



God's Best is Yet to Come

**Berean Series
Bible Studies**

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“God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved”—John 3:16, 17.

WE notice in verse 16 it does not say that whosoever believeth in Jesus in this life only, shall have everlasting life, and that is very important to understand when studying this Scripture. We must not read into any verse what it does not say, though a great number of people claim that believing in Jesus in the present life is essential to gain everlasting life. Verses 14 and 15 in John 3 are also helpful—“And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.” That is a very hopeful message, even—“Glad tidings of great joy,

which shall be to all people"—Luke 2:10. This, we believe, is God's Best, or the Gospel in a nutshell, which is yet to come for the blessing of all the world—all the families of the earth, as God promised to faithful Abraham so many centuries ago.

Then, the way in which God's Best is yet to come, we believe is well revealed in the wonderful miracle performed by Jesus as outlined in John 11. Reviewing that occasion, we find the outcome is really glorious, because the reality of this miracle will yet be effective in the blessing of every person who has ever lived in this world over the past six thousand years. Reading from verse 1 of John 11. "Now a certain man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha . . . Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick." We notice the sisters did not say—"Lord, come quickly and heal our brother." They left it to the Lord, well knowing that He loved them, and thinking He was sure to do something about the sickness of Lazarus. "When Jesus heard that, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glori-

fied thereby." "This sickness is not unto death"—not to result in lasting death at that time, for Jesus knew God's will in the matter beforehand. "When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was." No doubt the sisters were very, very disappointed that the Lord did not come and restore their brother to health. "Then after that saith he to his disciples, Let us go into Judaea again. His disciples say unto him, Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee; and goest thou thither again? After that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep. Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well. Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep. Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead. And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe; nevertheless let us go unto him. Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellowdisciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him." There was something very lovely about this response of Thomas; the Lord was going back into the danger zone, and Thomas

thought they would not let the Lord go back alone. They would go back and face the danger with Him, and die with Him, if He is going to die. We hear very little of Thomas afterwards, but there is no mistaking his devotion to the Master, in this incident.

From verse 17 in John 11 we read—
“Then when Jesus came, he found that he had lain in the grave four days already . . . Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him . . . Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee. Jesus said unto her, Thy brother shall rise again. Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.” Martha did not say, I know his spirit has gone to heaven, that he has an immortal soul and cannot die. No, Martha knew that death meant death, and that there would be a resurrection from the dead for her brother, having no doubt learned this truth from the Lord.

Verses 25 and 26—"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead (though he die), yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me (then) shall never die." Those two verses are not generally understood; many people, including ministers of religion, use those verses to imply that people who believe in Jesus do not really die. However, Jesus was referring to the resurrection day—when people are resurrected and believe in Him **then**, they shall never die, as He assured Martha. That was the lovely lesson Jesus was teaching His disciples, and us also today, in the raising of Lazarus from the dead after four days. There is to be a glorious awakening from the sleep of death for all who have died over the six thousand years of human history, and lasting life for all who obey the laws of the kingdom, just as would have been the case had death not overtaken mankind through the disobedience of Adam.

Reading from verse 39—"Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he corrupteth;

for he hath been dead four days." Martha was apprehensive. "Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God? Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me." Jesus knew that it was the Father's will that Lazarus be raised from the dead. It was not our Lord's own power that performed this and other miracles, but the Father's power. Our Lord had said in verse 4—"This sickness is not unto (lasting) death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby." So, with the power from on high Lazarus was restored to life after four days, so that Jesus' disciples may believe, and all down the centuries those who read this record, even we today, may believe in the power of God, to bring back from the dead every human being, in due time. Four days, four years, four hundred or four thousand years, makes not the slightest difference when the time comes for the Lord to call back from the dead all who have died.

Lazarus of course died again, but for some years he no doubt enjoyed living again with his sisters. He will be awakened again from the land of the enemy, but the illustration our Lord gave in raising Lazarus from the dead was perfect. After Jesus had called—"Lazarus come forth"—verse 43—we read—"Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him"—verse 45. No wonder! How many people down the centuries have believed on Jesus as their Saviour because of this miracle! "I am the resurrection and the life" really means something very important to us today also. Christ will be the resurrection and the life to all who obey when they have the opportunity of obeying, and knowing that Christ "tasted death for them."

In harmony with the lesson from the raising of Lazarus, that pictured our Lord being "the resurrection and the life" for all mankind who have ever lived, we have other Scriptures in confirmation of this lovely truth, such as Acts 24:15—"There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust." Here we see that it is not only people who believe on the Lord in this life who are to have a

resurrection. Further, the resurrection of the unjust is not for the purpose of hearing about their condemnation as many people still believe today. Our Lord's own words in John 5:28, 29 help us respecting those who have done good, and also those who have done evil—"Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment." In the King James Version the word "damnation", which is a terrible word, is used incorrectly, instead of "judgment." Even some modern translators use the term—"come forth to their doom"—also a terrible translation. The correct translation is—"resurrection of judgment." What does the word "judgment" mean? It means a trial time, a judgment, a crisis. When people are sick they face a crisis, and passing the crisis successfully, they live again. This is the thought in this word judgment. Mankind will come forth in the resurrection to learn about the Saviour who bought them from death, and by accepting Him as their Redeemer they will live, and will not die again.

These words of Jesus show that there are to be two distinct resurrections, of those who have done good, and those who have done evil. Those who have not done good will be in the majority, obviously, because all mankind born before our Lord's first advent, and most born since have known little about the good. Few born prior to our Lord's first advent knew about the hope of a future life, as also the majority born since, but all these are included in these words of the Master—"all in the graves shall hear his voice." Examining the future of mankind who have not done good, in the resurrection day of judgment, we read in Isa. 26:9—"When thy (God's) judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." That is something really wonderful! That is what the thousand year kingdom of Christ is for—to teach humanity that Christ died for them, that they may accept Him as their Saviour, and by obedience to the laws of the kingdom gain lasting life on the restored earth. That will mean the restoration of humanity back to that which was lost by Adam in the Garden of Eden. This will be God's Best yet to

come for mankind in general, because as stated in Heb. 2:9, Jesus by the grace of God, tasted death for every man.

Turning to Hebrews 2, we read from verse 6—"But one in a certain place testified, saying (Cited in Psa. 8), What is man, that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man, that thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands: thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him." Man, in the person of Adam, was created perfect, a little lower than the angels, but now we see not yet all things put under him. No, indeed, what we see is man in his imperfection, we see the fall of man, Paul is saying. What we do see and rejoice in, however, is described in verse 9—"We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour (a corresponding price, a ransom for Adam); that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." "By

the grace of God"—this is God's Best yet to come. By the grace or favor of God, this plan was arranged; God sent Jesus, and our Lord delighting to do the Father's will, the co-operation was perfect.

One of the most helpful Scriptures to explain further the world's trial time or judgment day, is the Apostle Paul's statement in Acts 17:31—"God hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." God, a righteous judge, will judge the world in righteousness, which is indeed most hopeful for all mankind in the resurrection day. The context, from verse 18 in this 17th chapter of Acts, shows that Paul's main preaching was on the all-important subject of the resurrection. From verse 22 we read—"Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions (margin—gods that ye worship), I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship,

him declare I unto you.” How diplomatic was Paul. He grasped this opportunity to declare the very One whom they did not know, and how effective was the Apostle’s preaching at that time. “God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands.” There is an important lesson for us here, that God does not dwell in man-made temples, cathedrals with stained glass windows etc. Rather, God dwells in the hearts of His people, in their humble, lowly locations wherever they are met together. In Jesus’ day He met with the people by the lakeside, on the hills, or in the fields. So today, the Lord dwells with us in our homes, in our hearts wherever we are and as we lift up our hearts and minds to Him. This is an important lesson for us to remember, that God dwells not in temples made with hands.

From verse 25 of Acts 17, Paul’s message continues—“Neither is worshipped with men’s hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appoint-

ed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: for in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device. And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent." The times of this ignorance, back over past centuries prior to Paul's day, God winked at. God was not dealing directly with mankind; He allowed the world generally to go its own way, to get the experience of the sinfulness of sin. Then, says Paul, the time for repentance had begun, in his day. All the Gospel Age, "as many as the Lord our Lord shall call"—Acts 2:39—are called to repentance in hope of the heavenly life, and all mankind in the Millennial Age must repent to gain life on the earth, as stated in Acts 17:31; for God has appointed this "day", in which He will judge the world in righteousness, by that Man whom He hath ordained.

Thus we see that God has set aside three thousand years for humanity's repentance—two thousand years of the Gospel Age to call out "a people for his name"—Acts 15:14—for the heavenly kingdom; and one thousand years of the earthly kingdom to give every human being who has ever lived an opportunity of repentance. Then, accepting the Lord Jesus as their Saviour, and by obedience to the laws of the kingdom, mankind shall progress to eternal life on the restored earth. Seeing that all the Gospel Age of two thousand years is required for the selection of the Bride of Christ impresses the importance of this part of God's plan. God will have representatives from every generation from Pentecost down to the setting up of the kingdom on earth, as members worthy to make up the Bride of Christ. When the time comes to "judge the world in righteousness" Christ's Bride, His joint-heirs, will be with Him to assist in the great work of the kingdom—"Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?"—1 Cor. 6:2.

While we have in mind the helpful thought of the Lord judging the world in righteousness in the resurrection day, which

will be God's Best for the majority of mankind on the restored earth, some Old Testament prophecies add further helpful pictures in confirmation of the glad tidings to come. We remember also the joyful message proclaimed at the birth of our Saviour—"Good tidings of great joy, which shall be **to all people**"—Luke 2:10. Few people really understand this message given at the birth of the Babe of Bethlehem. It was proclaimed to be "to all people", just as God promised to Abraham—"In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed"—Gen. 22:18. One prophecy in Micah 4:1-4 is of special interest—"In the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain (kingdom) of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains . . . And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem." Zion will be the spiritual phase of the kingdom, and Jerusalem will be the centre of the earthly administration. "And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off;

and they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the LORD of hosts hath spoken it." As this prophecy is sealed by the Lord Himself, we know for sure it will be fulfilled. Other important prophecies are found in Isa. 11:1-9; Isa. 25:6-9; Isa. 52:9, 10, which please read.

Another outstanding prophecy is recorded in Ezek: 37:1-5, 11-14, in which is described the restoration of Israel in the resurrection day. Quoting from verse 11—"Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost; we are cut off for our parts. Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves.

And shall put my spirit in you, and you shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the LORD have spoken it, and performed it, saith the LORD." What we have pictured in this prophecy in Ezekiel agrees so fully with the lesson our Lord gave us in the raising of Lazarus by the power of God. Who will doubt that **God's Best is yet to come**, for the blessing of the poor groaning creation, all humanity, pictured by the restoration of Israel in these inspiring prophecies.

As previously noted, there are to be two distinct resurrections of mankind—those who have done good, and those who have not done good. We have also seen that those who have not done good in the present life are to be resurrected and instructed and guided in righteousness, that by accepting Christ's sacrifice they may then gain lasting life on the restored earth. They will then experience God's best blessings that would have been the case had disobedience by Adam not brought sin and death upon all his family. This is well confirmed in the words of the Apostle in 1 Cor. 15:21, 22—"For since by man (Adam) came death, by man

(Christ) came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." Then verse 23—"But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his presence." Here again we have two resurrections clearly indicated—Christ the firstfruits, and those who became Christ's at His presence or kingdom.

In considering those who have done good, described as "Christ the firstfruits", some verses in Acts 2:29-34 are quite helpful, as they reveal the time when those who have done good throughout the Gospel Age began to be selected from the day of Pentecost onward. In this passage in Acts 2 the Apostle Peter gives a contrast between our Lord and David, as follows—"Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did

see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the holy spirit, he hath shed forth this (the outpouring of the holy spirit), which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens." We see how clearly Peter declares that our Lord Jesus went to the Bible hell (the condition of death), which is important to understand. He went there to redeem all mankind out of the Bible hell; His soul was not left in hell; no, indeed, God raised Him from death on the third day, and all mankind are to be raised from death, the Bible hell, because Christ tasted death for them. Verse 33 is most important—Peter said, This blessing of the holy spirit is the result of Jesus ascending to heaven into the presence of God, and then the power of God gave witness that Jesus' sacrifice was accepted on behalf of humanity, and the first benefit derived from His sacrifice was the outpouring of the spirit at Pentecost, to commence the selection of the New Creation, the Church, for the heavenly calling. That Pentecostal

blessing of the holy spirit marked the beginning of the sons of God of the Gospel Age, whereas previously the Lord's people were servants only.

What a helpful contrast is shown between verses 32 and 34. In the former—"This Jesus hath God raised up", and in the latter verse—"David is not ascended into the heavens." No, indeed, David's sepulchre was with them, Peter says, on the day of Pentecost. The same is still true, David is not ascended into the heavens, and will never be raised to heaven. He is still in the death condition, but we rejoice that he will be raised early in the Kingdom Age, and be one of the "Princes in all the earth"—Psa. 45:16—to administer the earthly phase of the kingdom. What a wonderful "Prince" David will be, along with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Moses, and all the Ancient Worthies who will direct the "new earth" under the power of Christ and His Church as the "new heavens."

Towards the end of our Lord's earthly ministry, He began to prepare His disciples for the time when He must leave them, well knowing that He would suffer

death and be raised back to the spiritual life He enjoyed previously with His Heavenly Father. To convey this information to the disciples was not at all easy, as they thought only of an earthly kingdom to Lord was doing Peter wanted to be with be established and themselves installed with Him in power on the earth. Jesus had been speaking openly about going away, as in John 13:33 we read—"Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you." Our Lord had told the Jews previously that He was going away, and then, talking to His disciples, He said—"I say the same to you; I am going away." Verse 36—"Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards." That was a lovely assurance to Peter. Peter wished to go with the Lord there and then; whatever the Him. When the Lord walked on the water, Peter went out to meet Him, and becoming afraid he began to sink, and the Lord had to save Peter, but—"thou shalt follow me afterwards" would be encouraging indeed, to Peter. However, Peter had to be shown

his own weakness in denying his Lord soon after, but the Lord forgave him and reinstated him in His service with the words—"Feed my sheep, feed my lambs"—John 21:15-17—so that Peter could follow the Lord afterwards. That will be the same for all the faithful followers of the Master who prove worthy, even unto death. That will be God's Best yet to come for all true and faithful consecrated followers of Christ; as with Peter, they will follow the Master afterwards, to the heavenly inheritance.

Our Lord's message in John 14:1-3, is so helpful for all His followers who, during the Gospel Age, consecrate their lives fully to His service, even unto death. "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." That is a lovely assurance, which our Lord gave on the last night of His earthly life. Verse 19 in this same chapter 14 of John adds weight to the promise of the heavenly

“place” to which Jesus was going away to prepare for His Church. “Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye (shall) see me; because I live, ye shall live also.”

The world of mankind will see Jesus no more; He is not coming back again in human form, for He is now in “the express image of God”—Heb. 1:3—but the faithful overcomers will see Him because they are going to live and reign with Him. From verse 20 in this same chapter of John we read—“At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you. He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him. Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how it is that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?” That’s quite a good question, which Jesus answered in verse 23—“Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.” God and Christ will dwell with us, in our hearts by their

spirits, which is experienced now by all devoted footstep followers of the Master. This is not enjoyed by the world of mankind, in the present life.

We call to mind that these verses being reviewed in John 14 were spoken on the night prior to Jesus' sacrificial death on the cross. He had already given them the Memorial Supper, and was telling His disciples about going away, assuring them, however, that His peace would be with them—"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither yet it be afraid. Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I"—verses 27, 28. How could they rejoice to lose their Master? However, if they loved Him truly, they would rejoice, because He was going back Home! He had come down from heaven to redeem humanity; He had surrendered over 30 years of spiritual fellowship with the Father, to grow up to manhood from the Babe of Bethlehem, to be 30 years of age, and then begin His ministry. Now, He was about to

return to the Father, to the heavenly courts. If they really loved Him they would rejoice, because He was going Home to God! How could they? They could not rise to the occasion; the joy Jesus would experience in returning to the Father did not register with them, but later no doubt it did—"for the Father is greater than I."

Following our Lord's interview with the rich young ruler, in Matthew 19, we have a helpful passage with reference to the heavenly reward for faithful Christians. The rich young ruler wanted to know about gaining eternal life; the Lord told him to keep the Law. He said he had kept it from his youth up. Then Jesus told him to sell all that he had and give to the poor, and come and follow Him and he would have reward in heaven. This young man had much riches, and he could not undertake what was required at that time. Reading from Matt. 19:23—"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." We know what the Lord meant.

Within the large gates into the cities of the East, there was a small gate called the "needle's eye", and it was easier for a camel to have his load removed, and crawl in through this small gate on his knees, after the large gate was closed at night, than for a rich man to enter heaven. However, if a rich man will unburden his riches, and devote his life, consecrate his life to God, it is possible to gain the heavenly reward. From verse 25—"When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved? But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible. Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore? And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." "In the regeneration"—that word "regeneration" means the giving of new life. When the world of mankind are being regenerated, being resurrected from death, the Lord's true followers will be with Him, to assist in

restoring humanity to life—calling them back from the land of the enemy. What a work is in store for all the faithful followers of the Master! The words of the Psalmist come to mind—“Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of men”—Psa. 90:3.

Strangely enough, some believers in the Lord find it difficult to grasp that true Christians are even invited to the heavenly inheritance, which Jesus said He was going away to prepare for them. When we consider what happened at Pentecost, with the out-pouring of the holy spirit upon the Apostles, and truly consecrated Christians ever since, we know for sure that is what Pentecost was for—to commence the “so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him”—Heb. 2:3. If there had not been a Pentecost, there would never have been an invitation for the heavenly kingdom. If all mankind, including Christ’s followers, were to live on the earth, there would never have been a Pentecost for the outpouring of the holy spirit, for the begetting of those who will have the new, spiritual life with Christ. There are to be

two distinct salvations—a general salvation for mankind as a whole, for all mankind on the earth during the Kingdom Age, and “so great salvation” for the faithful overcomers in the Christian calling for the heavenly inheritance.

Some helpful Scriptures clearly show that the heavenly calling commenced when the holy spirit was poured out from the day of Pentecost onwards, and the holy spirit is still being poured out upon God’s servants and handmaidens for the heavenly calling. It will also be poured out upon all flesh in the Kingdom Age, but not yet. Turning to Heb. 3:1 we read—“Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers (sharers) of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.” Romans 6:3-5 is also helpful—“Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?” Not baptized in water; no, “baptized into Christ’s death”—water baptism is merely the symbol of the reality. “Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his (Christ's) death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection"—the likeness of the resurrection to the Father's right hand.

From Romans 8:14-17 we read in similar strain—"For as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit of sonship, whereby we cry Abba, Father. The spirit itself (God's spirit) beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God. And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." "Joint-heirs with Christ"—down here on the earth? Not at all! How could Christians be joint-heirs on the earth, when Christ is in "the express image of the Father's person?"—Heb. 1:3. The word "Christian" is often used too broadly. The term Christian means "anointed follower of Christ", anointed with the holy spirit, and all who are not anointed with the holy spirit will certainly be on the earth in the resurrection, even though perhaps called Christians now.

For all truly consecrated Christians who will be joint-heirs with Christ, the anointing of the holy spirit is essential for the new spiritual life to begin in this life, that the New Creature may develop during the earthly pilgrimage, in preparation for the new spiritual birth, in the likeness of Christ Himself, as described by the Apostle John in 1 John 3:1-3—"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God; therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." What an amazing prospect! Christ's true followers are now the sons of God, children of God; not children of Christ; no, children of God, and even Christ is not ashamed to call all such His brethren—Heb. 2:11. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the Head Son amongst the "many sons" the Heavenly Father delights to bring to glory—Heb. 2:10.

It will be seen, that **God's Best yet to come**, to bless all the families of the earth, promised to Abraham so long ago, is sure of fulfilment, through Abraham's spiritual seed, even Christ and the Church. Christ was first of all the spiritual seed of Abraham, and the Apostle declared—"If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise"—Gal. 3:16, 29. Thus, with Christ's Kingdom established with the "new heavens and new earth" operating throughout this planet earth, shall our Lord's prayer be answered—"Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." Praise God from whom all blessings flow, for His wonderful Plan for the redemption of humanity, because Jesus Christ, "by the grace of God tasted death for every man."

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