as one Male Child by the Holy Spirit imminently. Though the Lord descends to the mid-air to take along the Body of the Lamb or the Pure Virgin accompanied by the Heavenly angels, in the forthcoming resurrections, the Lord will not come down to take along anyone. He only commands 'come up here'. The point of discussion in this chapter 'Resurrection of two witnesses' is about those who are taken up to heaven from earth in the resurrection body.

In Revelation chapter 12 we see that the woman who bore the Male Child flees to the desert and is taken care of in a place prepared for her 1260 days.

*"Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days" (Rev. 12:6)*

*"But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent" (Rev. 12:14).*

From the fact that God takes care of her 3 ½ yrs., we have to think seriously about what are the events related to it and the end thereof. By the word desert is meant the spiritual condition of the earth after the Holy Spirit has left. When the Spirit that is the river has been removed from here Satan makes his attempt to fill the earth with his water of false teaching; "So the serpent spewed out of his mouth like a flood" (Rev. 12:15) this means that in spite of such a circumstance, there will be a faithful remnant giving heed to the Scripture.

*"Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away" (Heb. 2:1).*

When the Church is under the preparation by the Holy Spirit, once in a while false teaching arises and makes some drift away. At the present time it is erratic but during the Tribulation of 3 ½ years and afterwards the true word will be scarce and false teaching abundant. During this period, those who keep the commandment of the Lord and the testimony of Jesus are said to be the remnant of the woman's children.

*"And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Rev. 12:17).*

Including the Male Child that was born there are three groups mentioned in connection with the woman.

The church of the firstborn registered in heaven; they are pictured as the Male Child caught up imminently to the Heaven of heavens who are perfected (the Pure Virgin shining like the sun).

*"And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death" (Rev. 12:11).*

It is those who are counted worthy of receiving the crown of life being faithful till death that are caught up to the Heavenly throne as Pure Virgin having power to rule.

After this, there are two groups as remnant among the children of the woman who bore the male child. Let us see who they are.

1. Those who obey the commandment of God (shining as stars)
2. Those who have the testimony of Jesus (shining as Moon)

### **1. Those who obey the commandment of God**

*"And I prayed to the LORD my God, and made confession, and said, "O Lord, great and awesome God, who keeps*

*His covenant and mercy with those who love Him, and with those who keep His commandments" (Dan. 9:4).*

From the beginning of the world there have been people who loved the Lord and their generations of those who obeyed the commandments that God spoke in various ways. They are generally considered as the excellent saints of the Old Testament. Their after-death-abode is at present in the first heaven. At the mid-air coming of the Lord those Old Testament saints who are in the after-death-rank of the first heaven will not be resurrected. Those who belong to this rank still remain on earth. They are said to be those who belong to the remnant of the woman's offspring who obey God's commandment.

## **2. Those who have the testimony of Jesus**

We understand from Rev. 12:17 that these are the remnant after the resurrection of the Pure Virgin of the New Testament Church. It was with the inception of the New Testament Church that the testimony of Jesus was preached in the world. The scripture shows only those in the New Testament Church as having the testimony of Jesus.

*"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8).*

That has happened so ever since then. A question may arise here as to how those who have the testimony of Jesus will be after the Holy Spirit has left the earth. But the Scripture tells us that there will be the witnesses of Jesus until the end of the world on earth for sure.

With the coming of the Lord in the mid-air, the Church activity does not stop. Only the resurrection of the Pure Virgin of the Perfected Church will take place at the secret coming of Christ. The resurrection of the virgins in the New Testament church or the maids of the Bride does not

happen at the mid-air coming. They continue their rest in the second heaven of Paradise even after that. At the same time there will be those who belong to their rank on earth who will join them. The generally prevalent view is that the Church will be raptured at the Lord's midair coming and afterwards none of the remnants will be on earth. Given below are some reasons why this view is wrong.

1. In Rev. 12:17 it is written that the rest of her children maintain their testimony for Jesus. They have not accepted Jesus during the three and a half year rule of Antichrist because nowhere is the rule of Antichrist mentioned in Revelation chapter 12. On the contrary, this chapter records only about the three and a half years satanic Tribulation.
2. Jesus promised the disciples His presence with them even to the end of the world. The Lord's mid-air appearance is not the end of the world (Mtt. 28:19-20), but will be fulfilled at His Glorious appearance that is the **second coming** which is **His public appearance**.
3. The end of the world signs that the Lord spoke to his disciples are rather remarkable in relation to the Church.

*" Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake. And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. But he who endures to the end shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come" (Mtt. 24:9-14), (Mk. 18:9-13; Lk. 21:12-19).*

Since we see that until the second coming which is the glorious appearance of the Lord there will be Gospel and those who have testimony of Jesus, who will they be unless they are the remnant of the Church? As much then as the

common teaching is that those will be raptured who worship the Lord in separation, what will be the condition of the nominal Christians? Will they all perish altogether? It is a matter to be pondered over whether even after the rapture the Gospel activity will continue.

**It is certain that after the resurrection of those who are worthy of becoming the Bride of the Lamb, still the gospel of Jesus and His witnesses will be on earth till the end of the world.** Above that even if the Holy Spirit is not working at that time, the working of the Holy Spirit is not stopping completely, we can see this in the light of the scriptures. The Lord had said like this in relation to the end of the world:

*"But when they arrest you and deliver you up, do not worry beforehand, or premeditate what you will speak. But whatever is given you in that hour, speak that; for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit" (Mk. 13:11).*

The things after the coming of the Lord in the mid-air are recorded here. Though the Holy Spirit will have gone from the earth, we can see that the Spirit will be active in those who yield themselves to it. Another scripture is added here to elucidate the matter.

*"Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves....But when they deliver you up, do not worry about how or what you should speak. For it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak; for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you...." (Mtt. 10:16-52).*

Church was established by the power of the Holy Spirit yet before this the disciples were sent out by Jesus during his public ministry to proclaim the Good News, then the spirit that spoke through them was of the Father. If so it is proved that Holy Spirit will continue to speak in relation to the remnant of the Church until the Glorious appearance of the Lord even after the Holy Spirit have been taken away after perfecting the Pure Virgin the most precious first fruit of the Church. This is explained below

in relation with the activities of the New Testament Church.

## **1. In relation to worship, ministry etc**

There is a teaching that at a time two types of worships (old-New Testament worships ) on earth cannot exist and by the coming of Christ in the mid-air, the true worship of God, the Lord's Table and other ministries will be stopped. But this must be substantiated by scriptural evidences. **Before elucidating this, let me assert one thing; the motive behind the writing of this book is that all in the Church must be perfected and caught up in the rapture.** But how many saints of the New Testament have departed from the body belonging to the rank of Virgins and as just heirs of eternal life without complete perfection. It is a reasonable and believable notion that all in the Church are not of the same rank and only those who mature in growth are entitled for the right of adoption as sons. Therefore even after the mid-air appearance there will be remnant of the Church belonging to the rank of virgins and those entitled for just eternal life until the glorious appearance of the Lord.

The church of the Lord was born on the very same day of observing the Festival of Pentecost in the Temple of Jerusalem during the first century; the history bears record that the Temple of that time was destroyed by AD 70. If that is so, there were two worships in existence at the beginning of the early Church. If the same thing repeats at the end of the world what is the harm?

## **2. In relation to the Lord's Table**

With the mid-air coming, the ministries of the Church do not cease. It will continue until the end of the world. Many think in respect of the Lord's Table that the Church is joined to Christ or at least the emphasis is laid on that. But all who partake of the Lord's Table will not be raptured. Those who are worthy of eternal life will be

resurrected on the last day (Jn. 6:53,54). The description of the same is given in the chapter titled 'Resurrection On The Final Day'.

The book of 'Revelation records that after the mid-air appearance those who have testimony for Jesus and obey God's commandments have to go through the great wrath. Revelation chapter 12 records the devil's war against both these groups (Rev. 12:11-17).

*"And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death. Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time." Now when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male Child. But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent. So the serpent spewed water out of his mouth like a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood. But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon had spewed out of his mouth. And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Rev. 12:11-17).*

In Revelation chapter 11 the rest of the children of the woman are spoken of allegorically.

*"Then I was given a reed like a measuring rod. And the angel stood, saying, "Rise and measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who worship there. But leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the Gentiles. And they will tread*

*the holy city underfoot for forty-two months. And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth." These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands standing before the God of the earth" (Rev. 11:1-4).*

In Revelation 12:14, 17 it has recorded about both the groups of the rest of the woman's children and the prophecy regarding them 1260 days. The statement 'I will give power to my two witnesses' means that for that particular period God will safeguard them and they have secured the needed grace to fight against Satan. By 'two witnesses' is not meant just two individuals but specially notable is that the two represent Old Testament and the New Testament).

These two witnesses are pictured as **two olive trees** and **two lampstands** that stand before the Lord of all the earth (Rev. 11:4). It must be interpreted spiritually.

## **1. TWO OLIVE TREES**

*"But the olive tree said to them, 'Should I cease giving my oil, With which they honor God and men, .... And go to sway over trees?' Then the trees said to the fig tree, 'You come and reign over us!' But the fig tree said to them, 'Should I cease my sweetness and my good fruit, And go to sway over trees?' Then the trees said to the vine, 'You come and reign over us!' But the vine said to them, 'Should I cease my new wine, Which cheers both God and men, And go to sway over trees?' " (Judges 9:9-13).*

The Olive tree denotes **divine vitality**, it also denotes **peace**. It was the olive tree that stuck on in the flood of Noah maintaining its greenish vitality, by virtue of which a dove returned to the ark with a green Olive leaf (Gen. 9:11). Paul in the New Testament has said about the Olive tree in the epistle of Romans:

*"For if the first-fruit is holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root is holy, so are the branches. And if some of the*

*branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them became a partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree, do not boast against the branches.....Branches were broken off that I might be grafted in....For if God did not spare the natural branches, He may not spare you either.... if they do not continue in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. For if you were cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these, who are natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?" (Rom. 11:16-24).*

The root spoken of here is concerning none but Jesus Christ the Nazarene the root of David and the Lion of the tribe of Judah (Rev. 5:5, 22:16, Isa. 11:1). Root in the New Testament denotes love.

*"that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love" (Eph. 3:17).*

Paul has vehemently said that God has never forsaken Israel His own people. It has already been shown above in two places in the book of Revelation speaking of the relation between David and Christ as descending from the shoot of David's root. The natural branches stand for Israel and that which is engrafted speaks of Gentiles. It is said here that the natural branches will again be grafted. Not just Israel but Abraham and those preceded him also had God's peace and vitality. They are represented by Olive trees. Two different Olive trees are distinctly shown because of the fact that both their resurrections take place at two different times, **one witness is shown as two olive trees to represent the resurrection of all the Old Testament excellent saints from the beginning to the end of the world due to be happened in two phases.**

## **2. TWO LAMPSTANDS**

Another witness is likened to two lampstands. They also are the anointed ones standing before the Lord's

presence. After presenting in Revelation chapters 2,3 lampstands in connection with the Church (perfect number), way up in chapter eleven two lampstands are presented to represent the remnant of the Church. Next witness is shown as two lampstands because their resurrection also must be occurred in two phases. Since this view is a new one departing from the conventional view it needs more explanation and clarity.

All future resurrections; be it of the Old Testament saints or of virgins, only on the basis of the book of Revelation the exposition will carry authenticity. For instance, on the basis of the verse that tell us (Rev. 11:12) that the two witnesses on hearing the voice 'come up here' went up to heaven, we maintain that they are the rest of the children that the woman bore (Rev. 12:17). The prophecy of Zachariah is an identical part in the Old Testament with the part of Revelation that we have discussed about two witnesses.

*"And he said to me, "What do you see?" So I said, "I am looking, and there is a lampstand of solid gold with a bowl on top of it, and on the stand seven lamps with seven pipes to the seven lamps. Two olive trees are by it, one at the right of the bowl and the other at its left." (Zech. 4: 2, 3).*

In the book of Revelation Christ Jesus is pictured as one that walks in the middle of seven lampstands. Zechariah saw the same thing in the vision corresponding to the Old and New Testament saints. The message to the Church in Revelation chapter 2 and 3 is concluded with the message to the Church of Laodicea the first and foremost event that is likely to happen such as the completion of the Church and that the overcomers will be sitting with Him.

We discussed in the previous chapter about the Male Child representing the over comers of the New Testament Church perfected by the Holy Spirit whom the Lord will catch up to the Throne in Heaven of Heavens imminently

which is recorded in Revelation chapter 12. In the same chapter we are told that among the woman's children that are left there are two groups who have to go through the Satan's great Tribulation 1260 days. The two groups that go through the Great Tribulation and the rule of Antichrist are pictured as two olive trees and two lamp stands in Revelation chapter 11. In the prophecy of Zechariah that is identical with this chapter importance is given to who are the two olive trees.

*"Then I answered and said to him, "What are these two olive trees-at the right of the lamp stand and at its left?" (Zech. 4:11).*

The angel who revealed the vision to Zechariah explained as a shadow about the construction of the Temple of God and its completion. In the building work carried out by the Spirit of God, the message came to Zerubbabel that with the shout of 'Grace, grace to it' the capstone will be driven through, but the Old Testament prophet Zechariah could not grasp the mystery regarding the vision of the lamp stand as it was not revealed (a solid gold lamp stand with a bowl of oil on top of it. Around the bowl seven lamps with seven pipes attached). The reason of mystery being hidden to them was that the Old Testament saints were not included in the temple of the city of New Jerusalem. The prophet had asked only about that which he wanted to know and its answer has been given in the prophecy, whereas in Revelation its full substance has completely been revealed.

The complete revelation of those who are included in the city of the living God which is New Jerusalem is given in this chapter (Zec. 4th chapter). As we try to unfold the mystery, the golden lampstand stands for **Jesus Christ**. The bowl on top of it shows the **Holy Spirit**. The seven lamps are **seven churches** spoken of in the book of Revelation connected to Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. The primary application of the vision is that in the temple

of the Holy Spirit built for the habitation of God the Father, Christ the Head and Church the Body are constituted. We have already understood the fact that in the New Jerusalem the constituent parts are the Pure Virgin, the Old Testament Champions and the Virgins of the New Testament Church. As regards the messages to the seven churches in relation to the seven lampstands in the book of Revelation, the gist is about those overcomers who make up the Pure Virgin and those who fall short of overcoming.

The vision received by the prophet Zechariah was about the city of the Living God. That is why the Holy Spirit has written about the building of Jerusalem Temple which is a shadow. See below the shadow and substance of the vision that Zechariah saw about the Temple of Jerusalem in relation to the city of God New Jerusalem.

1. A solid gold lamp stand - Christ Jesus
2. A bowl on top - Holy Spirit
3. Seven lamps and seven pipes - Seven Churches and sevenangels.
4. Two olive trees (left and right) - Represent all the Old Testament saints of excellence from the beginning of the world to the glorious appearance of the Lord.

Since Zechariah could not easily grasp the meaning of the vision he saw, he picked up the question what did the two Olive trees mean? Since it was not just two olive trees, we see in the verses the prophet asking for the second time to the angel what the meaning of the vision he next saw was.

*"Then I answered and said to him, "What are these two olive trees-at the right of the lamp stand and at its left?" And I further answered and said to him, "What are these two olive branches that drip into the receptacles of the*

*two gold pipes from which the golden oil drains?" Then he answered me and said, "Do you not know what these are?" And I said, "No, my lord." So he said, "These are the two anointed ones, who stand beside the Lord of the whole earth" (Zech. 4:11-14).*

In the first vision he saw seven lamps and seven pipes whereas in the second vision he saw differently so he asks about the two golden tubes and two olive branches by which golden oil flows. It means as we discussed earlier that the perfected saints of the Church and the Holy Spirit along with Christ enter the Heaven of heavens and the work of the Temple in the city of New Jerusalem is completed. That is why the prophet did not ask about anything of the first vision but on later occasions at first he asked about two olive trees and secondly about two golden tubes and two olive branches.

In Rev. 11:14, only the second question that Zechariah asks is being taken and quoted. The reason for that is the prophecy regarding the Temple is being fulfilled in the beginning portion of Revelation chapter 12 in relation with the mid-air coming of the Lord. An indication about the two remnant groups among the children of the woman who gave birth to the male child is revealed in the last part of this chapter and the 12th chapter is concluded. Whereas we can get the complete description about the woman's left over children while studying Revelation chapter 11.

The prophecy of Zechariah 4th chapter presents the account of two events. Verses 1 to 10 reveal Christ Jesus the Head (the golden lamp stand), the perfected Church which is the Body (seven lamps, seven pipes) and the Holy Spirit which is the Word the counsel of the Father that activates the Church (the bowl on top). The assurance of the completion of the Temple of God the Father is asserted by the verse "not by might nor by power but by Spirit" (Zech. 4:6). It is again affirmed that no matter how many

challenges may come, the Lord who had laid the foundation is the same God who will complete it (Zech. 4:9). The seven eyes that search all around the world (Zech. 4:10) are the eyes of the Lamb as revealed in (Rev. 5:6). The first part of Zechariah chapter 4 describes only about the Temple (Zech. 4:5-10) because church of the firstborn to be joined to the all powerful God the Christ at the mid-air appearance as mentioned in Revelation Chapter 12 would be caught up as Male Child.

In the vision of Zechariah the second question he asks about is another event. When he knew for sure that the work of the Temple would be completed, he asks about the Olive trees thinking that that was the only thing remaining.

*"Then I answered and said to him, "What are these two olive trees-at the right of the lampstand and at its left?" (Zech. 4:11).*

Zechariah the prophet of the Old Testament asks about only the two Olive trees to which he is related. Zechariah seems to have the same notion that most of the believers today have. The notion is that after the Church is raptured, none of those related to Church would be left on earth. However, the Spirit of God corrected the notion of the prophet the same day and he asks the second time about two golden tubes and two olive branches. Just as the prophet got the real revelation the second time, the study of Zechariah chapter 4 and Revelation chapters 11 and 12 gives us a newer revelation. In the vision he saw two golden tubes and near it two olive branches that release golden oil. Down below is the explanation of this verse given in Revelation chapter 11.

*"These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands standing before the God of the earth" (Rev. 11:4), ( Zech. 4:14).*

The book of Revelation elucidates that the two golden tubes that Zechariah saw are two lamps and the two

olive branches that release oil are two trees. It is also clear that these are the two witnesses who stand before the presence of the Lord. They are termed in the prophecy of Zechariah as two anointed whereas in the book of Revelation they are termed as two witnesses and prophets (Rev. 11:3,10). These two witnesses or anointed are not just two individuals. They are two remnant groups of the children borne by the woman as has already been explained.

The Pure virgin which is the body of Christ is revealed in a perfect sense to be seven lamps and after its completion, one of the two remnant groups of the children of the woman that bore the male child, which is the group that has testimony of Jesus is pictured as two lamps while the second group that is the group of those Old Testament champions who obey God's commands is pictured as two olive trees in two scriptures such as Zechariah 4:12-14 and Rev. 11:3-4.

**Of these the first is the group of the firstborn perfected and caught up to the heavenly throne signified by seven lamps and the next group is represented by the remnant of the New Testament Church signified by two lamps. The two olive trees represent those Old Testament champions from the beginning to the end of the world who obey God's commands.**

We have already discussed about those who are in the third heaven as per the death-resurrection ranks. The remnant children of the woman that bore the male child representing the two lamps and two olive trees are pictured as two witnesses in order that they may represent two groups. **More precisely, two witnesses are shown as two lamps and two olive trees rather than one lamp and one olive trees.** All the Old Testament champions who obey God's commands are pictured as **two olive trees** because of the fact that their resurrections take place in **two phases**. Similarly, the remnants of the New Testament

Church are shown as **two lamps** because their resurrection also takes place in **two phases**. Repetition is warranted by the need of the mystery registering in the mind.

**Revelation chapter 11 deals with the resurrection of the remnant of the children of the woman in the first phase.** To write more clearly, after the resurrection of the Pure Virgin in the pack of resurrection of the two witnesses, the resurrection of the Old Testament saints in the **first heaven** of the heavenly paradise and that of the virgins in the **second heaven** will take place.

The fact of the matter is that Revelation Chapter 12 must precede chapter 11 according to the subject matter arrangement. The account of events in Revelation is not as per chapter sequence. It is put on record in downright mystery form. About the woman it is written that she fled to the desert to a place where she would be taken care for 1260 days. The same period is written in chapter 11 in relation to the Gentiles that they will tread the courtyard of the holy city 42 months during which the ministry of the two witnesses coincides for a period spoken of as three and half years (Rev. 11:1-3). The two witnesses are shown to be those who are conferred grace or gift from God (Rev. 11:3). During the tribulation of three and a half years God fights the battle against Satan on earth through those who stand for the law of God and for the testimony of Jesus. The satanic government at that time will be in a very difficult position not able to do anything before the empowering grace they will have.

It has already been proved in the chapter of 'strange events' that the two witnesses would not be any of the deceased prophets reappearing such as Moses, Elijah or Enoch. If a wondrous work done by somebody has been repeated in the Bible somewhere else, it would be silly to say that it must have been done by the same person. For example, turning water into blood has not been done only by Moses.

*"Then the second angel poured out his bowl on the sea, and it became blood as of a dead man; and every living creature in the sea died. Then the third angel poured out his bowl on the rivers and springs of water, and they became blood" (Rev. 16:3-4).*

Similarly, it was not only Elijah who shut the heavens stopping rain.

*"When the heavens are shut up and there is no rain because they have sinned against You, when they pray toward this place and confess Your name, and turn from their sin because You afflict them, then hear in heaven, and forgive the sin of Your servants, Your people Israel, that You may teach them the good way in which they should walk; and send rain" (2 Chro. 6:26-27).*

**The ministry of Moses and Elijah was performed among the people of Israel. They are no longer supposed to perform ministry in the New Testament.** Elijah (shadow) who came as John the Baptist (Substance) had performed his ministry as the last prophet of the Law dispensation.

Moses talked about Jesus saying that the Lord would raise a prophet like me from among your brethren. It was also fulfilled in the Lord Jesus (Acts. 2:22,23). If so, God can raise faithful men like Moses and Elijah in the last days of the world's end and can get His ministry fulfilled through them. The remnant people of the Church will be active on earth even after the Holy Spirit has been taken away just as the Holy Spirit used the apostles before the establishment of the Church because the Lord who promised His presence with His people even to the end of the world will not break His promise. Those strong people who witness to the Gospel will be on earth until the end of the world.

The ministries of these two witnesses will not be confined to Israel or Jerusalem as they will be used by

God all over the world with power (Rev. 11:5, 6). They cannot be Moses and Elijah the prophets of Israel because about the two witnesses the Scripture says "These are the two anointed ones, who stand beside the Lord of the whole earth". They have power to strike the earth with every kind of plague as often as they wish (Rev. 11:6). By them people all over the world (those who do not obey God) will have to suffer great afflictions. Therefore the death of such troublesome men will be desired by all and after 1260 days, the first phase of God's plan will have been completed together with the death and resurrection of them that have completed their testimony.

At the breaking of the first seal by the lamb there comes to our view a white horse, its rider carrying a bow going on conquering and to conquer (Rev. 6:1, 2). (Not venturing for explanation).

*"I was watching; and the same horn was making war against the saints, and prevailing against them, until the Ancient of Days came, and a judgment was made in favor of the saints of the Most High, and the time came for the saints to possess the kingdom" (Dan. 7:21, 22), (Rev. 13:7, 11:7).*

Antichrist the Beast emerges from the bottomless pit (Rev. 11:7). This is also recorded as Sea (13: 1) also called as deep (17:8). **The first appearance of the Son of God was descending from the highest Heaven of heavens as the Lamb down to the earth for the atonement of sins, whereas the Antichrist ascends out of the deep that is the abode of darkness to the world as Beast in order to seduce mankind by sin and destroy them.** The Beast kills those who oppose his coming. The autocrats who come to power by sabotage either eliminate the opponents or put them to confinement. That is the modus operandi of the Antichrist who takes over the world rule. This not only affects two individuals but all the saints whom he will kill when they bear witness for God. However those who oppose him will arise even afterwards until the end

of his rule. They are called the final remnant which will be discussed in the next chapter.

Although the beast ascending out of the deep declares war against the two witnesses having completed their testimony and conquers and kills them, it is not to be considered as a defeat of the spiritual war of the people of God. When the Lord had died on Calvary, the world had thought that He was defeated. On the contrary, He had won victory over death and had risen again the third day from among the dead. In just the same way they will also resurrect after three and a half days and the story will end rather dramatically. That's why this event is linked to the crucifixion of the Lord.

*“And their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified” (Rev. 11:8).*

It is the spiritual condition of Jerusalem when the Gentiles tread on the holy city 42 months to which Sodom and Egypt are compared. It was Jesus Christ Himself the Lord of all who rescued the Old Testament saints from the Hades to the first heaven in paradise. Though Israel does not accept Him as the Savior, it is Christ's power that is at work behind their salvation. The dead bodies of the two witnesses are laid on the street of the great city; the people all over the world (except the last remnant) preventing the bodies to be buried because they have great joy. From this we can understand that the ministry of the two witnesses was worldwide and people all over the world were hurt by their supernatural power and that the world so celebrated their death (Rev. 11:8-10).

The corpses of the two witnesses represent two groups; the two prophets completing their testimony one of whom is a **lamp stand** and the other **olive tree**, will lie on the street three and a half days exposed to sunlight and dew. After three and a half days the victorious Lord

demonstrates to the entire world that they were not defeated but were winning victory. The voice had sounded from the Heaven of heavens '**come up here**'. At such a voice, breath of life comes into them and they stand to their feet, and the new body that they receive is resurrection body, a fact explained by their ascension to heaven through the clouds. The mystery of this event is: it is not just two individuals caught up to heaven of heavens, but as two witnesses, two groups of after-death-ranks (to first heaven and to second heaven).

Another event similar to this is explained in the prophecy of Ezekiel. As regards the house of Israel, a spiritual thought is given in Ezekiel chapter 37 in which dry bones are made to stand in array as a great army (Ezek. 37:1-14).

*"So I prophesied as He commanded me, and breath came into them, and they lived, and stood upon their feet, an exceedingly great army" (Ezek. 37:10).*

Although the allegory of Israel is said as a shadow, the resurrection of two witnesses is given as a literal (actual) happening not as a shadow. Although the allegorical passage in Ezek. 37 has nothing to do with the resurrection of the two witnesses, why this is mentioned here is to prove that our Lord can work not only as a shadow but even as substantially as this.

The resurrection of two witnesses is not shadow but substance; the reason being that the book of Revelation is a record of what is going to happen. It is written in Ezekiel that the Lord is able to bring the bones, and skin to form a cover over the bodies and raise them as a great army (Ezek. 37:7-8). It is not just in the Old Testament that the Lord did such miracles but also in the New Testament we can see the Lord's mighty work in the raising of Lazarus when the voice of the Lord restored the decomposing body to life.

The two dead ones represented two groups lying as two witnesses belong to two after-death-ranks. **Those who obey God's commands denote the Old Testament saints in the first heaven and those who have testimony for Jesus denote the virgins who are in the second heaven.** The incident here can be compared to the imminent catch up of the perfected saints of the Church at the mid-air coming as the Male Child. At the voice of the Son of God 'come up here' the souls of the Old Testament Saints whose souls are resting in the first heaven and the New Testament Church who belong to the maids resting in the second heaven quickly enter into their mortal bodies and stand to their feet being resurrected. They soon get caught up to heaven in the sight of all (Rev. 11:11). The Lord's breath of life comes into them as the power of resurrection causing them to stand resurrected; the world in fact sees the dreadful sight of the entire saints of the heavenly paradise both of the first heaven and of the second heaven stand resurrected at the middle part of the earth!

No power can stop the heaven-bound procession of all the saints from both the first heaven and second heaven being resurrected and taken up to the Heaven of heavens. We read that a great earthquake happening at that hour pulls down one-tenth of the city taking the toll of seven thousand people. At the resurrection of the two witnesses all inhabitants fear and glorify God. But that by the beginning of the rule of Antichrist Satan and False Prophet embark on a three and a half year autocratic rule introduce Antichrist the Beast as a hero of worship without honoring God and all the earth-dwellers whose names are not written in the book of life worship him (Rev. 13:8-10). The scripture makes it clear that even during the rule of Antichrist there will be a remnant of the saints who do not worship the Beast (Rev. 13:10).

The first fruit among the resurrection ranks was Christ's resurrection from among the dead. Thereafter they that

are of Christ will be resurrected from among the dead at the coming of Christ in the mid-air, which we have discussed in the chapter of resurrection of the Pure Virgin. In the chapter titled 'Resurrection Of Two Witnesses' we discussed that after the mid-air appearance past three and a half years all the saints from both the first heaven and second heaven at the voice of God 'come up here' will get resurrected and caught up. With the resurrection of the two witnesses all the saints are emptied from the heavenly paradise and taken up to the Heaven of heavens. By this the resurrection of all the saints we have thought about in the chapter 'Those Who Are In Heaven' of the after-death-ranks (third heaven, second heaven, first heaven) is completed. Our point of discussion in the next chapter titled 'First Resurrection' will be the resurrection of those martyred during the rule of Antichrist who belong to the rank 'Those under the Earth' among the after-death-ranks.

### **Lesson summary**

- The resurrection of two witnesses occurs at the beginning of the rule of Antichrist.
- At the resurrection of two witnesses, the resurrection of the greatest saints belonging to the after-death-rank of first and second heaven in the heavenly paradise will occur.
- After the mid air appearance the Great Tribulation will come on earth for three and a half years when the Old Testament witnesses obeying God's commands and the Gospel witnesses will oppose the Satanic forces and when their testimony will have been completed they will be slain by the Antichrist.
- After three and a half days that the breath of life comes to them and they stand to their feet shows the resurrection of the saints from the first and second heaven. That they go up to heaven at the voice '**come up here**' shows their ascension to heaven.

- The phrase of '**two witnesses**' is not about two individuals but it talks about two groups worthy of the holy place of New Jerusalem the heavenly city.
- With their resurrection, the resurrection of all the three after-death-ranks in the heavenly paradise is completed.

## Chapter - XI

### THE FIRST RESURRECTION

*"But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years." (Revelation 20:5-6)*

If a human being dies, will he live again? It is in answer to this important question that we have been discussing each of the ranks under the topic Resurrection ranks, right? Under the topic, first of all we discussed the resurrection of Christ Jesus who is the first fruit of the resurrection. Thereafter, we discussed on the basis of the Book of Revelation the last book of the Bible the storehouse of prophecies, we learned about the resurrection of the Lamb's Bride in the chapter titled "Resurrection of the Pure Virgin" and in the chapter titled "Resurrection of two witnesses" we discussed about the combined resurrection of the Virgins the maids (one lampstand) and the greatest of the Old Testament saints (one Olive Tree).

In the previous two chapters through the narrations of the two resurrections, we have seen the resurrections of the three after-death-ranks Out of the seven after-death-ranks. After taking a glance at it once again, let us enter

into the next topic the first resurrection of the Resurrection rank.

## **1. Resurrection of the Pure Virgin**

This is recorded in the 12th chapter of Revelation as a mystery. It is written in Revelation 12:5 that the woman bore a male child who would rule all the nations with iron rod and that the child was caught up to the throne of heaven. This reveals about the resurrection of the Pure Virgin. But the Jerusalem above is free; she is our mother (Gala. 4:25-26). The first fruit of this woman pictured by Paul is termed as the male child that was caught up to heaven of heavens imminently. Though the word resurrection is not mentioned here, the phrases such as 'the woman bore' denotes the resurrection and 'caught up to God and His throne' denotes the ascension of those who are worthy of being seated with the Lamb in heavenly body. When this happens at the mid-air coming of the Lord, the resurrection of the saints belonging to the highest rank in the third heaven as well as the transformation of the saints living for Christ on earth belonging to the same rank will occur. There afterwards none any longer can become the member of the Lamb's Bride Church. Today God has given that opportunity to all men until the above happening. **The greatest privilege and achievement that a man can gain in life is to become the member of the Bride Church who is the Pure Virgin joined to the Lord as one.**

## **2. The Resurrection of Two Witnesses**

Our discussion bore on the topic of combined resurrections of both the virgins who are the maids of the Bride of the Lamb (Psalms 45:14) in the second heaven of heavenly Paradise and of the saints in the first heaven based on Revelation chapter 11. Also, at the beginning of the rule of Antichrist the two witnesses representing two groups are killed and their bodies lie outside on the street

three and a half days and as the breath of life from God comes into them and they stand to their feet (Rev. 11:11) and as they hear the voice from heaven "come up here", both of them ascend to heaven (Rev. 11:12). **We have discussed in the previous chapter that this shows the resurrection of the after-death-ranks from the first and second heaven.** Though we do not see the term 'resurrection', the phrase 'the breath of life entered into them and they stood to their feet' stands for resurrection and the voice 'come up here' shows the ascension of those who are resurrected with heavenly bodies.

With these two resurrections all the saints who are in the heavenly paradise get resurrected and caught up to the Heaven of Heavens. Afterwards no single soul either remains in the Paradise or makes new entry after death. Now let us go into the details of the first resurrection.

During the 3 ½ yrs-rule of Antichrist (Rev. 13:5) those who keep the commands of God and the remnant of the Church who obey the Gospel that is the testimony of Jesus will be on earth until the end of the rule of Antichrist which is the end of the world (Rev. 20:4; Mtt. 28:20, 24:14). Since this fact is clearly proved in the after-death rank "Those under the earth", we are not going further into that. John records about having seen the souls of slain during the rule of Antichrist twice. In the first account he says in connection with events happening at the beginning of the rule of Antichrist who all are martyred and where the souls are ushered into.

*"When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. And cried with a loud voice, saying, 'how long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?' And a white robe was given to each of them, 'and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants*

*and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed" (Rev. 6:9-11).*

We saw under the after-death-rank in the chapter "Those Who Are Under The Earth" that the souls after death go under the earth where there are creatures praising God and that their abode in there is three and a half years the period of rule of the Antichrist. After the rapture of the Bride Church of the Lamb at the midair coming of the Lord the first phase of three and a half years will be the beginning of the travail which is the Tribulation by Satan (Rev. 12:13-14) after which the Great Tribulation that is the rule of Antichrist stalks in with the resurrection of the two witnesses and under the ensuing affliction those who stand for the true faith will have to lose their life for the sake of God's name. By the phrase 'lose life' is meant that they will be afflicted even to the extent of 'giving up their life'.

Those who are termed as 'fellow servants' are the 144000 sealed and set apart from Israel (Rev. 7:4). They belong to the rank of servants. Of the two witnesses pictured as two lamp stands and two olive trees, they are the latter olive trees. The epithet ascribed as 'brethren' shows that they belong to the last remnant of the virgins of the Church. They are represented as the second lamp stand. Those who lose their life during the Antichrist rule for the Gospel of Jesus' testimony or in other words the martyrs from the last remnant of the Virgins of the Church will be all over the earth. **An innumerable multitude will then be slain for the Lord (Rev. 7:9-17). At their martyrdom, the souls will be ushered into the after-death-rank under the earth.**

The number of Gentiles perfected for New Jerusalem will be secret. Nobody can know the number of them. (Rom. 11:25). But the number of first fruits from Israel is fixed, which is 144000 (Rev. 7:2-8; 4:1-5). At their martyrdom by the cruel persecution of Antichrist, the souls will usher into the after-death rank under the earth.

The Lord had clearly told His disciples about this time in connection with the end of the world.

*".....when will those things be? And what will be the sign of your coming? And of the end of the age?" And Jesus answered and said to them, " take heed that no one deceives you... All these are the beginning of sorrows. Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for my name's sake.....But he who endures to the end shall be saved. And this gospel of the Kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations. And then the end will come. " (Mtt 24:3-14).*

If we read it carefully we can know that this statement is about the persecution and death of the remnant group of the Church who will be on earth until the end of the world. Jesus' prediction that 'you will be delivered to be persecuted and killed' was told to the disciples and not regarding Israel. Therefore it is clear that the remnant of the Church will be there in the last days of the end of the world. Those of Israel do not accept Jesus or the Gospel during the Tribulation by Satan or at the beginning of the rule of Antichrist. They accept Jesus as the Messiah only in the end of the Antichrist rule. Among the end time events Jesus has said at first in relation to those who obey the Gospel and then in relation to Israel.

*" Therefore when you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place.....pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath. For then there will be great tribulation such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, nor ever shall be. And unless those days were shortened no flesh would be saved but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened. Then if anyone says to you 'look here is the Christ' or do not believe it, .. for as the lightening comes from the east and flashes to the west so also will the coming of the Son of man be, where ever the*

*carcass is there will the eagles be gathered together. Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (Mtt. 24: 15-37).*

It is clear that it is concerning Israel, I am not venturing to go into detail.

In accordance with Jesus' words and in the light of the revelation given by the book of Revelation, those who stand for the testimony of Jesus and those 144000 sealed from Israel who belong to the generation of keeping God's commands will fight back the Antichrist. The Antichrist will conquer and kill them but in spiritual sense they depart being over comers. We have learned from the previous chapters of after-death-ranks that the souls of such martyrs are preserved as two groups under the earth (under the altar). Since it is clear to us that the after-death-rank of those under the earth is the rank of the martyrs during the three and a half years period beginning from the rule of the Antichrist until the end of his rule, we are entering further into the second phase where John saw them.

"And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection" (Rev. 20:4-5).

It is just written that he saw the souls of them and not revealed the location. What is coming to view mainly here is a hint of moving towards the latter part of the preparation in heaven for the Lord's glorious appearance

which is the second coming of the Lord. In the first part it is written that the 24 elders who are seated on the thrones are also conferred power by the heavenly Father to carry out judgment on earth. Then it is stated regarding the first resurrection in continuation to that. In this second phase of vision John sees the souls of martyrs belonging to the same group which he saw under the altar, when the Lamb breaks the fifth seal during the rule of Antichrist.

Further on, here it explains that the number of both these groups (fellow servants, brethren) gets perfected and soon the first resurrection will take place. **The reason why more explanation on the basis of scripture is given here is because of the over emphasis that some attach to the first resurrection more than other resurrections.** Why over emphasis on it by some? No other reason than their failure to analyze the future events that are yet to happen from the tough style of the book of Revelation. During the study of the eschatological book of Revelation everyone's view will strike at the "first resurrection" since it is clearly recorded as a resurrection while other resurrections are recorded in mystery form rather than saying 'resurrection' directly. More over since the word 'first' is given naturally people view it in such a sense without a second thought. That is why in the spiritual world many are giving much emphasis to the first resurrection.

**The greatest trouble that has happened by giving overemphasis to first resurrection is the negligence of the study of other two important resurrections recorded in mystery form in Revelation other than the explicit terminology such as resurrection. Not only that but many a bible expositor makes a hodgepodge mixing up of events with scriptural inconsistency.** In Revelation chapter 12 the resurrection of the Pure Virgin from among the dead is recorded in mystery form. In the same manner in chapter 11 of Revelation the resurrection of two witnesses are recorded which we pondered and clearly established based on the word of God. First resurrection

is the resurrection of those who became martyrs for the word of God during the rule of Antichrist. I am very happy to state that God has helped to remove the inaccuracies and ambiguities prevailing currently in the study of resurrection ranks through this book.

In order to establish the subject in still clearer terms, it needs to disclose why the resurrection in third sequence is called first resurrection which occurred after the two resurrections among the resurrection ranks of saints (the resurrection of Pure Virgin happening at the midair coming and the resurrection of the two witnesses happening at the beginning of the rule of Antichrist). Now we are entering into the clarification of this.

".....And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection" (Rev. 20:4,5).

The phrase 'they lived' means that their resurrection is occurring here. However, nothing is said about their ascension to heaven but their position in the thousand year reign is revealed.

*"Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years"* (Rev. 20:6).

Their position during the millennial reign will be equal to the royal priesthood of the Lord. The priests performed their priestly duties at the Holy place of the temple in the Old Testament period. It is important to note the fact that they are not worthy to enter the Most Holy place. Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection and they are a royal priesthood. Here it ascertains that they are not worthy to include in the category of Pure Virgin the bridal church of God who is united to Christ the head who is in the Most Holy place. **Therefore the first**

**resurrection is not at all the resurrection of the perfected of the Church, which is proved here.**

The position of royal priesthood is only for those who are bought with the blood of Christ. Then there arises a question here how have the 144000 of Israel become worthy of the position. Peter the apostle has very clearly affirmed in his epistle the identity of the Church as royal priesthood (I Pet. 2:9-10). There are also two references in Revelation with regard to the church giving full support to this.

"...To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen" (Rev? ?1:5, 6).

Only those who are redeemed by the blood of Christ Jesus are royal priesthood. The royal priesthood denotes those who do the priestly duties of Christ the great king (King's priest- IPet.2:9-10). The meaning of King's priest and kingdom of Priest (Rev. 1:6, 5:10) are the same.

What Peter the apostle has said about the Church is the same as that which John has said in Revelation. This is not about Israel but the message conveyed to the church. The main task of the Church on earth now is to perform the duty of Royal priesthood on earth. But the account given in Revelation Chapter 4, 5 is recorded after the first fruit of the Church which is a group of the perfected firstborn has been taken up as the male child at the midair coming to the Heaven of heavens. After they have reached the Heaven of heavens, we see them taking full part with the Lamb in His ministries. 24 elders and 4 beings represent those who are perfected of the church in the Heaven of heavens (For explanation Revelation of Eternity pages 64-67)

If we carefully look at the new song that the perfected of the Church sings in heaven of heavens we can find out

the striking difference between Rev. 1:6 and Rev. 5:9-10. Nobody seems to contradict the fact that the content of Rev. 1:6 is said before the church is taken up to heaven. Here this verse [Him who loved "us" and washed "us" from "our" sins in His own blood, and has made "us" Kings and priests to His God and Father] applies to all who are bought with the blood of Jesus in the church. But the statement after the Church (the perfected) was taken up to heaven of heavens in the mid air appearance, says [And **"they" sang a new song**, saying: You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and **with your blood you purchased for God** persons from every tribe and language and people and nation. You have made **"them"** to be a **kingdom and priests to serve "our" God**, and **"they"** will reign on the earth] (Rev. 5:9-10 NIV).

At the beginning of the book of Revelation when the church was on earth the pronoun "us" has been used in common and after the perfected of the church has been entered in heaven of heavens the remnant of church has been addressed as "them". After that the same content of the statement re-iterated and this is about none else but the remnant of the church. Moreover we do not see any mention about Israel here. This is because the phrase "redeemed by His blood from every tribe, language and nation" does not fit to Israel but only to Church. If all who are in the Church were taken up in the midair coming of the Lord, how would this verse have been written? It would be like this: [And **"we" sang a new song**, saying: You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and **with your blood you purchased for God** persons from every tribe and language and people and nation. You have made "us" to be a kingdom and priests to serve "our" God, and "we" will reign on the earth]. (As a matter of fact, though there may be some translation errors in the Bible, the essence and spirit of ideas may not be incomplete).

The 24 elders and 4 beings representing the Church taken up to heaven of heavens sing only about the remnant

of the New Testament church on earth. They are the ones who perform the duty of Royal priesthood on earth even after the perfected of the church was taken up. In this incident they do not mention anything about the Old Testament Israel. Revelation chapter 5 verse 9 narrates about the virgins, the remnant of the church who are among those doing priestly duties during the thousand years reign. Since it is clearly recorded in Revelation 5:10 that they will reign on earth as royal priesthood, partakers in the first resurrection will be in the group of those who are worthy for the Holy place. Hence the group of 144000 martyrs from Israel also included in this. Regarding that Rev 20:4-6 recorded about them who have fought and become martyred during the rule of the Antichrist.

Though it is the same position for all those who are worthy of holy place such as the **Old Testament saints**, virgins of the Church and the 144000 of Israel performing priestly duties, there is difference in their ministries. The Old Testament saints are **SINGERS** while the **PLAYERS ON INSTRUMENTS** are **144000 of Israel**. The **virgins of the Church** are those who walk on either side of the Great King **PLAYING TIMBRELS** and dancing (Ps. 68:24-27). (For details please see the book 'Revelation of Eternity' pp. 78-81). Those who belong to the category of royal priesthood must be redeemed by the precious blood of Jesus; that is the reason why they omitted the mention of Israel while singing the song. **Then the reason why they also are included in the first resurrection towards the end of the rule of Antichrist is that they are being redeemed during the rule of Antichrist from the earth for the Lord (Rev. 14:3).**

When the souls of the slain cry from under the earth (under the altar), each of them is given 'white robe' (Rev. 6: 9-11). From this it is made clear that God accepts the martyrs from Israel during the rule of Antichrist along with the martyrs of the remnant of the church and likewise puts seal on those who are to join them (Rev. 7:3-8). They

are the group of 144000 becoming martyrs about whom Revelation 14:3, 4 reveals as first fruit redeemed from among men to God and to the Lamb. Since these are virgins and were not defiled with "WOMEN" (Rev. 14:4), the spiritual meaning of this does not attribute to marriage as taboo which was instituted by God according to His will. But it points to the fact that the 144000 of Israel who are the first fruit from earth stand in separation from the women portrayed as MYSTERY BABYLON THE GREAT THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS (Rev. 17:1-8). During the rule of the beast the economic and business network will be controlled by this woman synonymous to uncleanness and all nations in alliance with her. Here the word "WOMEN" denotes that it is an evil fellowship of all uncleanness.

All the saints related to the wall and towers of the Holy place of the city of God are those who are redeemed by the blood of the Lamb and are of high rank. The Old Testament saints were freed from the bondage of Upper Hades and transferred to the first heaven in heavenly Paradise, the power that worked behind it was the virtue of the precious blood of the Lamb. The virgins of the Church are born by the Gospel. In the same way he purchases them, when the Lord seals and sets apart for Himself the 144000 from Israel. In brief, all the saints who are related to the city of God are the excellent ones bought by the blood of the Lamb.

Where the first resurrection is mentioned, there we do not see them being resurrected and caught up to heaven, nor do we hear such voice as 'come up here'. On other occasions when resurrection is not mentioned but occurs as a mystery in the instance of Pure Virgin the phrases such as "**caught up to God**" (Rev. 12:5) and in the instance of two witnesses "**come up here**" (Rev. 11:12) are used to tell about ascension to heaven. However, here the term 'first resurrection' is used without leaving any room of doubt. In the case of martyrs' resurrection it does not record

when they got resurrected and ascended to Heaven of heavens but we can be quite sure by the book of Revelation that they reached the Heaven of heavens. We will discuss about it later in this chapter.

Those who teach and restrict the resurrections in relation with mankind as first resurrection and the resurrection on the final day, explain about the rapture of church based upon Revelation 4:1-2 where Apostle John heard the voice "**Come up here**" and they teach this resurrection as the first resurrection. But in fact first resurrection is mentioned in Rev 20:4-6. From this it is proved that those who teach and expound the book of Revelation in the chronological order of chapters also deviate from it.

About the first resurrection as to its time we have evidences from the Old Testament prophecies. This is because the first resurrection is the resurrection that happens first in relation to Israel God's own people. As we analyze the Old Testament prophecies we see

*"Your people shall be volunteers In the day of Your power;  
In the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning,  
You have the dew of Your youth" (Ps. 110:3).*

Psalms 110 of David is prophetically profound and meaningful. "You sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool" (Ps. 110:1). Based upon this verse we have learned that the first fruit of the Church will be taken up as a Male Child to Heaven of heavens in the midair coming of the Lord. It is in Ps. 110:3 depicted about the first resurrection as taking place on the day of Christ's power (war) by saying "In the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning, You have the dew of Your youth". Isaiah prophecies adding more detail to it.

*"Your dead shall live; together with my dead body they shall arise. Awake and sing, you who dwell in dust; for your dew is like the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead" (Isa. 26:19).*

The statement "**your dead shall live**" is about those who die in the Lord from now on (during the rule of Antichrist) as mentioned in Revelation 14:13. Those blessed who die in the Lord are said to be related to the remnant of the Church (Rev. 14:13) and the phrase "**my dead body will arise**" is based on those who are purchased from Israel. It is on the day of Christ's power (war) that the dew of the youth comes out of the earth. The reason why we say that the first resurrection is a very different kind of resurrection from all of it that has happened so far is: it is the souls belonging to the after-death-rank under the earth that come out resurrected from the womb of the earth. This is what Isaiah spoke of "the earth shall cast out the dead" (Isa. 26:19). In the two resurrection occurred so far, it was the souls being entered into the heavenly Paradise (1, 2, 3 heavens) who got resurrected and caught up to heaven of heavens, whereas in the first resurrection, souls belonging to after-death-rank "under the earth" are getting resurrected. Then the resurrection in the last day is in relation with Earth and such after-death-ranks as Sea, Hades and Hell, which will be happening after 1000 years reign. This resurrection does not have any relation with heavenly paradise.

The first resurrection is the time of gathering the first fruit of the earth ahead of the end time harvest (Mt.13:39). **God sees Israel as the first fruit of the crops upon the earth** (The resurrection that occurs just before the end time harvest that is the end of the age).

*"Israel was holiness to the LORD, The first fruits of His increase. All that devour him will offend; Disaster will come upon them," says the LORD' " (Jeremiah 2:3).*

The mystery which is hidden here is that **144000 sealed from Israel** are the **first fruit** to God and the Lamb **from among men** (mankind is God's farming on earth). This resurrection is called the first resurrection because **144000 the martyrs of Israel are the first fruit of the earth** and the last remnant of the virgins among the remnant of the

New Testament Church getting resurrected along with them emerge from under the earth resurrected.

Then we can see in Psalm 110 the indication about the **Lord's Day of power** (Ps.110:3) and the **Day of his wrath** (Ps. 110:5) which are to happen in future. In Psalm it says that "In the day of power the dew of youth comes out from the womb of the morning" (Ps.110:3) but Isaiah prophesied about this in a different way as "your dew is like the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead" (Isa. 26:19). Then Isaiah goes on saying about the day of his wrath "hide yourself, as it were, for a little moment, until the indignation is past" (Isa.26:20) whereas Psalm 110: 5-7 reveals and explains about the happenings of that time. Here it is clear that both David and Isaiah have spoken regarding the same thing in prophetic spirit.

It is on the day of the Lord's power (Ps. 110:3) that those who belong to the rank of the dead resting under the earth who died in the Lord will resurrect and come out of the earth in the beauty of holiness like the dew of the morning for the Lord. Regarding this we have discussed based on prophecies of David and Isaiah the Old Testament Prophet. The 144000 of Israel the first fruit of the crops of the earth come out of the earth and the last remnant of the virgins of the Church along with them will emerge out of the earth and get resurrected. Here it is reiterated that this is the first resurrection that happens in relation to the earth and hence it is called the first resurrection.

The dominion of Christ begins (Rev. 12:10) after the midair coming of the Lord while the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ during the time of sounding of the seventh trumpet by the seventh angel (Rev. 11:15). Hence from this we get the indication about the mystery of three important resurrections from the two chapters of book of Revelation chapter 11 and 12. The resurrections by which the souls

are joined to New Jerusalem the heavenly city is the pithiest thing as far as mankind is concerned. That is why these two chapters describing it are placed in the middle of the book of Revelation with ten chapters each in the rear and the front. As for the study of Revelation, this must be the method such as dislodging needed portions and interlocking with other parts study is progressed. Otherwise, study will be out of the way.

### **THE MARTYRS OF THE CHURCH BEFORE THE HEAVENLY THRONE**

*"After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" All the angels stood around the throne and the elders and the four living creatures, and fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying: "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom, Thanksgiving and honour and power and might, Be to our God forever and ever. Amen." Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, "Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?" And I said to him, "Sir, you know." So he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple. And He who sits on the throne will dwell among them. They shall neither hunger anymore nor thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any heat; for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes" (Rev. 7:9-17).*

No further evidence is to be presented for the fact that during the Great Tribulation caused in the rule of the Beast that is Antichrist, not just Israel will go through. Here the

facts which we understood before are once again reaffirmed by the Word of God from the above quoted verses. A large multitude from all the world (nations, tribes, people, language), holding palm leaves in hand appearing before the heavenly throne will be the martyrs slain for the sake of the Gospel which is the testimony for Jesus. That each of them is given a white robe (Rev. 6:11) is a hint of identity about them. Since it was made clear in the first resurrection that those who are martyred in this period go to their after-death-rank under the earth, now let us enter into the details of the 144000 from Israel who also will be resurrecting with them.

*"After these things I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, on the sea, or on any tree. Then I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God. And he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea, saying, "Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads." And I heard the number of those who were sealed. One hundred and forty-four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel were sealed: of the tribe of Judah twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Gad twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Asher twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Naphtali twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Levi twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Issachar twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Benjamin twelve thousand were sealed" (Revelation 7:1-8).*

To put seal on Israel as they go through the Great Tribulation in the rule of Antichrist means that they are

provided with the grace they need to stick on in the crucial time. All who are sealed get martyred in fact. **They fight for the Old Testament Law whereas the remnant of the church are killed for the testimony of Jesus.**

The first resurrection occurs as the world draws near to the end. Noteworthy in this connection is Paul's writing regarding Israel in Romans:

*"For if their rejection results in reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance bring but life from the dead? If the first part of the dough is holy, so is the whole batch. If the root is holy, so are the branches" (Romans 11:15-16 ISV).*

Since Israel did not accept the Gospel that was the cause of the reconciliation to the world, they had been scattered abroad on the earth. That at the same became the cause of the reconciliation and approval of us the Gentiles. Towards the end of the world when the number of Gentiles gets perfected so as to be joined to New Jerusalem, again God will begin to restore them to their former estate. The fact of the matter is becoming evident before our eyes today. The first occurrence will be what Paul speaks of as the first part (Rom. 11:16) is the perfection of the number (144000) of the first fruit of earth. God has purchased them from the earth. With the sounding of trumpet by seventh angel God accepts the first part of Israel and then the number of the Gentiles so as to be joined to New Jerusalem gets perfected and the first resurrection being accomplished. This is what Paul has spoken of as the resurrection of the dead. Past the day of Power or war (Ps. 110:3), comes the inevitable day of God's wrath (110:5). The first incident during the day of Power or war is the first resurrection.

### **THE MARTYRS OF ISRAEL BEFORE THE THRONE.**

*"And I saw something like a sea of glass mingled with fire, and those who have the victory over the beast, over*

*his image and over his mark and over the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, having harps of God. They sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying: "Great and marvelous are Your works, Lord God Almighty! Just and true are Your ways, O King of the saints! ..." (Rev. 15:2-3)*

*"Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His Father's name written on their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of loud thunder. And I heard the sound of harpists playing their harps. They sang as it were a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders; and no one could learn that song except the hundred and forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth. These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from among men, being firstfruits to God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no deceit, for they are without fault before the throne of God" (Rev. 14:1-5).*

Here in the above verses the narration is about the 144000 martyrs from Israel who are partakers in first resurrection are reached in heaven of heavens.

The 144000 redeemed from the earth for the Lord are the ones sealed from the twelve tribes of Israel (Rev. 7:4). It is very clear supported by the scripture that **they are not virgins in human sense remaining single without marriage**. Similarly it is not fit to think that the Bride of the Lamb is 144000 **virgins**; because **the Bride of the Lamb is Pure Virgin** and not Virgins (2 Cor.11:2). **Virgins are maids of the royal daughter** in the inner court (Psalm 45:14). Here it is not only that there is no mention about the numbers included in the New Testament Bride and the Virgins in the scripture but says their number is perfected. That will ever be a top secret. Since here it clearly

says that their number is 144000, it is not at all related to the Church, but it is very clear that it relates to Israel.

The 144000 have been redeemed from among men as first fruit to God and the Lamb (Rev. 14:4). That is a promise of God yet to be fulfilled in relation to Israel God's own people and this we have discussed in previous sections on the basis of Jeremiah 2:3.

The end of the world is a harvest when earth's crops are reaped (Rev. 14:14-16), before that the 144000 from Israel are taken up to Heaven of heavens as the first fruit of the earth's crops. This is the fulfilment as well as the evidence of having them reached heaven as recorded in the passages of Rev. 14:1-5 and 15:2-4. It is revealed in Revelation chapter 14 that these are the first fruits purchased from among men. Whereas in chapter 15 as victors having fought against the Antichrist and won holding harps. We also see that they are singing the song of the Lamb which none others can learn, along with the song of Moses. That means these are revealed in two different categories in heaven of heavens.

In Revelation 7: 9-17 the martyrs of the Church of God from all the nations participating in the first resurrection are shown as great multitudes. The 144000 from Israel, the first fruit of God's crops in the earth are resurrected along with them. The scriptural evidence for that is seen in Revelation 14:1-5 and 15:2-4. These are the ones who get martyred during the rule of Antichrist and go to the after-death-rank that is under the earth which is the altar. These are entered into the heaven of heavens in the first resurrection which take place in the beginning of Lords' power (war). The number of all the saints accompanying Him in the glorious appearance which is the second coming of the Lord is perfected at first resurrection.

We could get a clear understanding from the study till now regarding those who are martyred during the rule of Antichrist gets resurrected in first resurrection which occurs during Lords' power (war) and appear before the

heavenly throne. The primary step to redeem Israel by Lord God is being completed in taking up the 144000 from Israel to heaven of heavens as the first fruit from the earth in resurrection body. These are pictured as the second olive tree belonging to the Old Testament saints who are to be joined to the remnant of the woman who is our mother Jerusalem above. Together with them those who are in the rank of Virgins, the last remnant of the Church of God are portrayed as the second lamp stand. Their resurrection also gets completed on that day. This is proved beyond doubt that first resurrection is the resurrection of the martyrs those who are martyred during the rule of Antichrist.

Following is a table which shows the after death and resurrection ranks of all great saints who are to be included in the heavenly city New Jerusalem.

**Table: Death and Resurrection ranks of those who include in newJerusalem**

	<b>Saints</b>	<b>After-death-rank</b>	<b>Resurrection rank</b>
1	Pure Virgin (Bride)	In third Heaven	Resurrection from the dead (7 lamp stands)
2	Virgins who are the maids	In the Second heaven	Resurrection of two witnesses (1st lamp stand)
3	Old Testament Champions	In the first heaven	Resurrection of two witnesses (1st olive tree)
4	Martyrs of the New Testament Church	Under the earth	First resurrection (2nd lamp stand)
5.	The Martyrs of Israel the first fruit of the earth (144000 Number)	Under the earth	First resurrection (2nd olive tree)

There is a time period of 1000 years gap between the first resurrection and the resurrection on the final day.

The resurrection of the last day is fulfilled on completion of the 1000 years reign of the Lord. That is described in next chapter. Let's enter into the last chapter of this book trusting on the grace of God.

## Lesson Summary

- As the rule of the Antichrist begins the world condition gets worsened.
- During the time of antichrist rule those who stand for the sake of divine truths are the ones getting martyred.
- They will go under the earth ushering into their after-death-rank.
- The resurrection of martyrs happening prior to the second coming of the Lord is the first resurrection.
- Upon the completion of first resurrection the number of all the saints who are to be ushered into New Jerusalem the city of God is perfected.
- The 144000 of Israel the first fruit of the earth's crops are redeemed from among men and entered into the heaven of heavens and hence it is called the first resurrection in relation with earth and Israel.
- First resurrection is the resurrection of the martyrs. This is not at all the Resurrection of Pure Virgin.
- Those who have part in the first resurrection will be reigning with Christ as priests for 1000 years. During the 1000 years reign Church Bride of the Lord does not perform the priestly ministry. They will adorn the position of the Queen of the Great King Christ Jesus.
- 144000 martyrs the last remnant Old Testament great saints and the last remnant of Virgins who are the maids of Lamb's Bride will get resurrected in first resurrection and entered into the Heavens of Heavens.

## Chapter - XII

# RESURRECTION OF THE LAST DAY

*“Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.” (Rev. 20:11-15)*

We have just come to the final chapter of the study of the after-death abode of man who is created for eternity but after their short life in body where they go immediately and when they return through resurrection. With the last day resurrection, there comes the fruition of all the plans and projects of God that He had blue printed about human creation before the foundation of the world. On that day, the present earth and heaven will flee from God’s presence and they will be burned up. And after the final judgment

the New Heaven and New Earth will appear and sea, death, sorrow, groaning and the like will not be there.

Regarding the study of resurrection ranks that we have discussed so far, it was about all the saints included in New Jerusalem the city of the living God and their resurrections. There is an indication about the last day resurrection while giving the narration of first resurrection which is occurring before the harvest that is the end of the world. There is a time gap of 1000 years between first resurrection and last day resurrection (Rev. 20:4-6, 20:11-15).

*"But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection"... (Rev. 20:5).*

The above quoted verse clarifies an important fact that the rest of the dead will resurrect after a period of 1000 years after the first resurrection. As we progress in the further study of last day resurrection, let us look at who all will partake in it and when it will happen. Before entering into that it is better to have some understanding about Lords' Glorious appearance, end time Harvest that is the end of the world and the Last judgment of the living before the Glorious throne. **It is to prove that the Harvest happening at the time of Lords' Glorious appearance and the Judgment before the Glorious throne are not the Last day judgment of the dead or the last day resurrection.**

All the saints supposed to reach heaven of heavens reach there with the first resurrection which happens on the day of Lords' power (war). There after Almighty Lord God receives the diadem. Regarding that it is recorded in relation with the trumpet of seventh angel (Rev. 11:15).

*"Then the seventh angel sounded : and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, ' The Kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever!'" (Rev. 11:15).*

Revelation 19:6-7 gives details about the Lord's taking over the Kingdom.

*"And I heard as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, "Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns!" (Rev. 19:6).*

It is the groups of those who have reached the Heaven of heavens after resurrection that make the loud voice in heaven. Among them a loud voice of great multitude (Rev. 19:1, 7:9) is of the group of Virgins of the New Testament Church. The sound of harpists playing their harps is of the group of 144000 of Israel (Rev. 14:2). The voice of many waters, and like the voice of loud thunder is of the group of those who fear God both small and great from the Old Testament saints (Rev. 19:5).

When once the Lord has received the world kingdom the next important thing to be fulfilled in the Heaven of heavens is the marriage of the Lamb with the Pure Virgin who is prepared as the Bride.

*"Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready. And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. Then he said to me, "Write: Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!" And he said to me, "These are the true sayings of God"" (Rev. 19:7-9).*

As the heavenly marriage between the Pure Virgin the Bride and the Christ Jesus who is the Sun of Righteousness the Bridegroom will be solemnized before the Throne of God the Father, the greatest secret hidden in the divine mystery concerning human creation since the world began will be divulged. What was begun speaking in Genesis (Gen. 2:24), got established spiritually in relation to the New Testament Church (Eph. 5:31,32). Its literal

completion process being started off at the Lord's mid-air coming, will be perfected in the Heaven of heavens by the marriage of the Lamb (Rev. 19:7-8). Oh what a great day that will be for those who are the first fruit from all creations and Church of first born numbered to be among the Bride, how indescribable will be their blessedness! How blessed are also those, the Virgins who are maids, the saints who are Old Testament Champions and the 144000 from Israel who are the first fruit of the earth qualified to partake in the marriage of the Lamb in heaven of heavens.

**After the marriage the heavenly Bridegroom and the Bride accompanied by the escorts will be appearing to the earth the abode of the Bride. This appearance is the glorious appearance of the Lord, also called the Second Coming.** At that time the Lord will send His angels and gather up His own separated people from the midst of the wicked which is recorded in the scripture as harvest that is the end of the world (Matt. 13:41-42).

*"Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and on the cloud sat One like the Son of Man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, "Thrust in Your sickle and reap, for the time has come for You to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe." So He who sat on the cloud thrust in His sickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped" (Rev. 14:14-16).*

We can see predictions about the end time harvest even in the Old Testament prophecies. The prophet Daniel prophesies about one like the Son of Man coming through the clouds (Dan. 7:13) while Joel prophesies the purpose for which He comes.

*"Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Come go down....." (Joel 3:13).*

(Not going into details of events of the end of the world).

We can see that Jesus had spoken in the Gospel to people through parables regarding the end of the world. He clearly illustrated its meaning to his disciples. Here only a few important matters are recorded from such parables. In the parable that Jesus told about sowing the seed and its falling in various places and its explanation by the Lord what revealed to us is spiritual ranks generated as a result of the preaching of the Word of God through the Gospel. Here such spiritual ranks have great significance in relation to the resurrection ranks. Amongst them we are going to discuss only about the seed sown in good soil.

*“ But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty” (Mtt. 13:23).*

For a person to hear the Word and grasp it and then to reach the hundredfold perfection he has to grow from thirty fold and sixty fold through and through only then can he reach the hundredfold. Those who are born again to be worthy of eternal life are just like infants who are equal to thirty fold state. Those who grow to the state of being worthy of holy place belong to the rank of Virgins who are maids and are equal to sixty fold state. The hundred fold state is that which belongs to the rank of spiritual perfection. They are the Church of the first born the body that is united to Christ the perfect head. We have already discussed about the resurrections of the hundred fold who are Pure Virgin and the sixty fold who are Virgins, the maids and of same ranks as the Old Testament Champions and saints. So in this chapter “Resurrection On The Final Day” now we are going to discuss about the resurrection of those thirty fold who are partakers of eternal life.

Regarding the parable of Tares in the field, it is about the teachings planted by Satan against the Gospel which

is the true word of God. Through this such groups and Churches which are without foundation built upon wrong teachings are sprouted. In the field that is the world the good seed is the Word of the Son of Man. The true sons of the Kingdom of God are born through the gospel. Satan sows the wrong doctrines that are untruths, through which Tares which are the sons of the wicked are grown. At the harvest that is the end of the world the weeds are bound up and burnt in the fire while the wheat is gathered in the barn (Mtt. 12:24-40). This is not the end time final judgment of the dead but it is the final judgment of wicked people who are living upon earth fulfilled in the Second Coming of the Lord. It will happen at the glorious appearance of the Lord.

*"The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His Kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth" (Mtt. 13:41,42).*

The dragnet that was cast into the sea in the parable pictures the separation of the wicked and righteous during end of the world (Mtt. 13:47-50).

*"So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come forth; separate the wicked from among the just." (Mtt. 13:49).*

When the Lord asked the disciples whether they understood all things about the harvest which is the end of the world, they replied yes (Mtt. 13:51).

What Jesus has revealed through parables in the Gospel is about the things that will happen in the last days of the end of the world which is the Second Coming of the Lord. This has got no relation with the mid-air coming and the rapture of the Bride Church. Such a view is not scriptural. The Lord has spoken in parables throughout the Gospel about the signs of the world's end and the harvest on that day.

*“Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other” (Matt. 24:30-31).*

*“But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only. But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. Then two men will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left. Two women will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left. Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming” (Matt. 24:36-42).*

Here it is recorded about the Lord separating His elect from the wicked and gathering them in the harvest by the end of the world. This has not got any relation with the rapture of bride church. We get clarity of this while we think in line with what St. Luke wrote very clearly about this.

*“For as the lightning that flashes out of one part under heaven shines to the other part under heaven, so also the Son of Man will be in His day. But first He must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation. And as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man: They ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. Likewise as it was also in the days of Lot: They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built; but on the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained*

*fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. Even so will it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed. "In that day, he who is on the housetop, and his goods are in the house, let him not come down to take them away. And likewise the one who is in the field, let him not turn back. Remember Lot's wife. Whoever seeks to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it. I tell you, in that night there will be two men in one bed: the one will be taken and the other will be left. Two women will be grinding together: the one will be taken and the other left. Two men will be in the field: the one will be taken and the other left. And they answered and said to Him, "Where, Lord?" So He said to them, "Wherever the body is, there the eagles will be gathered together"" (Luke, -17:24-37).*

Here it is said about the events happening at the glorious appearance of the Lord, the second coming in connection with the events of Noah's time and the time when Lot left Sodom. The statement "For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be" (Mtt. 24:27, Luk. 17:24), is said about His glorious appearance which is his public coming; and not about his secret coming which is mid-air appearance. The Lord's sending the angels and gathering His elect will be at the harvest in the end of the world. There is another thing which must be noted here: **that nobody will be resurrected at the glorious appearance of the Lord except that the sending of the angels and gathering the elect from the corners of earth will happen.** They will be ordinary men who were not resurrected. Those who are thus gathered in are the invited ones worthy of participating in the wedding banquet of the Bridegroom and those with him, which will be hosted on earth.

Mathew chapters 24, 25 is about the happenings occurring on the day the son of man is revealed by the end of the world. Chapter 24 is an explanation of the end time signs and when those will take place. The end will

come when this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the entire world as a witness to all the nations (Mtt. 24:14). The Son of Man will be coming to the earth at an unexpected hour hence those who live at that time should be prepared (Mtt. 24:44). That day and hour is in the power of the heavenly Father (Mtt. 24:36), (Acts 1:7).

The Gospel of St. Mathew Chapter 25 records the **Parable of the Ten Virgins setting out to meet the Bridegroom and of the Talents that are the events happening after Jesus has appeared on earth in His glorious appearance.** It is already clarified in the Resurrection of Pure Virgin that the parable of ten virgins is not concerning the Bride Church. All things spoken of here in this parable are the events which should happen on earth. A careful analysis of facts reveals that these events do not have any relation with resurrections of the dead or taking up of Bride Church at the mid air coming of the Lord.

The parable of Ten Virgins is about spiritual preparation on the day the Son of Man is revealed. **It is a sure fact that even at the end of the world there will be a remnant of the Gospel Church on earth.** In Revelation Chapter 2 and 3 those who are among the numbers of Pure Virgin who is victorious attaining perfection have been spoken in relation to the seven lamps. After the perfected first born of the global Church has been taken up, the remnant of the Church is **spoken of as two lampstands** in the book of Revelation (Rev. 11:4). Those who include in the remnant of the Church worthy of becoming the maids who are Virgins have been resurrected and taken up to heaven of heavens in two phases. This is what two lamp stands represent. Even after that the remnant will be there upon the earth. They have been shown as **ten virgins** who took lamps on their hand. In ten virgins the lamps that each one holds indicates the light of the world that is the Gospel. The days and times of the end of the world will be difficult times without anyone to help or give a hand

lift and the lamps on hand points to the fact that each one should stand at his own.

The days between the first resurrection and Lords' glorious appearance will be times of spirituality at deadly low ebb. In those days the circumstances on earth will be wicked and filthy as in the days of Noah and Lot. There will be a group of elect people who will wait for the second coming of Christ discreetly even at that critical time on individual basis. The five wise virgins of the ten virgins stand for those who keep the small light shining in the midst of turbulent circumstances and get saved enduring till the end. Their position will be different from the righteous of that time who live upon earth. The angels will gather them from all the ends of the earth to meet the bridegroom in Jerusalem. That day only those who were prepared and ready went into the banquet hall for the feast. The door of the banquet hall was shut only when that was filled (Mtt. 25:10). The resurrection of the Pure Virgin is a happening at a finger snap. On that occasion, as we read in the parable of Ten Virgins, there won't be a little while for lingering around talking to others. Five of the ten virgins had their lamps short of oil because they were foolish. There we only read that they went out to buy oil, but we don't see them buying it. Where would they get oil from? As they returned desperate and pleaded knocking the door of the banquet hall to open for them but in turn they received the **Lord's harsh answer that He never knew them**. From this it is clear that this incident happens on earth as the foolish virgins are on earth (Mtt. 25:1-13).

St. Luke has quoted the Lord to have said the same incident in yet another way in his Gospel

*"Then one said to Him, "Lord, are there few who are saved?" And He said to them, "Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able. When once the Master of the house*

*has risen up and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock at the door, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open for us,' and He will answer and say to you, 'I do not know you, where you are from,' then you will begin to say, 'We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets.' But He will say, 'I tell you I do not know you, where you are from. Depart from Me, all you workers of iniquity.' There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and yourselves thrust out. They will come from the east and the west, from the north and the south, and sit down in the kingdom of God. And indeed there are last who will be first, and there are first who will be last'" (Lk. 13:23-30).*

In both these passages the same incident is recorded. One is focused on Ten Virgins while the other on the first being the last. Here it very clearly shows that all the saints along with the Lord will appear to earth from heaven of heavens and on that day they sit with the Lord in the row, to where the elects are gathered together from four ends of the earth; these elects are not only from Israel but the Gospel remnant are also included. Based on the word of God the light is shed on the fact that this event is materialized upon earth. **Those who are aware of Spiritual things and yet do not get prepared daily will get rejected at the fulfillment of the things. The reason for that is they ignore the things spoken of in the Scripture and about its fulfillment.**

The Lord has said about the parable of the talents in relation to ministry. The parable spoken by the Lord in St. Mathew about the faithful and wise servant in relation to the end of the world (Mtt. 24:45-51) and the parable of the talent are the same. It is just a re-iteration by the Lord in chapter 25.

*"For the kingdom of heaven is like a man travelling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered*

*his goods to them. And to one he gave five talents... two... one, to each according to his own ability..... After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them..... 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord....You wicked and lazy servant..... And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Mtt. 25:14-30)*

Luke has written that the nobleman who went to a far away country to receive his kingdom and return has indeed returned. Both the parables are the same (Luk. 19:11-17). Since there is mention that he has returned receiving the kingdom, it is clear that the occurrence is in the earth. God commits responsibility of cities to good and faithful servants in the millennium. You were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities.....you also over five cities.... (Lk. 19:16,17).

In the parable of Ten Virgins, five wise virgins reveal their position to participate in the marriage feast on earth. In the parable of the talents since they are the faithful they will have authority over cities in the Millennium and it reveals their authority. These all are the ones, not resurrected, included among the righteous and gathered together in the harvest that is the end of the world.

Israel is likened to a fig tree in the last days. In the construction of the Old Testament Temple fig tree was not used. Olive tree was used for lintel and doorposts (1King. 6:31,33). The Old Testament saints and the 144000 Israeli martyrs the first fruit of the earth belonging to the heavenly Jerusalem have been pictured as two Olive trees. The remnant of Israel after the first resurrection has been likened to the fig tree.

*"Now learn this parable from the fig tree, when its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves you know that summer is near." (Mtt. 24:32).*

**After the first resurrection which is the resurrection of those who martyred during the rule of Antichrist, the remnant of Israel pictured as the fig tree and those who are witnesses of Gospel are pictured as virgins holding lamps on individual basis and having extra oil.**

As the Lord appears in glory he will send angels to gather the faithful elect of these two groups in the harvest that is the end of the world. They get the positions to enter into the wedding banquet on earth and the authority to rule the cities during the 1000 years reign. This we can notice from the below mentioned happenings as the Lord appears in Glory.

**The following are the happenings of the day when the Son of Man is revealed**

1. Gathering together of the elect by the Son of Man in the harvest which is end of the world (Rev. 14:14-16)
2. In the war of Armageddon the beast and the false prophet were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone (Rev. 19:17-21)
3. Gathering the vine cluster of the earth and trampling in the great winepress of the wrath of God (Rev. 14:17-20)
4. Satan being bound and cast into the bottomless pit for a thousand years (Rev.20:1-3)
5. The wedding feast occurring in the earth (Rev. 19:9)
6. Separating of wicked from the righteous during the end of the harvest on the day of appearance of Son of Man. (Mtt. 25:31-33)
7. The judgment in front of the glorious throne and the beginning of Christ's 1000 year rule (Rev. 20:4)

(For further study and details please refer "EXEGESIS-BOOK OF REVELATION")

Satan and his powers could only keep the lifeless body of Jesus the Nazarene who became the sacrifice for

atonement of sins just three days under the seal and guard. On the third day Jesus broke the Roman seal and rose again from death in victory. An angel who descends from heaven is chaining Satan for 1000 years and he will lie down there. He is weak and feeble who cannot come out from there on his own. How blessed are we who follow the victorious Christ. Those who obey and follow Satan the evil power, remember that he and his followers are the ones about to be thrown into the lake of fire, where the beast who acted himself as God and the false prophet were thrown.

As the Lord will be seated on the glorious throne, the angels will gather all the living men before the throne of the Great King. The shepherd separates them and makes to stand them in left and right. Regarding that it is recorded in the last part of chapter 25 of Gospel of Mathew. The events of the end of the world are given in Gospel of Mathew Chapter 24, 25 in orderly manner.

*“When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on His right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.’ “Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?’ And the King will answer and say to them, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to*

*one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.' "Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.' "Then they also will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?' Then He will answer them, saying, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.' And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.'"* (Matthew 25:31-46).

The throne of glory is mentioned elsewhere in the Gospel as great throne

*"So Jesus said to them, "Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Mtt. 19:28).*

In the book of Revelation only a little space is devoted to this subject. Enough is given in the Gospel ; that is why it is not given in Revelation.

*"And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years" (Revelation 20:4).*

Before the glorious appearance, the heavenly Father confers power to the 24 elders sitting on thrones to execute judgment along with Christ Jesus the Great King. The Lord

gives authority to his 12 disciples whom he chooses from Israel to judge 12 tribes of Israel. The power of judging all the nations would be for the 12 apostles taken as representatives of the nations. Paul the apostle would be the first among the apostles of the nations (Gentiles). The words thrones (judgment seats) are spoken of in Revelation in view of them also. The twelve chosen from Israel and the twelve representing the Gentiles consist of the 24 elders. These are the ones sitting on thrones with Jesus executing judgment. When the Lord begins to rule having Head quarters in Jerusalem (Mtt. 5:35) the city of the great King, He is enthroned on the throne of glory. On that day He divides all nations living and remaining in earth to his left and right. The Lord considers the sheep of his right hand as blessed. Those who carry out the testimony of the gospel are called the least of His brethren and a great mystery is unfolded from this. The mystery is that they are the proclaimers of the Gospel. It is only after His resurrection Jesus Christ started to call His disciples in the relation of brethren.

All who are born again by the Gospel in the bond of brethren can be viewed in three divisions in relation to the end of the world.

1. first is the Church of the firstborn becoming worthy of unifying to the one who is the first born attaining adoption as sons from the bond of brethren (Rom. 8:29). They are the Pure Virgin who is the Bride of the Lamb of whom we have discussed in the light of the scripture.
2. The Virgins who are maids are addressed as brethren in the word of God (Rev. 6:11).
3. Out of the elects gathered in from all the four directions of earth at the glorious appearance of the Lord, they who carry out the testimony of the gospel are qualified and called as "the least of these my brethren".

From this we understand without any room of doubt that until the end of the world as part of the Gospel there

will be brethren as remnant of the Church. **The Lord has not called them meaninglessly as the least of my brethren. Those who can understand that Christ has addressed them so because they have been the witnesses of the blood of Christ Jesus** can undoubtedly accept the fact that 'the Church remnant' will be on earth till the end of the world. This mystery is unfolded in the light of the Scripture.

By the terminology '**Church**' in the New Testament, **there are many who think that outside the Bride Church nothing exists.** Therefore as long as this notion remains etched in their mind, they cannot fully comprehend and take in the divine truth. Based on many facts it is proved in relation to the end of the world that there are three ranks among people in the church of God, they are such as **Pure Virgin** the Bride of the Lamb attaining perfection (perfected as son), **Virgins** that are the maids (**brethren**), **the least of His brethren** gathered together without resurrection at the end of the world. The five wise Virgins who are gathered as elect on that day have special position. They are the ones who will be appointed over cities in the Millennium, which is recorded in the Word of God as their special privilege. Those who are gathered to the right hand side of the throne of glory without resurrection will be righteous; they will be the subjects or citizens of the earth during the Millennium.

The world will hate and persecute these, **least of the Lord's brethren** who are the witnesses of the Gospel and those who stand for the word of God towards the end of the rule of Antichrist. In those days conscientious people from all nations of the earth extended help and even sheltered these persecuted. That will be **counted by the Lord as good work and they regarded as righteous, who are gathered to the right side** (Mtt. 24: 9, 22). **Though their work at that time is very small, the reward they get will be great.**

*“And whoever gives one of these little ones only a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, assuredly, I say to you, he shall by no means lose his reward” (Mtt. 10:42).*

This passage is what the Lord said to His disciples while sending them before the Holy Spirit had descended to the earth and form the New Testament Church. It will be the same condition in the last days of the end of the world. Here the Lord spoke of them as ‘**little ones**’ (Mtt. 10:42) **just because the sacrifice of sanctification was not yet fulfilled.** Whereas in the end of the world incident the remnant of the Gospel is called as the ‘least of His brethren’ because they are the ones having faith in the gospel and are sanctified by the blood of Christ Jesus.

As the Lord sits on the throne of glory to judge the living, the epithet used by the Lord ‘the least of these my brethren’ (Mtt. 25:40) for the last remnant of the Gospel, whereas another epithet ‘**least of these**’ used secondly (Mtt. 25:45) is in relation to the Jews. We can see God justifying those who help them also. It is at the end of Antichrist’s rule and appearing of the Lord that the Jews look to the one pierced and get saved. They will not accept the Gospel until then. That is why they are given the epithet ‘the least ones’.

Following Table is a brief description regarding the end time harvest which we have already discussed.

**Brief Description Regarding Endtime Harvest**

	Partakers in End time Harvest	Represented by	Position in 1000 year rule
1	Wise Virgins (The Lords’ Least brethren) (Matt. 25:40) From the last remnant of the Gospel of New Testament Church	Five wise virgins holding lamps in hand and having extra oil (Matt. 25: 2, 4)	Authority over cities
2	From the last remnant of Israel (least of these) (Matt. 25:45)	Fig Tree (Matt. 24: 32)	Authority over cities

3	The righteous from all nations (Gentiles) (Matt. 25:46)	Sheep on the Lords' right side (Matt. 25:33)	Subjects (citizens)
4	Wicked from all nations (thrown into everlasting fire lively) (Matt. 25:41)	Goats on the Lords' left side (Matt.25 :33)	Not eligible for any Position and cast into Hell fire on the Last Day

There are chances of misconception about those who are on the right hand of the great King proclaimed 'righteous' that they are ushered into eternal life. These are entered into the 1000 years rule of the Lord and not into eternal life. We are going to think further about that.

*"Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life" (Jn. 5:24).*

We are well aware of the fact that those who have entered into eternal life have death in their body. This is the state of those who are pronounced righteous and ushered from the throne of glory to the millennial rule. They are mortal liable to die and they have generation increase also. Like that there are also chances that they become sinners losing their eternal life. There is scriptural evidence that during the Millennium there will be sin and death. Death the last enemy will be done away only on the last day. Much is not dealt with in Revelation about the millennial kingdom because ample of details are given in the Old Testament prophecies.

*"But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; For behold, I create Jerusalem as a rejoicing, And her people a joy. I will rejoice in Jerusalem, And joy in My people; The voice of weeping shall no longer be heard in her, Nor the voice of crying. "No more shall an infant from there live but a few days, Nor an old man who has not fulfilled his days; For the child shall die one hundred years old, But the sinner being one hundred years old shall be*

*accursed. They shall build houses and inhabit them; They shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. They shall not build and another inhabit; They shall not plant and another eat; For as the days of a tree, so shall be the days of My people, And My elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labor in vain, Nor bring forth children for trouble; For they shall be the descendants of the blessed of the LORD, And their offspring with them. "It shall come to pass That before they call, I will answer; And while they are still speaking, I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, The lion shall eat straw like the ox, And dust shall be the serpent's food. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain," Says the LORD" (Isaiah 65:18-25).*

The description provided here is not about the new heaven and new earth; but about the very present earth in which we live at the time of the Lord's one thousand year rule. **Here it does not say that there won't be death but says that there won't be voice of weeping and crying. From the words "the child shall die one hundred years old" it becomes clear that there will be death. "But the sinner being one hundred years old shall be accursed", this means that sin and curse will be there in the Millennium.** Their life span is said here because their resurrection does not happen. Those who are resurrected on the last day and enter into eternal life in New Heaven and Earth will have everlasting life. The eternal life in Millennium is to be taken in spiritual sense. Here it is made clear that the inhabitants that time will be ordinary men subjected to sin and death.

As the Lord rules on earth righteously where Satan, Antichrist, and False Prophet are not, the righteous people are ushered into eternal life. **The question how come there are sinners among the righteous must be answered by those who argue that the salvation once secured once is not lost.** Where do sinners come in the Millennium? For only those whom the Lord pronounced righteous have

**entered into the Kingdom of the Father (Mtt.25:34).** Here arises a question how sin sprang up in them. **The answer is made clear in the Scriptural warning that the salvation of soul is liable to get lost if it is not kept secure till the end.**

We have already discussed about the battle in the midair in which the Pure Virgin caught up to Heaven of heavens as a Male Child. Then Satan and his angels shall fight against Chief angel Michael and his angels in the war. That day Satan and his angels get defeated and thrown down to the earth the footstool (Rev.12:7-9). Regarding that we have discussed in detail in relation with the study of Pure Virgin. In the war of Armageddon prior to Millennium, Antichrist and the Beast are bound and cast alive into the Lake of Fire and Satan is chained for a thousand years. The wicked angels who all are thrown down with them are not bound. They are active on earth, as well as the demons are also not removed from earth. Though their circle of activity is limited in Millennium, through their activity sin becomes evident in some. Like that even in midst of righteous ones some are becoming sinners during thousand year ruling.

It is also proved that of those who entered into the Kingdom of the Father as righteous for eternal life some become sinners, they lose their salvation and blessing and become cursed. **If such a declension can happen in the Millennium of the Lord's rule, how much more can people backslide from the faith today, much more chances!**

There are many things in common between "Judgment before the throne of glory and the final White Throne judgment". Therefore we mistake both of them as one. There are some in a certain sect who teach and sing pleading on behalf **of the deceased that they might be granted grace on the day of glory dawn (glorious appearance) to stand on the Lord's right hand in**

**resurrection. It would have been better for them to know that in the light of Scripture this would never happen!**

As the Lord sits on the throne of glory, He will cause all the nations left alive to stand on the left and the right. Those on the right among them (sheep) will enter into eternal life being blessed, while those on the left (goats) will be cursed and thrown into the lake of fire (Rev. 19:20) alive for eternal torment where also the Antichrist and the false prophet caught alive and cast bound, the same place prepared for the devil and his angels (Mtt. 25:41).

During the millennial rule, the number of the righteous will be far greater than sinners, which is reverse to the present state. The reason why it is reiterated here about the souls during the millennial rule of the Lord where they will be kept, is to reaffirm the fact that our discussion of the after-death-rank of "Those who are in the Sea" is worthy of acceptance. We have no doubt that during the millennial rule, sinners go to Hades and wicked sinners go to Death. But the after-death-rank "Those who are in the Sea" is the answer to the question as to where do the righteous souls go after death. When the Lord rules here, it is very clear that no soul will go up above His head. During the millennial rule there will be only one after-death-rank of righteous souls. The reason is that as the Lord rules here, it will not be a hard thing to live righteously. **During the millennium there will be opportunity to become heirs of eternal life only. Their names are written in the book of life. Here you will be remembering my former statement that book of life is for the period from the beginning of the world to the end of the millennial rule.** Of the seven after-death-ranks that we have discussed so far there are three ranks, Viz. Sea, Hades and Death remain and are not resurrected from the beginning of the world until the last day. The main theme of discussion in this chapter 'the resurrection on the last day' will be their resurrection and judgment.

What we have briefly discussed is about the things happening during the long period from the first resurrection to the end of millennial rule.

At the end of the millennial rule Satan will be released and he will gather all the nations from all the four corners of the earth innumerable as the sand of the sea and enticing Gog-Magog he will bring all in array for the final battle. They will surround the saint's camp and the beloved city when fire from heaven comes down on them and consume them. The last enemy death Viz. Satan who deceived the nations and enticed them into Gog-Magog war will be cast in the lake of fire where the beast and the false prophet are, and tormented day and night for ever and ever (Rev. 20:7-10).

Since we could comprehend little bit about end of the world happenings and millennial rule now let us enter into the study of "The Resurrection On The Final Day".

Our Lord Jesus Christ has spoken about the resurrection on the final day of all dead, both great and small in the Gospel like this.

*"Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth – those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation" (Jn. 5:28-29).*

Here the Lord has said about those who are resurrected on the last day for eternal life and eternal damnation get resurrected and come out of the graves. Please do not go into such interpretation as the Lord spoke only about those who were in the tombs and nothing was spoken about others. The Lord said about the dead those who are to resurrect on the last day (According to Jewish custom the dead were buried in tombs. That is why the Lord spoke like this). Daniel the prophet has also prophesied about the last resurrection.

*“And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, Some to everlasting life, Some to shame and everlasting contempt” (Dan. 12:2).*

Two groups are resurrected from the dust on the last day. If the first group is risen from dust for eternal life, the second group is risen for shame and eternal condemnation. The earth and the heaven fled away from His face only after handing over those in dust before the great white throne (Rev. 20:11)

*“Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them” (Rev. 20:11).*

According to the command of the Lord that you are dust and into dust you will return (Gen. 3:19), since the beginning of the world humans died and returned to dust. Regarding that Moses the godly man sang, that man is not coming to an end at death but returns to dust and hence he penned psalms 90 with the insight that man would return getting resurrected.

*“You turn man to destruction, And say, “Return, O children of men”” (Psa. 90:3).*

**On the last day resurrection God does not command from heaven but from the White Throne He commands the sons of men to return.** The heaven and earth flee from His presence and all who went to dust and are due to be resurrected will appear before the White throne all both great and small. Last day resurrection is the resurrection of all those human created out of dust who died and did not partake in any of these three resurrections, such as The resurrection of Pure virgin, the resurrection of Two witnesses and the first resurrection. Resurrection on the final day the resurrection of three left out resurrection ranks are being fulfilled. We are going to think about each of these.

## I. THE RIGHTEOUS SOULS WHOSE NAMES ARE WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF LIFE WHOM THE SEA DELIVERED UP

Out of the seven after-death ranks the last three ranks are Sea, Hades and Death. We have already seen that the righteous whose names are written in the book of life are ushered after death into the sea where the creatures praising God exist. All the souls whose names are written in the book of life from the beginning of the world are worthy of eternal life. After death their souls are resting in sea which is their after-death rank. At the voice of the Son of God their souls return to the respective place where their bodies had decomposed and get resurrected and appear before the White Throne. That is the fact we figure out in the verse “the Sea delivered up those who were in the Sea” (Rev. 20:13).

From the above verse we understand that the book of life is not opened ever before, no, neither in any preceding resurrections nor before the throne of glory.

*“And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire” (Rev.20:12-15)*

Well, the clarity of the fact that the souls whose names are written in the book of life are in the Sea, can be had if we read carefully that passage where the last day resurrection is dealt with.

*“The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they*

*were judged, each one according to his works. Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death" (Rev., -20:13).*

**If the individuals born in the first death that is the spiritual death depart from the body without getting the salvation of soul or rebirth, such souls go to the Hades the after-death rank of sinners and in case of sordid sinners such souls will go to the hell that is Death, and it is also made clear that the names of such souls are not written in the book of life.** The names of all who get salvation from God are at first written in the book of life. Such souls by virtue of being born again by faith are delivered from the first death and inherit eternal life and therefore **they get saved from the second death which is the eternal separation from God.** Whose name must be written when or undone when is not determined by man but by God. In every spiritual dispensation God speaks to men about His project of salvation. It is when man refuses the word of God that man gets out of eternal life. Whoever may leave the body without being informed of the way of salvation at any time, the determination of such a one's after-death rank rests with God who weighs the souls. **Nobody must doubt about the impartiality of God who is just. God's judgment is impartial as well as just.**

We must be well aware of the fact that if any one dies being disobedient in spite of knowing God's laws, God will not show any mercy on the last day. If we read carefully about the largest chunk of souls being delivered by the three after-death ranks such as Sea, Hades and Death to the presence of God we can better understand about the after-death rank of the Sea. We see that Death and Hades were cast into the Lake of fire without Sea; if we read together with it the phrase 'the book of life was opened', we can arrive at the conclusion that those who were written in the book of life were in the Sea. I don't think whether any point from scripture is there to refute this idea. Therefore here it is affirmed that the souls

registered in the book of life as heirs of **eternal life** that were kept in the Sea will be resurrected with the **terrestrial glory** and brought before the White Throne on the last day.

Now let us examine what the Lord spoke about the resurrection on the last day and judgment recorded in the Gospel.

*“This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day” (Jn. 6:39-40).*

In the golden verse recorded in the Gospel of John eternal life is given priority.

*“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life” (Jn. 3:16).*

**The desire of the Heavenly Father is that no one should perish but at least get eternal life and get saved from the eternal death.** For that God gave His darling Son to be offered as sacrifice on Calvary for the atonement of the sin of mankind. **Salvation is God’s gift** to everyone who looks to Him in faith. Those who believe this way will be registered in the book of life and on account of being heirs of eternal life, their resurrection will be on the last day. As we continue reading it we find the details of how eternal life can be obtained.

*“No one can come to me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day” (Jn. 6:44).*

God who has created every heart alike has made all men with the freedom of choice. **By the phrase ‘unless the father attracts’ is meant that if in the innermost being anyone has thirst for truth and righteousness, God who**

**knows it from afar off prepares the way for saving such a soul.** It is a true fact that God never shows favoritism to any one. God leads those who have the inner knowledge in the soul to salvation. For example, we have the centurion called Cornelius (Acts 10:34-36). Peter had spoken to all who were gathered there that God is no respecter of persons and accepts those who fear Him and do what is right in every nation. **The Holy Spirit came upon them as a proof that they had accepted all things that God had commanded. This is what is meant by the attraction of the Father.**

*“Then Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day” (Jn. 6:53-54).*

The Lord has spoken here the actual meaning of the Lord’s Table. If we read it and ponder over it, great will be the mystery unfolded from it.

**The Lord’s Table is established for those who are saved, baptized and those who lead a pure life. The Lord has said here that those who are just heirs of eternal life are spiritual babes and such souls would be resurrected on the last day resurrection.** About the Lord’s Table, the Spirit of God has spoken three aspects in the Word of God.

### **1. In relation to eternal life**

About this we have discussed now. Those who got saved and added to the church are the saints who repented and have taken baptism. These belong to the category of thirtyfold yielder whose resurrection will be on the last day. **The Lord seems to infer that they will not be resurrected either at the midair coming, or at the resurrection of the Virgins or even at the first resurrection.**

If a person who has taken baptism will not be rejected at the Lord's coming just because he did not get opportunity to take part in the Lord's Table. By 'babies' is meant here those who have every opportunity for spiritual growth wantonly refuse it. For those who want to grow to maturity and want to be taken up at His coming, the Lord provides opportunity. But those who wantonly refuse to make use of the available opportunity and continue in the same state of birth, such only become the heirs of eternal life and will be rejected at His mid-air coming.

## **2. In relation to the Kingdom of God**

*"And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is My body." Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom." "* (Mtt. 26:26-29), (Mark 14:22-25, Luke 22:16-20).

The new covenant was established through Jesus' sacrifice of the body. The Lord's Table is the remembrance of the holy blood that was shed for the remission of the sin of all mankind as well as the body that was broken to unite us with Him. **The Lord has spoken here (Luk. 22:16-19) that there are those who are worthy of sitting with Him in the Kingdom of the Father and until it is fulfilled He would not drink of the fruit of the Vine.**

When it will be fulfilled in the Kingdom of God, it is **not only those who are in the New Testament church** but all those who come with Him **in the glorious appearance and the living elect will sit with the Lord in the banqueting row.**

*"There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in*

*the kingdom of God, and yourselves thrust out. They will come from the east and the west, from the north and the south, and sit down in the kingdom of God" (Luke 13:28-29).*

The Lord has spoken of it as that which is yet to be fulfilled in the Gospel. **He has clearly said that it will be fulfilled in the Kingdom of God after the glorious appearance and not at the midair coming when the Bride will be taken up** (Mtt. 26:29, Mk.14:25, Luk.22:16, 18).

Those who partake of the body-blood (Bread and Wine), of the Lord being the heir of just eternal life will not sit with Him in the banqueting row in God's Kingdom (Millennium). Why because they will only be resurrected on the last day. In the kingdom of God Lord himself and all the saints who come with him and the living elect, not resurrected or glorified but gathered by the angels will sit with the Lord in the banqueting row. What the Lord had spoken to the disciples before His passion is being fulfilled then in the kingdom of God. Here it is clear that the Lord's Table instituted as a shadow gets fulfilled as substance not only in the New Testament Lord's Table service at present.

### **3. In relation to the New Testament Church**

*"For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes. Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the*

*bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world"(I Cor., -11:23-32).*

The New Testament Church alone has the right to institute the Lord's Table service. This is not committed to any others because the mandatory order has been given only to the Church. By the phrase '**until the Lord's coming**', it is not meant just up to the midair coming of the Lord. But it is the period starting from His first coming which is proclamation of His death or gospel and until His second coming. -After the Lord's death and resurrection, He had ascended to heaven from the mount Olive and again He comes on to the mount Olive with all saints and until then there will be those who remember the Lord's death on earth.

Apart from what we thought till now **the central theme of the Lord's Table** in relation to the Church is that those of the Church of God who are perfected will be united to the Lord who is the Head.

*"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we, though many, are one bread and one body; for we all partake of that one bread." (I Corinthians 10:16-17)*

The saints of the Church of God from the beginning of the Church to the end of the world are made up of those who are in the following four groups:-

- (i) Those who resurrect from among the dead, **the Pure Virgin**.
- (ii) Those who partake in the resurrection of two witnesses and first resurrection, **the virgins**.

- (iii) The living elect not resurrected but gathered by angels on the day the Son of Man is revealed, **least of the brethren.**
- (iv) Those who are resurrected on the final day, **heirs of eternal life**

**It is again made clear that the church that the Lord established will not be transferred from the world at the midair coming of Christ but will continue till the end of the age or the second coming of Jesus Christ. The bodily sacrifice of Christ in the New Testament connects all the humans born on the earth to the heavenly Father. It will be fulfilled spiritually till the glorious appearance of Lord and afterwards literally. Thereafter, in the New Heaven and New Earth God's Kingdom will be fulfilled in fullness forever in relation to eternal life.**

*"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen." (Matthew 28:19-20)*

**The most important thing is to be in union with the Lord. That is the purpose we have been baptized for (Gal. 3:27). In order to fully avail the benefits of baptism we need to cling to Him always. Likewise, the Lord's Table reveals that we all will be united to Him. Let that supreme aim be the aim of all in the church. In so doing such will surely be taken up in the midair coming of Lord. The fact of the matter is that participation in the Lord's Table alone does not qualify one for the midair coming. Whether to take up or reject just because of deprivation of opportunity to take part in the Lords' Table even after baptism rests with the Lord. The normal rule is spoken here. **Let us live daily with the attitude that we are not of the world but belong to Christ, and live with hope and readiness to be taken up at the Lord's midair coming.****

The Lord had taught the house-hold of Lazarus about the resurrection on the last day. It is revealed by the dialogue of Martha,

*"Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day"" (Jn. 11:23-24).*

In the Gospel the Lord had laid great stress and taught on the eternal life and the last day resurrection. The gist of what we thought till now is those whose name is written in the book of life, worthy of eternal life are resting in sea after death and they will resurrect with terrestrial glory on the last day resurrection. The glory they receive is for terrestrial body to dwell in new heaven and new earth. The scriptural evidence for that is mentioned below.

*"There are also celestial bodies and terrestrial bodies; but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another" (1 Cori. 15:40).*

It is those who are resurrected in the last day resurrection with the glory of terrestrial bodies that will rise up from the dust for eternal life. **By that the resurrection of all the righteous people worthy of eternal life right from the beginning of the world to the end of the future Millennium will be completed.** God's will for all the mankind is that all must be at least worthy of eternal life and partake in the resurrection of the last day. May the Lord help us to pray and act desiring the will of God to be done on earth.

All sinners from the beginning of the world to the end of the Millennial rule are in any one of such after-death-ranks as the Hades and Death. Those who reach the Hades which is the lowest pit and the Death which is the Hell are there in grief and agony like prisoners to be convicted. All the wicked will resurrect on the last day resurrection in naked body without any glory. Righteous God will judge each one according to his deeds and cast them into the eternal hell fire. **All the righteous souls occupying**

**the after-death-ranks from the third heaven down to the Sea will be resurrected to receive promotion and wellbeing whereas the sinners will be resurrected for eternal damnation.**

## **II. THE SINNERS WHOM THE HADES DELIVER UP**

About the sinners in the Hades we have already discussed in the after-death-ranks that though they are sinners they are not hardcore sinners. Those who are in Hades are of the row among those cursed ones whose names are not found written in the Book of Life. They are such that have wantonly refused or avoided to receive God's salvation. It is recorded in the book of Revelation who they will be. Its brief explanation is given below.

*"But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death"(Rev. 21:8).*

### **1. THE FEARFUL**

Fear is one of the consequences of sin. God had created man as one having power. But as he became subjected to spiritual death by sinning, the devilish spirit of fear began to haunt the early parents. That is why they hid behind the trees (Gen. 3:8). We can see the result of the same handed over to the descendants. After Cain killed his brother, we can understand that fear had gripped him.

*"Surely you have driven me out this day from the face of the ground; I shall be hidden from Your face; I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond on the earth, and it will happen that anyone who finds me will kill me" (Gen. 4:14).*

Those who live in sin actually live in darkness and fear. It is when one gets freed from it and comes to the marvelous light of Christ Jesus that fear is dispelled by confidence.

*"For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind" (2 Tim. 1:7).*

The power of the New Testament is that through His death He destroyed the devil who had power over death and released those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

## **2. UNBELIEVERS**

Whatever is not from faith is sin (Rom.14:23). Everybody on earth believes something or the other. Those who do not believe in the one whom we ought to believe, are put in the list of unbelievers. The only way to receive forgiveness of sins for all is to put their faith in Jesus.

*“To Him all the prophets witness that, through his name, whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins” (Acts 10:43).*

It is only when one believes in the Lord Jesus to receive forgiveness of sin that one becomes a believer. All who are otherwise are counted as unbelievers before God.

## **3. THE ABOMINABLE**

*“They profess to know God, but in works they deny Him, being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work”(Titus 1:16).*

Those who have only empty words of godliness without practical works in relation to God, are abominable before God’s presence.

## **4. MURDERERS**

*“Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.” (1 Jn. 3:15).*

## **5. FORNICATORS**

*“Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body” (1 Cor. 6:18).*

If sinful thoughts are cherished, it will surface one day. Ironically, the sin of a fornicator does harm to his own body.

Enticing Black arts and idolatry are all sins God hates. Though it is written much in the Old Testament, it is recorded in the Scripture that during the rule of Antichrist the worldly men will be subjected to such vices.

*“But the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk. And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts” (Rev. 9:20-21).*

Under the present modernism people have become fools, professing themselves to be wise (Rom.1:22). What more example do we need to describe the foolishness of the modern wise in relation with 2010 world Cup that they ran to octopus for predictions to know who will win the final match. The Word of God reminds us that such tendencies and activities will be increased.

## **7. LIARS**

*“You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it” (Jn. 8:44).*

What I have written so far is a brief description of the sinners whose names are not written in the Book of Life. Since it is a difficult task to bring out a complete list of sins, the easier way of listing out from the book of Revelation in connection with other Scriptures has been adopted.

The wisest man is he who knows the fact that all who are born and brought up in sin and finally dead in sin will face final judgment and knowing that he keeps himself from sinful ways. All who died in sin will be victims of Hades. In the Last day Resurrection they will arise and stand before the White Throne In naked body without

glory. In the judgment of that day they are convicted and cast in to the eternal Hell fire which is the Lake of fire. By their resurrection, all that sinners from the beginning of the world to the last day who are tormented in the lowest Hades will be resurrected.

Although we have completed the study regarding those sinners tormented in lower Hades, now we need to think about the judgment of the demons. It is in the last day that Jesus Christ commands and sends the demons to the lower Hades. Till that time they continue to work in the midst of humans.

*“When He had come to the other side, to the country of the Gergesenes, there met Him two demon-possessed men, coming out of the tombs, exceedingly fierce, so that no one could pass that way. And suddenly they cried out, saying, “What have we to do with You, Jesus, You Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?”” (Matt. 8:28, 29).*

*“And they begged Him that He would not command them to go out into the abyss. Now a herd of many swine was feeding there on the mountain. So they begged Him that He would permit them to enter them” (Lk. 8:31 ,32).*

From the above two verses demons are to be entered into Hades. Like that they will be entered in there only on the command of Christ Jesus. These will be here in earth until the last day that sin prevails in humans. The demons also included in the resurrection on the last day when the Hades delivers up its inhabitants. These will resurrect nakedly in the superhuman body which they had prior to the flood in Noah’s time and stand before the white throne. With their resurrection and judgment the Hades becomes empty.

### **III. THE SORDID SINNERS WHOM DEATH (HELL) DELIVERED UP**

Those who are in Death are the last cursed after-death rank. The resurrection of the most cursed rank of hardcore

sinner also will be occurred on the last day. Those who are equal to the angels that sinned will be thrown into it. Since it has already been discussed in the after-death ranks, I cut this part short. God does not want any man to reach here because it is eternal torment in there forever. It is into outer darkness that the unprofitable servant (Matt. 25:30), sons of the Kingdom of this world (Mtt. 8:12), hypocrites (Matt. 23:14) are thrown out. Because despite the fact they knew God much, they gave up their Master of life for selfish motives and temporary profits. They all will be thrown into the Hell fire which is the second death. Life on earth is temporary; if we give up spirituality for the benefits of earthly life down here, God will remove them from His presence mercilessly. Likewise at the last judgment they will receive great condemnation. They will share eternal torment along with the devil, the Beast, False Prophet and his angels in the Hell fire. About such persons it is recorded in the book of Revelation as:

*“But outside are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie” (Rev. 22:15).*

In addition to what we discussed above, dogs are mentioned here. Regarding the remainder mentioned in the above verse we have already discussed in relation to the sinners.

*“For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them. But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: “A dog returns to his own vomit,” and, “a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire”” (2 Pet. 2:21-22).*

Whoever abandons the right path will be severely disciplined (Pro.15:10). If we compare this verse with the above, we can more easily understand who will be subjected to the severest punishment. Peter the apostle also has spoken about this. Those who, having known

the way of righteousness, turn from it are equal to dogs and pigs. If the sin confessed and forsaken are repeated, it is like the dog that turned to its vomit and the pig that wallows in the mire after being washed. Such person will go to the last row or rank of Death and from there they will be subjected to the severest punishment in the final day resurrection. No one knowing this grave matter would take Christian life for granted or for fun. But those who understand this truth would live out the Christian life seriously. But Satan hides this matter from so many and deceives them.

*"Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the mutilation!" (Phil. 3:2).*

He who deviates from the path of faith is Satan. When Judas Iscariot was overtaken by greed for money, we can see that his mind was influenced by the devil and controlled in the wrong direction (We do not see here that Satan used any devices such as super computer, chip, 666 seal etc. to deceive him).

*"And supper being ended, the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him" (Jn. 13:2).*

Satan, seeking an opportunity to get into Judas Iscariot, snapped a suitable time and entered into him and did his work. It is recorded in the word of God that when Judas had eaten the piece of bread, Satan entered into him (Jn. 13:27). From this it is clear that Satan can infiltrate into anyone if he gets a loophole. The Satanic work started in Eden is still continuing in the world.

The first person who entered into Hell that is Death as a hardcore sinner was Cain. God had warned and spoken to him very clearly that the sin was at his door and its desire was for him and he had to subdue it. Cain ignored the Godly warning and hence Satan entered into him. Because of that he did the horrible sin and killed his own brother and like Satan Cain also became murderer. Satan

has been attempting to trap human in sordid sin since beginning. Recognizing this truth people of God should always be vigilant so as not to fall prey to his baits.

*“He who rejects me, and does not receive my words, has that which judges him - the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day” (Jn. 12:48).*

He who rejects the Word of God that is the Christ Jesus is under judgment. It is indispensable that we examine ourselves whether there is any rebellion within us to the Word of God. All humans should be careful that they do not enter into the last judgment on the last day. Satan is making haste to deceive and carry many into eternal damnation along with him by any means. Recognizing the wiles of Satan, it is the duty entrusted upon the children of God to save themselves and others by trusting in the Lord.

At the resurrection of hardcore sinners those who belong to the rank of Death (Hell), the resurrections of all mankind born and dead on the earth are completed. After the resurrection on the last day no human soul remains to be resurrected.

The souls of hardcore sinners, whom the Death (Hell) has delivered up, will get into their body wherever it got decomposed and resurrect in naked body without glory and appear before the White throne. But the angels who sinned do not resurrect, they have been chained under darkness in their body. In the last judgment of the last day Hell is delivering them in front of the White throne. Their judgment also gets completed on that day.

*“For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment” (2Pet.2:4).*

Apostle Peter recorded that the first group of angels who sinned in heaven along with Satan are **‘preserved in Hell’**, but Saint Jude in his epistle distinguishingly said

about second group of angels as **'reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment'** who sinned at the time of Noah in the ancient world.

*"And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day;" (Jud: 6).*

When Death (Hell) delivers up those in it for the judgment of that last day or great day, it consists of hardcore sinners and also the angels who sinned. That is why it was stated earlier that those who committed sordid sins are equal to the angels that sinned.

In the Judgment of those hardcore sinners and wicked angels whom the Death which is Hell has delivered up before the White throne, judged and cast into the lake of fire where Satan who is the root of wickedness is lying. On that day the prophecy recorded in the prophetic book of Malachi is being fulfilled (Mal. 4:1)

*"For behold, the day is coming, Burning like an oven, And all the proud, yes, all who do wickedly will be stubble. And the day which is coming shall burn them up," Says the Lord of hosts, "That will leave them neither root nor branch"" (Mal. 4:1).*

On that day Satan who is the root and all the wicked who are the branches are cast into the lake of fire.

By the Last Day Resurrection and the final White Throne Judgment getting completed, all the after-death ranks are abolished. The present sky and earth are disappearing, in burning up and dissolving of basic elements, prior to the final judgment ahead of the appearance of the New Heaven and Earth wherein no death will be. Along with that, places such as the Sea, Hades, Death (Hell) also will be vanished after the final day of judgment.

## Lesson Summary

- The resurrection of the Last Day is recorded explicitly in the book of Revelation chapter 20.
- The resurrection of their rows belonging to the last three after-death ranks are completed on that day.
- At the Last Day Resurrection, the resurrections of all mankind from the beginning of the world to the last day are completed.
- The Sea delivers up that which is in it before the White Throne those souls of the rank who are worthy of eternal life and are written in the Book of Life. **The mention of “the Sea delivers up that which is in it” is not about those who are drowned to death in the Sea.**
- Those whom the Sea delivers up are worthy of eternal life and attain terrestrial body. They ushered into Godly eternity in New Heaven and Earth.
- Those whom the Hades and Death deliver up are all the wicked from the beginning to the last day of the world.
- Everyone was judged according to each one’s work. Those who are in the Hades are cast into the eternal fire. While the hardcore sinners are cast into the outer darkness in Hell fire.
- The judgment of the angels that sinned and are chained under darkness in the Hell that is Death for the Great Day of Judgment and the demons in Hades will be fulfilled on the final day resurrection.
- In the New Heaven and New Earth there will not be sin, death and Sea.
- The New Jerusalem the holy city descended with its full splendor to the Courtyard which is the New Heaven and New Earth and this is the substance of that was shadow in the Old Testament. With that God’s long-term project designed about the human race before the foundation of the world comes true and is fulfilled.

## SECOND PART - RETROSPECT

All men have resurrection. The resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked will take place. It will be better at this time to self examine in which resurrection of various ranks man arises to life I will be involved. The following are the after-death ranks:

- During the midair appearance of the Lord those worthy to be transformed and those resting souls worthy to resurrect from the third heaven in the heavenly paradise are in the rank of Pure Virgin, the beloved of the Lamb.
- During the beginning of the rule of Antichrist, in the resurrection of the Two witnesses the souls resting in the first and second heaven in the heavenly paradise are Resurrected and they belong to the category of Champions of Old Testament saints and Virgins in the New Testament Church respectively.
- Towards the end of the rule of Antichrist, in the first resurrection the souls resting under the earth (ie. under the Altar) who are Virgins, the martyrs of the New Testament Church and the 144000 martyrs of Israel, get resurrected and are taken up to heaven of heavens.
- In the resurrection on the Last Day, the souls of all righteous people resting in the after-death rank sea will get resurrected and entered into New Heaven and New Earth.
- In the resurrection on the Last Day, those sinners tormented in Lower Hades and the demons get resurrected and after judgment they are thrown into eternal Hell Fire. On that day those hardcore sinners under severe torment and the wicked angels in Death which is Hell are judged and thrown into Hell fire.

### **WHEN A PERSON BREATHE HIS LAST, WHERE WILL HE BE?IF A HUMAN BEING DIES, WILL HE LIVE AGAIN?**

Well, we have now come to the conclusion of our study based on the two questions of Job the godly man. Trusting

in the grace of God we have thought about the after-death ranks from the beginning of the world to the last day and about the resurrections. These two questions have great significance in relation to eternity. The reason for that is human is created for eternity and that is predetermined by God.

All of the mankind must be in one place in eternity are mentioned below:

1. In the Temple of the living city New Jerusalem (Those who are part of the Pure Virgin will be with the Lamb)
2. In the Holy Place of New Jerusalem (The most excellent saints of the Old Testament, maids that are virgins, 144000 of Israel).
3. In the Courtyard of New Heaven and New Earth (All the righteous worthy of eternal life whose names are written in the Book of Life).
4. In the eternal Hell Fire (Satan, the Antichrist the Beast, False Prophet, wicked angels, demons, hardcore sinners, sinners).

Where in eternity do you want to be? Indeed let the most excellent position be our aim. God willing, we will obtain it. The fruition of the heavenly project of God who saw the end at the very beginning even before the foundation of the world is fulfilled in The New Heaven and New Earth. In the vision John saw in spirit from great and high mountain that the New Jerusalem the holy city descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God to the New Heaven and New Earth. The descriptions of its manifestation are found in Revelation chapters 21 and 22. Let us live daily with the great vision of heaven that we want to be with the Lamb who is the Temple at the time of its fulfillment. We must strive hard so that by any means it may be fulfilled in our life. **Indeed! Let it be our supreme goal and vision.** Let us commit our lives into God's hands for a moment.

*Loving Father, how great is your plan concerning our lives! Thank you for the great privilege that you have prepared for us through your darling Son. I surrender myself fully before the divine truth that your Holy Spirit has revealed. Prepare me for your coming.....Amen!*

*“And I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and first earth had passed away, also there was no more sea”(Rev.21:1).*

The holy city New Jerusalem, descends from the presence of God to the midst of those humans who are worthy of eternal life and are like angels of God in the New Heaven and New Earth. With that, the culmination of divine project about the human creation viewing the end at the very beginning will be fulfilled.

*“And I saw a new heaven and new earth, for the first heaven and first earth passed away. Also there was no more sea. Then I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be with them and be their God. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying and there shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.” Then He who sat on the throne said, “Behold, I make all things new”. And He said to me, “Write, for these words are true and faithful.” And He said to me, “it is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts.”(Rev.21:1-6)*

**Write, for these words are true and faithful.  
And He said to me,  
“It is done.”**

## DEATH- RESURRECTION RANKS (IN THE ORDER OF RESURRECTION EVENTS)

After-death-ranks	Those involved in the ranks	Resurrection ranks	Occasion of Resurrection	Place destined in Eternity
1. The third heaven in the Heavenly Paradise (2 Cor. 12:2-5, Rev. 5:13, Acts.7:56,59)	Pure Virgin (2 Cor. 11:2, Ps. 45:13, Song of Songs. 6: 8-10)	Resurrection from among the dead (Phil. 3:11, Lk.20:34, 35, Jn.5:25) [Perfected among 7 lampstands]	At the Midair coming of the Lord (1Cor. 15:51-55, 1Thess. 4:16-17, Ps. 110:1, Rev. 12:1-11, Eph. 5:30,31)	At the Midair coming of the Lord (1Cor. 15:51-55, 1Thess. 4:16-17, Ps. 110:1, Rev. 12:1-11, Eph. 5:30-31)
2. Second Heaven in the Heavenly Paradise (Rev. 5:13, 2 Cor.12:2-5)	Virgins (Ps.45:14, 68:25-27, Rev.11:4, 12:17, Zech. 4:12)	Resurrection of Two Witnesses (Rev. 11:3-12) [1st Lampstand of the two lampstands]	At the beginning of the Rule of Antichrist (Rev.6:1-2, 11:7)	In the Holy Place of the City of New Jerusalem (Wall) (Rev.21:14-21)
3. First heaven in the Heavenly Paradise (Rev.5:13, 2Cor.12:2-5, Luk.23:42,43, Eph.4:8, Psa. 68:18, 1Sam.2:6).	Old Testament Champions (Ps. 68:25-27, Rev. 11:4, 12:17, Zech.4:11)	Resurrection of Two Witnesses (Rev.11:3-12) [First Olive tree of the two Olive trees]	At the beginning of the rule of Antichrist (Rev.6:1-2, 11:7)	In the Holy Place of the City of New Jerusalem (Towers) Rev.21:12-13

<p>4. Under the Earth (Under the Altar) Rev. 6:9-11, 20:4, 5:13</p>	<p>Witnesses of the Gospel martyred during the rule of Antichrist (Rev.12:17, 6:11, 7:9-17) And the Israeli martyrs of that period (Rev. 12:17, 6:11, 14:2-5, 15:2-3)</p>	<p>First Resurrection (Rev.20:4-6) [Second of the Two lamp stands and second of the two Olive trees].</p>	<p>At the end of the rule of Antichrist (Rev.11:15, Rom.11:15-16, Isa.26:9, Psa.110:4)</p>	<p>In the Holy Place of the City of New Jerusalem (Wall, completion of Towers) (Rev.21: 14-21, 21:12,13)</p>
<p>5. In the Sea (Rev. 5:13, 20:13, Eph. 4:8, 15Sam.2:6, Psa.68:8, Job. 26:5)</p>	<p>The righteous whose names written in the book of life (Rev. 20:12-13,15)</p>	<p>Resurrection on the final Day (Rev. 20:13-15, Jn. 6:39, 44, 54, 11:24)</p>	<p>At the end of Millennial rule (Rev. 20:4-5, 1Cor.15:24-26, Mal 4:3, John 5:28,29)</p>	<p>In the Courtyard that is New heaven and New Earth (Rev.21:27,3-5)</p>
<p>6. In Hades (Rev. 20:13, Psa. 31:17, 9:7, Job 24:19, 26:6, Lk. 16:23, 1Sam. 2:6)</p>	<p>The SINNERS whose names are not in the Book of Life (Rev.20:13, Exo.32:33)</p>	<p>Resurrection on the final Day (Rev.20:13-15)</p>	<p>At the end of the Millennial rule (Rev. 20:4-5, 1Cor.15:14-26, Mal.4:3 John 5:28,29,)</p>	<p>In the Second Death the Lake of fire (Rev.20:14,15, 22:15)</p>
<p>7. In the Hell which is Death (Rev.20:13, 2Peter 2:4,10,20, Jude 13, Job 26:6)</p>	<p>Hardcore Sinners whose names are not in the Book of Life (2 Pet. 2:20, Prov.15:10, Gen.18:20)</p>	<p>Resurrection on the final Day (Rev. 20:13-15, Jn. 12:48)</p>	<p>At the end of the Millennial rule (Rev.20:14-15, Mal. 4:1, Jn. 5:28,29, Dan. 12:2-3)</p>	<p>In the Second Death the Lake of fire (Rev.20:14, 15, 19: 20, 20:10, Heb. 10:29)</p>

### A WORD AT LAST!

Beloved Readers,

I give all glory and honor to the Almighty God as He has given me grace to fulfill the task that God has committed on to me by the back up of continuous prayer and fasting of God's people. I want to express my gratitude to you for reading this book carefully. I am certain that by the sincere and dedicated reading of this book, the readers would have definitely experienced a spiritual transformation by the Holy Spirit. Hopefully, let us know about your decision and invaluable suggestion and encourage others also to read this book. May the Lord help you to reach the greatest position/rank of Pure Virgin being able and worthy to live with the Lamb forever. With sincere prayer that no one fall into the eternal horror which is the Hell fire, let me thank all of you once again. May the Lord help you all richly!

We prefer to translate these books into other languages and also to produce animations. Those who are interested in these ministries please contact.

### BOOKS PUBLISHED PRECIOUS CALLING MINISTRIES

1. Nithyathayude Velippadu (Malayalam)
2. Manushyan Pranane Vittal Pinne Avan Evide?  
Manushyan marichal Veendum Jeevikkumo?  
(Malayalam)
3. Pusthaka Vyakhyanam - Velippadu (Malayalam)

#### **Books under planning to Publish:**

1. Anthya Nyayavidhi (Malayalam)
2. Daiveeka Prathyakshathakal (Malayalam)
3. Shavam Ullidathu Kazhukkal Koodum (Malayalam)