

From Time To Eternity

Introduction:

One of the reasons why the Bible is such a wonderful book is that it contains so much original information. There are some things that we can know by studying the Bible that we could never know were it not for the revelation of God. For instance, from where did man come, and where is he going? In this lesson this morning, we want to emphasize the second part of that question. The Bible gives the answer. The Bible gives us information that involves things from time to eternity.

Lesson:

- I. We are living in an age of time. Time is determined by the revolution of heavenly bodies. And while time exist two things are certain: people will be born and people will die. In the case of each one of us as individuals, time began when we were conceived in our mother's womb and were born into this world. And time, as we know it, will end for us when we die (*i.e. if Christ doesn't come back first*). So, let's begin this morning discussing what happens during this period that we call time, i.e., the period between birth and death.

A) Birth - The first great event in our existence is of course, being physically born. The question that needs to be asked and that is germane to our discussion this morning is, "Are people born sinners or innocent?" While Calvinism would have you to believe we are born sinners, the scriptural answer is that we are born innocent. Sin is not inheritable. The only thing that we have inherited from Adam is a fleshly nature characterized by the same strength and weakness that characterized his fleshly nature. No, we are not declared guilty because of the sin of someone else. That would be unjust and unfair, and we do not serve such a God (**Ez. 18:4, 19-20**). The truth is there is undeniable evidence in scripture that we are not born in sin (**Rom. 7:9; 1 Cor. 14:20; 1 Jn. 3:4**). My question to Calvinists is this: if infants are born sinners, what sin have they committed? If they have committed no sin, what you have is sinless sinners. That's a ridiculous doctrine.

B) All sin - Now, as it happens, babies grow into children, and children grow into a state of knowing right and wrong, i.e., they reach the age of accountability. At that point they are confronted with the decision to sin or to refrain from sin. So far no one, saved our Savior, has made the right choice at that time, for the Bible affirms that all have sinned. So then, all who have reached the age of accountability, have been plunged, as a result of their transgressions, into the realm of spiritual darkness; into the realm over which Satan is god and in which he holds captives captive. And let it be noted that this can be blamed on no one but the one who has sinned (**Jas. 1:13-16**). The question that arises, then, is, "What should we do?"

C) Obey the gospel - If one dies without obeying the gospel, he is lost forever. But if one obeys the gospel, he receives the remission of his sins and enters into Christ. Now believe me, that's where you want to be. In Christ there is no condemnation (**Rom. 8:1**). In Christ there is hope in death (**Rev. 14:13**). In Christ there is access to all spiritual

blessings (**Eph. 1:3; 2:10ff**). So, through obedience to the simple gospel plan, one is translated out of the darkness he got into when he first sinned, and translated into the kingdom of God (**Col. 1:13; 1 Pet. 2:9**). Now again, one who refuses to do this, will remain in a state of sin and darkness until time runs out. At that point he will be lost forever.

D) Growing and living faithfully in Christ - Finally, in the kingdom of God one is a new creature (**2 Cor. 5:17**). He now has the responsibility to grow and live faithfully into death (**2 Pet. 1:5-11; Gal. 5:4; 1 Cor. 10:12; Rev. 2:10ff**).

- II. Now we are ready to talk about death and what happens after one dies. Physical death occurs when the spirit is separated from the body (**Jas. 2:26** - **“For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also”**). Now we learn by revelation, as well as by experience, that death is no respecter of persons. Everyone must experience the cruel taste of death (**Heb. 9:27; 1 Pet. 1:23-25**). So the question is “what happens on the other side of death?” “Where do we go from death?” The Bible gives us the answer. We go to the *hadean* realm. We do not go immediately to heaven or hell, we go to *hades*. Hades is the realm of the unseen; the place where spirits go when the body dies.

A) Hades divided - There are two sections in Hades. One is called *paradise* or *Abraham’s Bosom*. The other section is called *tartarus*. As one lives on earth on this side of time, he determines where he will go to await the resurrection and judgment. Paradise is a place of comfort for the faithful (**Lk. 16:22-23; Acts 2:27, 31; Lk. 23:39-43; Mt. 16:18**). Tartarus is a place of torment for the unfaithful (**Lk. 16:23; 28; 2 Pet. 2:4, 9; Jude 6**). So, all the faithful from the kingdom of God, as well as those who are not held accountable by God (*infants; mentally handicapped*), will go to paradise. And all the unfaithful in the kingdom, as well as those who never obey the gospel, will go to TARTARUS (**2 Thess. 1:8, 9**).

B) No crossing - In **Lk. 16:26** we find that one cannot cross from one section of *hades* to another. After death your abode is fixed until judgment. There is no second chance.

- III. The next thing to discuss is the end time. When Jesus returns all the dead will be raised and the alive changed (**Heb. 9:28; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; Jn. 5:28, 29; 1 Cor. 15**). At that time this world as we know it will end (**2 Pet 3:10-12**). Next will come the judgment in which there will be a formal pronouncement of the eternal destiny of every soul (**Matt. 7:21-23; Acts 17:30, 31; 2 Cor. 5:10; Rom. 14:10-12**). Finally, we have the faithful going to their eternal reward in heaven (**1 Pet. 1:3, 4; 2 Tim. 4:6-8**), and the unfaithful going to their final destination in hell [*Ghenna*] where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth (**Rev. 20:10-15**).

Conclusion:

So, that is a Biblical look at conditions from time to eternity. Obviously we cannot change or do anything before time, i.e., before we are born. Certainly once we leave the realm of time and go into eternity, all things are out of our control for our destiny at that point is sealed. Therefore, we must be concerned with what we can do now while we are in the age of time (**Jn. 9:4; 2 Cor. 6:2**). What will you do?