**Lesson: The Second Death**

 The Holy Bible speaks of death, life after death, and then a second death. We all live, die, and are revived at the last day to receive judgment. Some will inherit eternal life, and the rest will die again, a second time, for the last time. The former group will live in a new heaven and earth, but the latter group will die out with the old heaven and earth. In physics is explained the phenomenon of entropy, heat death, the end of the universe. The Bible also informs that heaven and earth will pass away. It seems science and scripture have once again converged upon the truth regarding the passing of heaven and earth. For the chosen however, all will become new.

* REV 20:14–15 ~ Death and hell were thrown into the lake of fire: this is the second death. Anyone not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire.
* REV 21:1,6,8,27 ~ And I (John) saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and earth had passed away... The fearful, unbelieving and abominable; murderers, whoremongers and sorcerers; idolaters and liars—they all will have a part of the lake of fire that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.
* REV 21:10,23–27 ~ God carried me (John) away in the spirit to a large and high mountain, and showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God... The city had no need of the sun or the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it and the Lamb is its lamp. The nations which are saved will walk in the light of it; kings of the earth will bring their honor and glory into it. Its gates will never be secured, for there will be no night. Access will be denied to things which could defile, or work abomination, or create a lie, but given only to those people who are written in the Lamb’s book of life.

Here it is: one group lives the other dies. In which group are you? Be assured, if you are not sure, you are in the second group and will experience the second death. If you are in the first group, you also know; because you have accepted the atonement of Christ, cleansed by the blood of the Lamb. Aware of the wrath of God which awaits the unrepentant sinner, it comes as a surprise to me the mere numbers of people who are in denial of God’s judgment or have rejected His salvation. They have much to be afraid of, especially death; fear only God and have nothing to be afraid of, especially death.

* MAT 10:28 ~ Jesus said, “Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, fear Him who can destroy both soul and body in hell.”
* REV 20:1–13 ~ The devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and false prophet are, to be tormented day and night forever and ever. And I (John) saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose face the earth and heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. The dead, small and great, stood before God; and the books were opened, and another book was opened: the book of life. The dead were judged from the things written in the books, in accordance with their works. The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and hell delivered up their dead as well; and they were judged according to their works.

You see, if you try to be saved by your own works you will be judged by those works; nobody can save themselves regardless of the abundance of their good works. That is why believers rely on the perfect work of Christ. You can be judged by works or by faith, but as you can see, the only works that count were those of Jesus Christ. Your works mean nothing, except those done in obedience to God, which is by faith. Simply put, your good works will never earn salvation because it’s free; however, being saved will lead you into works of obedience, in which case you will be judged by the righteousness of Christ.

* JDE 1:4–8 ~ Certain men have secretly crept in, who were ordained for condemnation; ungodly men, who turned the grace of God into lasciviousness, denying the only true God and our Lord Jesus Christ. I (Jude) remind you that you know this, how the Lord saved the people out the land of Egypt but afterwards destroyed them when they ceased to believe. Also, angels who did not keep their first estate (in heaven) but left their habitation are reserved in everlasting chains under darkness until the great day of judgment. Same as Sodom and Gomorrah and nearby cities which gave into fornication and deviant sex, they are an example of the ones suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. Also included are those filthy dreamers who defile their bodies, despise authority, and speak evil of the righteous.
* JDE 1:11–13 ~ Such as these speak evil of that which they know nothing about; but with what they know instinctually, as animals, they corrupt themselves. Woe unto them, for they have taken the wayward path (of Cain), consumed by greed for an earthly reward (like Balaam), only to perish in their rebellion (as with Core). These people tarnish your charitable feasts, while they engorge themselves without concern. They are clouds without water carried away by the wind, trees without fruit that wither away—twice dead, plucked up by the roots. They are as raging waves foaming with shame, or wandering stars which are resigned to blackness forever.
* REV 2:10–11 ~ Jesus said, “Do not fear the things that you will suffer, for the devil will throw you into prison, to be tried, and you will have tribulation ten days. But be faithful unto death and I will give you a crown of life. Those with and ear let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches: Whoever overcomes will not be hurt by the second death.”

 Who doesn’t wonder if we are in the last times? Well, those who don’t care. It is written: you cannot love God and mammon (MAT 6:19–24; LUK 16:1–13). What is mammon? It encompasses worldly wealth and possessions. In other words, you can choose to love the world or to love God (JAM 4:4; 1 JO 4:6–8). If you love the world you die with it; if you love God you live with Him. Either way, it’s forever. I pray for those who do not care; I hope they will see the light and discover the truth. For many, they don’t want to know the truth, they don’t desire God, and they choose to do everything their way; but that way will take them down.

* DEU 7:9–10 ~ Know this, that the Lord your God is a faithful God who keeps His covenant of love and mercy to a thousand generations, with those who love Him and keep His commandments. He will repay those who hate Him to their face, and will destroy them; He will give them no slack.
* JER 29:11 ~ God says: I know the plans that I have for you, to give you peace and not evil, so you can have a future.
* 1 JO 2:15–17 ~ Do not love the world or the things in it. If anybody loves the world, the love of the Father is not in them. All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the greed of the eyes, and the pride of life is not of the Father but of the world. And the world passes away; but those who do the will of God will abide forever.

 Jesus said, “In the last days things are going to get progressively worse, even worse than the times of Lot [destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah] and Noah [destruction of the entire earth].” Note there were very few survivors when God brought wrath down upon humankind during these two occasions. What do you think lies in store for those who behave so immorally that it will be the worst of times? Remember, you are either of God or of the world (JOH 15:18–19); you either love God or mammon (MAT 6:24). In the end, the world will be in such tribulation, God may save His people out of it (JER 30:7; MAT 24:21–22); then again, there may be some who must endure it (ERV 2:10).

 Dreadful times are coming (2 TI 3:1). It is possible the Antichrist has arrived. Could this be the beginning of the end, the beginning of sorrows (MAT 24)? I’m sure generations before have thought this. Notice how all of God’s Ten Commandments are being violated left and right already. Is this worse than ever before? In my observation, everything appears to be going downhill fast.

1. Placing the world or worldly things before God is in violation of the first commandment.
2. Idolizing or worshipping other gods, people or self violates the second.
3. Rejecting the Holy Spirit in favor of a life of disobedience is violating the third.
4. Defaming God’s truth and Holy Word blasphemes His name, in violation of the fourth.
5. Dishonor and disrespect of those placed over you violates the fifth.
6. Taking a life indiscriminately, regardless of age, is murder.
7. Having sex outside of matrimony (between husband and wife) is adultery.
8. Taking something by force that is not yours is stealing.
9. Lying, deceit, and nonfactual testimony are bearing false witness.
10. Desiring something or someone forbidden to you is covetousness.

 Okay, maybe we have violated all ten at least once in our lives, but nowadays people are violating them all continuously. Naturally, it only takes one sin to be outside of God’s Law, which is why everyone needs to be saved from themselves. The smart ones are choosing Christ and therefore, life. People and governments trying to eliminate your freedom, livelihood, and choices are among the latter group choosing death; you know, the ones loving mammon. But they’ll never be satisfied, always wanting more, trying to control everything and everyone. In simple terms, they are globalists, though known by many other names (e.g., communists, socialists, fascists, statists, anarchists, jihadists, and the list goes on). It is tyranny, any way you look at it: people dictating to you that which you must do or else. Sound familiar? They will grab it all and squander it like preceding empires which fell due to massive corruption, with the last global empire already screaming down the road (REV 17:10–11). This is the very scenario our nation’s founders fought against and warned it could happen again. It is happening now, by the look of it. That is why God’s Word needs to reach the world.

* PSA 63:1 ~ Oh God, you are my God; I will seek you every morning. My soul thirsts for you, my flesh longs for you in a dry and thirsty land where there is no water.
* AMO 8:11–12 ~ Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord God, when I will send a famine in the land; not a famine of bread or a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord. People will wander from coast to coast, from the north to the east, running to-and-fro seeking the Word of the Lord, but will not find it.
* MAT 5:6 ~ Jesus said, “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.”
* MAT 24:14 ~ Jesus said, “The gospel of the kingdom will be preached throughout the world as a witness to every nation; then the end will come.”
* MAR 16:15 ~ Jesus said, “Go into the world and preach the gospel to everyone. Those who believe will be saved, and those who do not will be damned.”
* JOH 6:35 ~ Jesus said, “I am the bread of life; those who come to me will never hunger, and those who believe me will never thirst.”

 People often brag about how they intend to live life to the fullest. Rarely are they talking about life after death; they are usually referring to this life and this world. It reminds me of a parable Jesus taught (LUK 12:16–21) about the guy who had it made and decided to “eat, drink, and be merry.” Then God said to him, “Fool, tonight your soul will be required from you.” Jesus stated that this would be the fate of people who collect earthly treasures for themselves but are not rich towards God. Yeah, you can gather riches and party until you drop or until they turn out the lights; either way, that is how it ends. But in heaven, the celebration never ends and the light is never turned off.

 It is easier to live life to the fullest on this planet if you have the Holy Spirit guiding you. A godly person does not have to forfeit pleasure, success, happiness, or desire; all these can be had in accordance with God’s will. Those believing sin is fun are misguided, because you can have fun without sinning, whereas sin results in penalties, natural and spiritual. One can be fulfilled in this life and in the next, and that would be living life to the fullest. If you constantly indulge the evil desires of your mind and body or make this life a continuous blast, you will go down in flames when it runs out. The self-indulgent appease only themselves; they do not intend to please God, because they would rather be their own god, make their own rules, and have their own way (JDE 1:18–19). To them, God, faith, and obedience are a huge burden. And since they do not want God, they will get their wish, permanently banned from His presence.

* PSA 68:1–2 ~ Let God arise, let His enemies be scattered; let them who hate God flee before Him. As smoke is driven away, so drive them away; as wax melts before the fire, let the wicked perish at the presence of God. But let the righteous be glad; let them rejoice before God exceedingly.
* JER 23:36–40 ~ The burden of the Lord will be mentioned no more, since every man’s word will be his burden. For you have perverted the words of the living God, the Lord of hosts. Say to the prophet, “How has the Lord answered you, and what did God say?” But you said, “The burden of the Lord” after God told you not to say that. Therefore, I (God) will utterly forget you, and I will forsake you and the city I gave to you and your fathers, and I will cast you out of my presence. I will bring an everlasting reproach upon you, with perpetual shame that will not be forgotten.

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