

Pentwater Bible Church

Isaiah Message 150

March 13, 2022



The Punishment of Korah, Dathan and Abiram by Botticelli cir 1482

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Pentwater Bible Church

The Book of Isaiah
One-Hundred-Fifty

ALL THE BODIES OF THE DEAD WILL BE VISIBLE

March 13, 2022

Daniel E. Woodhead

Isaiah 66:24

24 And they shall go forth, and look upon the dead bodies of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die,; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh (ASV, 1901).

At least five and a half billion people will die in the Tribulation. Many of them who assaulted Jerusalem in the last stages of the Campaign of Armageddon will die and their bodies will lie on the ground decaying around Jerusalem. The dead bodies of the enemies of God will lay and rot. *For their worm shall not die.* This image is evidently taken from the condition of unburied bodies, and especially on a battle-field. The Hebrew word (*tolah*) properly refers to the worms which are generated in such corrupting bodies. These are worms that are produced in putrid substances, like the larva of flies which feed on rotting flesh. The fire of this passage is referred to by the Lord Jesus regarding future punishment; and is the fearful image which He employs to denote the final suffering of the wicked in hell that shall not consume them but they shall burn perpetually when He said “*neither shall their fire be quenched*” (Mark 9:44–46).

This image is taken directly from the fires which were kindled, in the valley of Hinnom, to consume putrid and decaying substances. This is a real-world example of what the Lake of Fire will be like. That was a valley on the south side of Jerusalem, into which the filthy refuse of the city was thrown. It was also the place where, formerly, an image made of brass was made to honor the pagan god Moloch. This is where children were offered in sacrifice (II Kings 16:3; II Chronicles 28:3). This place was subsequently regarded as a place of peculiar abomination by the Jews. The filth of the city was thrown there, and it became extremely offensive. It was basically a burning garbage dump. The air was polluted and filled with plague like disease. The sight was terrible and in order to dispose of the garbage, it was necessary to keep fires continually burning. The extreme loathsomeness of the place, the filth and putrefaction, the corruption of the atmosphere, and the lurid fires blazing by day and by night, made it subsequently one of the most appalling and loathsome objects with which a Jew was acquainted. It was called the Gehenna of fire, and was the image which the Lord Jesus often used to denote the future punishment of the wicked. Therefore, it is important to realize there is not annihilation of the soul after death. We will all experience eternal consciousness.

In that deep and loathsome valley it seems to have been the common expectation of the Jews that some great battle would be fought which would establish the supremacy of their nation over all others. We know this as the Tribulation (Revelation 6–19). Somewhat more clearly the Chaldee Paraphrase renders the passage:

Isaiah 66:24

‘They shall go forth, and shall look upon the dead bodies of the sinners who have rebelled against my word; because their souls shall not die, and their fire shall not be extinguished; and the wicked shall be judged in Gehenna, until the righteous shall say, We have seen enough.’¹

All nations shall come to Zion, bringing Israel an offering to the Lord. The pious and happy worshippers of God shall see the punishment which He will execute on His and their foes, and all shall see them finally destroyed. New priests will be taken into service, and a universal service of “all flesh” will be celebrated in Jerusalem “new moon after new moon, and sabbath after sabbath”. The celebrants shall also gaze at the corpses of the condemned—whose enduring doom shall be a sign of the fate “*of the men who rebelled against Me*”. The visibility of their corpses will only be part of their fate. This view of them laying there will remind all who know the Lord that their spirits have entered the first phase of eternal torment in Hell. Later they will receive their final fate which is to be cast into the Lake of Fire, Gehenna (Matthew 10:28, 25:41, 25:46; Revelation 20:10,14,15, 21:8).

Israel will be as enduring as the new heavens and the new earth. All mankind (i.e., people from all nations) will worship the LORD, bowing down before Him. As Isaiah had frequently written, these righteous ones will contrast greatly with those who rebelled against the LORD. They will suffer eternal torment (Mark 9:48). This awesome way in which the majestic Book of Isaiah concludes points to the need for unrepentant people to turn to the Lord, the only God, the Holy One of Israel and profess faith in the death and resurrection of His Messiah (Acts 4:12).

THE DOCTRINE OF IMMORTALITY

The fact that everyone who has ever lived on this earth will live forever when we are released from these bodies is found first in the Old Testament. There are at least sixteen (16) specific evidences for the Doctrine of Immortality in the Bible. We see at the death of Abraham he is said to have been *gathered to his people*. This does not mean that he was buried with others of his family because they were back in Mesopotamia. This refers to his joining others who died before him. The same was said of Ishmael (Genesis 25:17), Isaac (Genesis 35:29) and Jacob (Genesis 49:33).

Genesis 25:8

⁸Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; and was gathered to his people (ASV, 1901).

Enoch was raptured and went to eternity to live. This is affirmed in Genesis 5:24 and Hebrews 11:5). Job too made an affirmation that he realized that after death he would be raised again without his body to see the Lord.

¹ Uzziel Jonathan B., *The Chaldee Paraphrase on The Prophet Isaiah*, Published by London Society’s House London, GB 1871 pg.226

Job 19:25–26

²⁵ But as for me I know that my Redeemer lives, And at last he will stand up upon the earth: ²⁶And after my skin, even this body, is destroyed, Then without my flesh shall I see God; (ASV, 1901).

Job knew for certain that even though his body will eventually decay and die, nevertheless, he will see God without from his body in immortality.

Immortality is simply the eternal continuous and conscious existence of the soul after the death of the body. Within the Bible the term immortality is usually used of the body only. However, theology proper uses the term as applied to both the body and the soul. For our purposes here we will focus on the continuous consciousness of the soul-spirit or the immaterial part of the human after the body ceases to live.

Another evidence for the Doctrine of Immortality is based upon the Doctrine of Resurrection. The very act of resurrection implies immortality. We are raised to live forever. In the Old Testament the doctrine is found in Isaiah 26:19; Daniel 12:2-3; and Hosea 13:14. In the New Testament it is clearly expressed in John 5:25-29 and Revelation 20:4-6, 11-15. This then according to Scripture, demonstrates that the immaterial part of man is viewed as being with God upon death and is conscious. There are examples of this truth in both testaments. The Old Testament expresses this doctrine in at least the following three verses.

Psalms 17:15

¹⁵ As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness (ASV, 1901).

Here David expressed a real faith that the soul will still be conscious in the fellowship with God even after death. This is also taught in the following verse:

Psalms 73:23-25

*²³ Nevertheless I [am] continually with thee: thou hast holden [me] by my right hand
²⁴ Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me [to] glory. ²⁵ Whom have I in heaven [but thee]? and [there is] none upon earth [that] I desire beside thee
ASV, 1901).

In this Psalm, the author Asaph expressed a real faith in immortality. Even upon his death he saw himself as being with God and conscious.

Ecclesiastes 12:7

⁷ Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it (ASV, 1901).

Here Solomon expresses the truth that the body returns to the earth to be decayed and finally become dust, but the spirit goes to be with God our creator. Finally, David expected to be able to join his dead son with whom he conceived with Bathsheba after his own death.

II Samuel 12:23

²³But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me (ASV, 1901).

The Lord also gives us evidence of the consciousness of our souls in at least two places. Earlier in this book of Isaiah we saw an example of this in chapter 14

Isaiah 14:9-11

⁹Sheol from beneath is moved for thee to meet [thee] at thy coming: it stirreth up the dead for thee, [even] all the chief ones of the earth; it hath raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations.¹⁰All they shall speak and say unto thee, Art thou also become weak as we? art thou become like unto us? ¹¹Thy pomp is brought down to the Sheol, [and] the noise of thy viols: the worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee (ASV, 1901).

Among the very first casualties of the final destruction of Babylon will be the King of Babylon who is Antichrist himself. He is the second person of the unholy trinity. The devil, antichrist and false prophet are in this trinity. He ruled the one world government with imperialistic power given to him by Satan and will speak blasphemous words against the true Son of God, the counterfeit son will be powerless before the True Son. Because of the rule in anger and suppression that will be unrestrained the earth's remaining saved people will rejoice into singing.

As the Antichrist's spirit arrives in Hell awaiting his final destination of the Lake of Fire the former great government, occultic, and economic leaders of the earth who preceded him will quickly rise up off their thrones in utter shock that he, too, has entered the abode of Hell. It will be that all the pomp of his worldwide reign will now suffer the demise of Hell demonstrating what the Lord Jesus has said. Therefore, in this passage the soul of the king of Babylon enters into the Hell section of *Sheol* itself, and all the souls that preceded him in Hell suddenly rise in astonishment as they see this one also entering the domains of Hell. They are able to ask questions and carry on a conversation. These dead souls are conscious. The same observation is found in the story Jesus told of the rich man and Lazarus.

Luke 16:19–31

¹⁹ There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: ²⁰ and there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, ²¹ and desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. ²² And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; ²³ and in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments,

and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. ²⁴ And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. ²⁵ But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. ²⁶ And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence. ²⁷ Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: ²⁸ for I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. ²⁹ Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. ³⁰ And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. ³¹ And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead (KJV).

Lazarus, Abraham and the rich man all were in the place of the dead. They were fully conscious and were able to communicate with each other. The rich man was in eternal punishment and Abraham made it quite clear that there was no way for him to come where Abraham and Lazarus were in Paradise. Not only does this demonstrate again that after our bodies fail our souls, that is, the immaterial part of us live forever, but we see that the decisions on earth for Jesus or not have eternal consequences. Interestingly God has planted this awareness of eternity in each of us. So all are without excuse.

Ecclesiastes 3:11

¹¹He hath set eternity in their heart (ASV, 1901).

The word “heart” is frequently used in Scripture as one of the facets of the immaterial part of mankind. So contained in our “heart” (the immaterial part of man) is the element of immortality (eternity). God set it in our hearts! Paul also assured us of this when he said the pains and suffering now will be worth it when we see the glory that the Lord has for us!

Romans 8:18

¹⁸For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us (KJV).

THE THREE BENEFITS OF KNOWING ABOUT IMMORTALITY

1. Our Hope of Future Joy

Immortality provides us with the hope of future joy, according to Philippians.

Philippians 1:23-24

²³For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: ²⁴nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you (KJV).

Paul is faced with the imminence of physical death. He was in the Mamertine prison awaiting execution but that gave him hope of future joy, knowing that upon separation of the body he would be going into a conscious continuous fellowship with the Lord.

2. Our Temporary Residence in this Life

We must be aware that our residence in these bodies is only temporary. According to Philippians 3:20 which states:

Philippians 3:20

²⁰For our citizenship is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ (ASV, 1901):

The believer's citizenship is in heaven. The fact that immortality is true is the awareness that believers are in temporary residences in this life. Our citizenship is in heaven. This means that whatever trials and tribulations we encounter in this life we do not need to despair to the point of depression. We can say; this too will pass for I am only passing through here, my citizenship is in heaven!

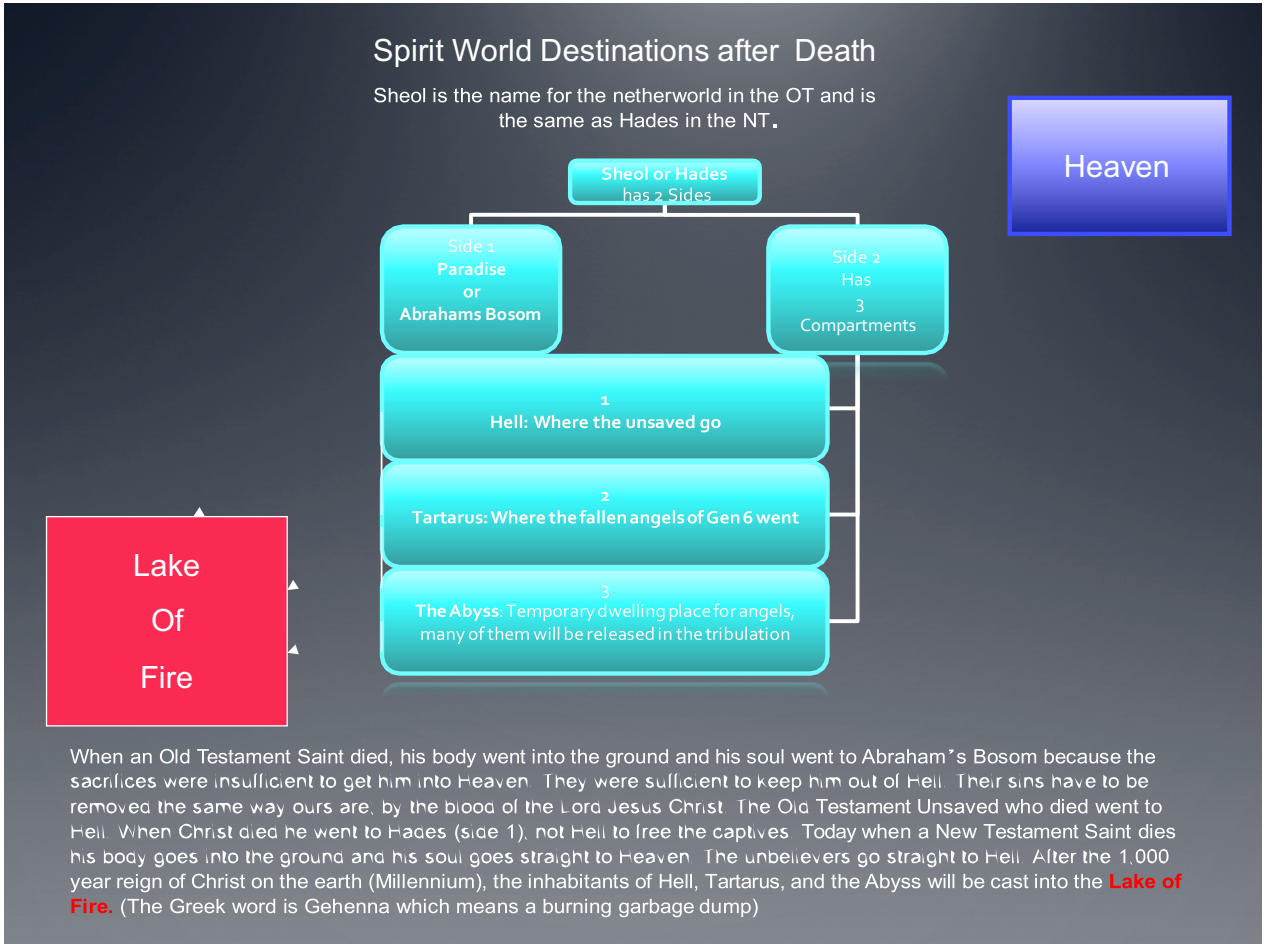
3. Our Motivation for Righteous Living

Because of all of this we should have the proper motivation for living righteous lives. We should be led by the Spirit and be on the sanctified track always growing more Christ-like throughout our lives. A person who does not have this hope struggles to make the best of this life. They will try to make their lives increasingly better moving to higher standards of living.

We must remember that:

The more literally we take the Bible, the more fundamental our theology becomes. The less literally we take the Bible, the more liberal our theology becomes.

If we go the liberal route God's message to us is lost.



Eternal Destination chart by author

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