

TWICE DEAD MEN -- A BIBLE MESSAGE

The Bible has much to say about dead men. There is a very interesting but solemn statement in the Bible: "It is appointed unto men once to die; but after this the judgment." Hebrews 9:27. And surely there is no more interesting question in the Bible or in any other book than the question of Job 14:14: "If a man die, shall he live again?" Many centuries after this question was asked a Man who was different from all other men stood beside the sepulchre of a dead man. That dead man was Lazarus. He had been dead for four days. Men had been dying four thousand years or four days. The living Man, who stood near the sepulchre, is called in the Bible, "The Man of Sorrows." He is also called "The Second Man From Heaven." I Corinthians 15:47. In I Timothy 2:5 He is called "The Man Christ Jesus." That Second Man From Heaven was at the sepulchre to raise that dead man to life. Before He performed that wonderful miracle He made a wonderful statement. He said, "I am the resurrection, and the life; he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die." Then He thus commanded that dead man, "Lazarus, come forth." "And he that was dead came forth." John 11:44.

There are some people who believe that later on, in some miraculous way, this man Lazarus left this world without dying, because the Bible states that it is appointed unto men ONCE to die, and therefore Lazarus did not again experience physical death.

This, of course, is human speculation. There is no Scriptural proof that Lazarus did not die twice physically, but in considering the twice-dead men of the Bible we are not thinking of Lazarus or others who were raised from the dead by the Lord Jesus and His servants. The Lord Jesus in very plain language commanded His disciples to raise the dead. Matthew 10:7.

PLUCKED UP BY THE ROOTS

We read also of twice-dead men in Jude 12. These were religious men, "twice dead, plucked up by the roots." In Hebrews 9:14 we learn that by the blood of Jesus Christ some religious Hebrews were purged from dead works. The Bible teaches us that men may be very religious and still be dead before they die physically. The unsaved man, whether or not he is religious, is declared to be dead in sins. When such a dead sinner turns to religion and religious works and religious things, instead of turning to the Man who said, "I am the resurrection and the life," there is a sense in which that religious sinner is twice dead.

How very many dead sinners are going religiously to perdition only the omniscient God knows. "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His." II Timothy 2:19.

The Bible clearly teaches that the dead sinner cannot find life in religion, but in a Person. The best Christian who ever lived on this earth said, "For to me to live is Christ." Philippians 1:21. But in this message we have in mind other twice-dead men rather than these twice-dead religious sinners.

THE SECOND DEATH

We might mention a third group of twice-dead men described in the Bible. This is by far the largest group of all. Note these solemn words in Revelation 20:12 to 15: “And I saw the dead, small and great stand before God” . . . “and the dead were judged” . . . “And the sea gave up the dead which were in it.” “And death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire.” “This is the second death.” “And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.” Note the words: “This is the Second Death.” These men had died physically and later on they are to experience the sorrows of the second death. Surely they are twice-dead men. Until the Second Man comes the second time, first to give incorruptible bodies to His redeemed people, even the most consecrated saints must experience that death which is absence from the body, until Christ shall rapture His Church. God’s Word is plain that He will have all men to be saved by faith in the Man Jesus Christ. I Timothy 2:3 to 6. Therefore, men may escape the Second Death, though they experience physical death. It is blessed to know that many men (twice-alive) will go to their heavenly home without experiencing even the physical death, for this will be the experience of all of the Lord’s redeemed ones who are alive when the Lord Himself shall raise the dead saints and call the living saints to meet Him in resurrection bodies. I Corinthians 15:51 to 56. Philippians 3:20 and 21. I Thessalonians 4:13 to 18.

DEAD WHO HEAR CHRIST

Note the life and death, or death and life, messages of the Lord Jesus in John 5:24 to 29: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation: but is passed out of death into life.” “Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.” . . . “Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life.”

Here we learn that although it may seem paradoxical to say that living men are dead, that is exactly what the Second Man From Heaven said. He declared that when these living dead men believe they do pass out of death into life. When this great transformation has taken place then these living men have new life, Divine life. Note the Bible instructions to those believers who have passed out of death into life “Yield yourselves unto God, as those who are alive, from the dead.” Romans 6:13. Dead sinners heard the voice of the Son of God and were made alive. The hour is coming when all that are in the grave will hear the voice of the Son of God. The men who die saved will come forth in the resurrection of life. But not the unsaved. Their part is called “the second death.” So, remember, you are either headed for the resurrection of life or for the second death. Also remember that you will never hear the saving gospel if you leave this world unsaved. If you do, Hades is not missionary territory. Would it not be wise on your part to receive the Divine life that God offers you in Christ this side of the grave? Christ said, “He that believeth on Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.” “The free gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Romans 6:23. You cannot earn this gift by striving, struggling or by doing your very best. Eternal life is not a reward for faithful service. God will surely reward His faithful people for their faithful works. But eternal life is God’s free gift. Salvation is not for sale. It cannot be purchased by man. Note God’s plain words: “Not of works, lest any man should boast.” “Not of yourselves; it is the gift of God.” Ephesians 2:9 and 8. Sinners pass out of death into life when they believe God’s Word and receive God’s Son. God’s Son said, “I am the way, the truth and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me.” John 14:6. The Son of

God said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on Me hath everlasting life." John 6:47. Note God's true Word: "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son." John 5:11. "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." I John 5:12: The glorious future of all who have eternal life through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is stated in Colossians 3:4: "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory." Again we quote the testimony of the greatest of all Christians, in Galatians 2:20: "I have been crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me and gave Himself for me." Here we have the testimony of a man who had been dead and was made alive; and after he was alive he declared that he had been crucified. Crucifixion meant death, if it was crucifixion with Christ. "Death" crucifixion meant death baptism for Christ, and it was death baptism for the man who was crucified with Christ. Note the words of Christ when He knew He was going to Calvary for crucifixion and death: "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straightened (pressed) till it be accomplished. It was accomplished when the Saviour cried on the cross, "Finished," and yielded up the ghost. John 19:30. Christ was baptized into death. His death was His baptism. In Colossians 2:20 we learn that the believer is dead with Christ. Note this plain statement in Colossians 3:3: "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." "Knowing that our old man was crucified with Christ." Romans 6:6.

"Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him." Romans 6:8. Note how the believers are described in Romans 6:2 . . . "We that are dead to sin." Note the great change in Ephesians 2:5 and 6: "Even when we were dead in sins, God hath made us alive together with Christ, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus." What a change! From "dead in sins" to a life and resurrection and ascension. By grace. "God who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us." Ephesians 2:4 . . . But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." Ephesians 2:13.

Surely we should study the sixth chapter of Romans in the light of Romans 3:24, "Being declared righteous without a cause by God's grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."

If it is without a cause, so far as anything that man deserves or is able to do or not to do, then surely man should not give any value or importance to his work or worthiness or any religious ceremony, except as he may be able to say with the apostle Paul: "I have planted, another man watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase." I Corinthians 3:6 and 7.

Surely it is a blessed privilege to point the sinner to the Lord Jesus Christ, to instruct him from the Word of God that he can be saved by grace, by believing that when Jesus Christ received His death baptism on the cross He actually put sin away and then entered into heaven after His resurrection, having obtained eternal redemption for us. Hebrews 9:12. But no faithful and obedient servant of the Lord who believes Romans 3:24 and Ephesians 2:8 to 10, will instruct any justified believer to receive a religious ceremony from the hands of another man to make his justification more efficacious or his position in Christ more secure, no, he will say with Paul, "God, Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." II Timothy 1:9. "According to the election of grace." "And if by grace, then it is no more

of works; otherwise grace is no more grace.” “But if it be of works, then it is no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.” Romans 11:5 and 6.