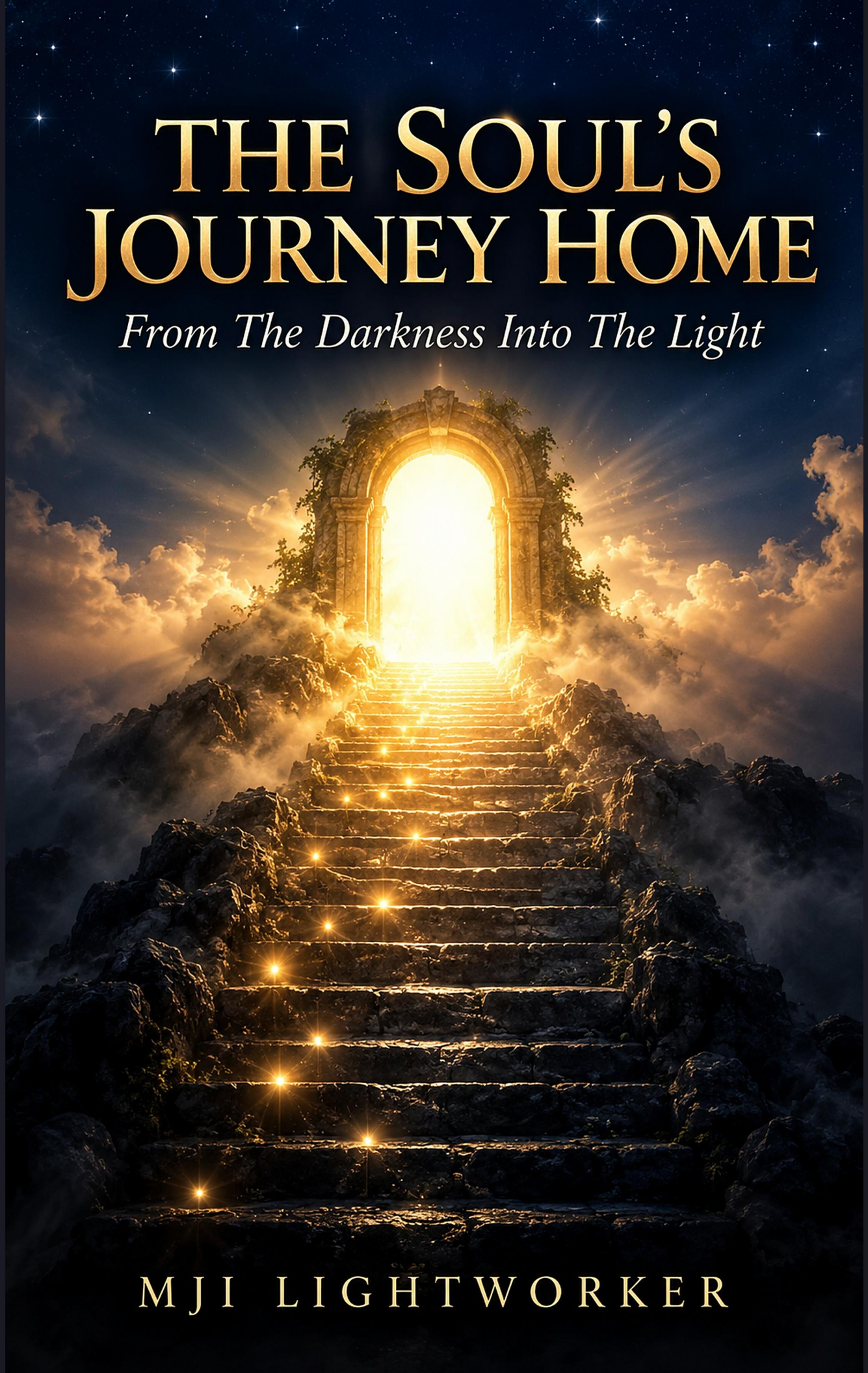
THE SOUL'S JOURNEY HOME

From The Darkness Into The Light



MJI LIGHTWORKER

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Before You Begin

Most of what we were taught about God, the soul, and what happens after death was built on fear. This book reads the King James Bible again, whole and in context. Here is what you will find, stated plainly up front, so you can test every word of it as you go:

- You are not far from God. You never were.
- You did not begin at your birth, and you will not end at your grave.
- You came into the flesh not as a punishment, but to learn. Knowledge becomes wisdom only by being lived.
- The separation you feel is a veil over the mind, not a wall between you and God.
- The Father judges no man. The soul judges itself, so that it can learn.
- Heaven and hell are not addresses. They are states the soul lives within itself.
- The verses used to frighten you, read in their own words and setting, do not say what you were told.
- God wills all to be saved, and God does not fail to do His will.
- Fear was never the message. Love was always the message.

Do not take any of this on my word. Open your own Bible. Read the verses around the verses. Then decide for yourself.

Introduction

Most of us were taught that we are far from God: born separated from Him, judged from above, and in danger of being lost forever. These six studies read the King James Bible again, whole and in context, and find a different story. It is the story of a soul that came forth from the Father, entered the flesh to learn, and is on its way home.

Part One, Why The Soul Enters The Body, asks why an eternal soul would come into a body of flesh at all, and finds that the flesh is the classroom where knowledge becomes wisdom.

Part Two, What Separation?, shows that the separation we feel is a veil, not a reality. In Him we live, and move, and have our being.

Part Three, Ultimate Freewill, shows that the soul is free, that it judges itself so that it can learn, and that God, being one with the soul, cannot condemn Himself.

Part Four, The Fear Verses, takes the verses most often used to frighten people and reads them in their own setting and their own words.

Part Five, The Eternal Soul, shows that the soul was known before the womb and goes on after the grave, through more than one housing, and that heaven and hell are states the soul carries within, not places it is sent.

Part Six, The Guarantee Of Salvation, gathers the promises, the oath, and the mercy of God that settle where every soul's journey ends.

Each part can be read on its own, but they were written to be read together, in order: from the darkness into the light.

> "*I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.*" (*John* 16:28)

PART ONE

Why The Soul Enters The Body

How The Soul Turns Knowledge Into Wisdom

Have you ever noticed how one day can carry you from dread to relief, from shame to peace, and back again? Most of us never stop to ask why we feel these things at all. We just live inside whatever feeling has hold of us.

Here is something almost no one points out: every one of those feelings has an opposite sitting in the same place inside you. Across from fear is not just calm. It is a safety that can never give way. Across from shame is not just confidence. It is a worth that was never in question. You have felt both ends of nearly every pair. So ask yourself: why were you made able to feel both?

> "*And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good.*" (Genesis 1:31)

Whole. Finished. Nothing missing. So why would a soul made that complete ever need a body that can feel fear, shame, and grief?

Here is the short answer. Being given something good is not the same as choosing it, and you cannot choose something unless there is something real to choose it against. The rest of this study walks through that one step at a time, in Scripture's own words.

The Difference Between Knowing And Having Lived

The soul does not come into the flesh because something went wrong. It comes because knowing a thing, however completely, is not the same as having lived it.

A person can read everything ever written about swimming and still go under the first time real water closes over their head. What they knew had never been tested. Wisdom is knowledge that has been tested and held. Scripture says it plainly:

> "*Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.*" (James 1:3)

In the spirit, before the flesh, there is nothing to test against. Nothing is missing there. Everything good is whole, and it is lived, not just known. But something that has never been tested cannot be chosen; it can only be. So the soul enters a body of flesh, time, and limits, so that what was already whole can also be chosen, and what was given can become proven.

The Flesh States And What They Point Back To

Every hard feeling in the flesh comes from the ego. The ego is not a mistake. It is the small, separate self that a body is built around, the "me" a soul takes on when it enters a body it can lose. The ego does five jobs, and each job has its own feelings. Next to each, look at what that same energy becomes when it relaxes.

The ego's first job is **protecting itself**. Fear, anxiety, dread, suspicion, terror, and hesitation are all a body guarding itself from something that could destroy it. Relaxed, that same energy becomes safety, trust, security, and certainty.

Its second job is **keeping track of the body**. Tiredness, pain, restlessness, hunger, and sluggishness are the ego watching over a body with limits. Relaxed, that awareness becomes wholeness, energy, rest, and simply being.

Its third job is **measuring its own worth**. Guilt, shame, pride, remorse, and embarrassment are the ego weighing itself against some standard. Relaxed, that measuring becomes full acceptance of yourself, a worth that cannot be lost, and innocence.

Its fourth job is **reacting to a world it cannot control**. Sadness, grief, anger, frustration, resentment, envy, and despair all come from bumping into things outside of us. Relaxed, that reacting becomes peace, harmony, compassion, and kindness.

Its fifth job **gives the whole design away**. Happiness, joy, gratitude, wonder, and peace show up exactly when the ego's grip loosens, if only for a moment. Loosened all the way, that becomes bliss, unconditional love, and oneness. That is why the goal was never to destroy the ego. It is to loosen it on purpose, by choice, instead of only in the rare moments when joy does it for us.

Knowledge Becomes Wisdom Only Through Trial

Paul names how it works:

> "*And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope:*" (Romans 5:3-4)

Hebrews says even the Son learned this way:

> "*Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;*" (Hebrews 5:8)

If obedience had to be learned through suffering even there, it is not learned any other

way. Jesus named the two natures we live with:

> "*Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.*" (Matthew 26:41)

And Paul draws the line between knowing about something and being built by it:

> "*Now as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth. And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.*" (1 Corinthians 8:1-2)

What we know in our heads, if it has never cost us anything, is not yet what Scripture calls wisdom.

Freewill Needs Real Stakes

A choice only teaches us something if it matters. Souls could choose even in heaven, as Lucifer's fall shows. Each soul is its own self, and that alone makes a different choice possible.

What heaven did not have was the veil. A soul choosing there knows exactly what it stands to lose. The flesh does not create free will. It softens it. Here a soul chooses without seeing everything, so it can choose, stumble, and get back up a little at a time, instead of facing the whole choice at once with nothing hidden. And a choice where nothing is at stake is not really a choice at all.

The Veil

None of this works if the soul remembers where it came from. If you carried full awareness of your eternal safety into the body, fear would have nothing to hold on to, and there would be no real test. Paul describes the condition we live in:

> "*For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.*" (1 Corinthians 13:12)

The veil is not a punishment or an accident. It is what lets the choice be real while it is being made. And as the veil lifts, that is how we know a soul is growing, not because anything underneath has changed, but because the soul is finally seeing what was always true.

The Mercy Of Waiting

Waiting is a mercy, and it is something the spirit does not have. God holds every

moment at once:

> "*I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.*" (Revelation 1:8)

The Holy Spirit knows before and after, but it holds them as one present moment instead of living through long stretches of waiting the way the flesh must. That waiting is exactly what makes life in the flesh gentle enough to learn from. A soul choosing in time gets to wait, wonder, and change its mind before the outcome lands, instead of carrying the whole weight of a choice all at once. It is the same mercy as the veil, worked out through time instead of through hiddenness.

Virtue Needs Its Opposite

Courage means nothing where nothing can threaten. Forgiveness has nothing to forgive where no one can be wronged. Compassion has nothing to answer where no one suffers. Paul sets what the flesh produces beside what the Spirit produces, and each one shows us the other:

> "*Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these … hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings … But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.*" (Galatians 5:19-23)

Why Negativity Is Necessary

None of the flesh's heavier feelings is a power of its own, standing against the good. Each one is the good, squeezed down as it passes through a body with a veil and limits. Fear is safety not yet trusted. Shame is worth not yet accepted. Despair is joy the flesh has lost sight of. Nothing on the negative side has any substance of its own. It is the good, contracted, the way a muscle tightens or a balloon loses air.

That matters, because it keeps us from picturing two powers, one good and one evil, locked in a fight forever. There is one reality, the good, and one condition acting on it, the flesh under the veil.

But knowing that does not make the hard feelings weightless while we are in them. If a soul could always tell that its fear was only trust not yet arrived, the fear would have no force, and choosing trust would cost nothing. The same veil that hides where we came from is what makes the fear feel total while it lasts. It has to feel real for the choice against it to mean anything. And when a soul chooses trust over fear, it is not defeating an enemy. It is taking back what the flesh only ever squeezed, never actually lost.

The Stairway Between Opposites

Picture every pair of opposites as a single stairway. Fear stands at the bottom step and trust at the top, and in between are all the feelings a soul passes through on the way: worry, unease, caution, hope, calm, confidence. They are not different things. They are one energy at different vibrations, lower near the bottom, higher near the top.

That is why no soul has to leap from terror to perfect peace in a single bound. It climbs. One step of trust where there used to be worry. One choice to forgive where there used to be a grudge. On a hard day a soul may slip down a few steps, but the stairway is still there, and so is the next step up.

Jacob saw it in a dream:

> "*And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it.*" (Genesis 28:12)

A ladder set on the earth and reaching to heaven, with movement going both ways. That is the life of a soul in the flesh. And when Jacob woke, he said:

> "*Surely the LORD is in this place; and I knew it not.*" (Genesis 28:16)

God was at the bottom of the ladder the whole time. The climb was never toward a God who was far away. It was toward seeing the One who was already there. Scripture describes the direction of the climb:

> "*But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.*" (Proverbs 4:18)

More and more, not all at once. Every step up is the good loosened a little further, and the soul a little closer to the light it never left.

The Purpose Of The Earth

Scripture calls this a task, not a punishment:

> "*And I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things that are done under heaven: this sore travail hath God given to the sons of man to be exercised therewith.*" (Ecclesiastes 1:13)

And Paul weighs the hard work against what it produces:

> "*For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.*" (Romans 8:18)

> "*For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.*" (2 Corinthians 4:17-18)

Oneness Within Individuality

The flesh does one more thing. It makes us feel separate, alone, shut inside our own skin. That feeling is real as an experience and false as a fact. Part Two will show this in full; here is the heart of it. There is nowhere a soul can be outside of God:

> "*Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?*" (Psalm 139:7)

Paul's picture for this is a body, not a wall:

> "*For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.*" (1 Corinthians 12:12)

A hand does not stop being a hand by having its own shape and its own work. It simply has no life of its own apart from what flows through it. Jesus said it even more simply:

> "*I am the vine, ye are the branches*" (John 15:5)

So the individual soul is not a broken-off piece of God trying to find its way back. It is its own self, inside a oneness it never actually left, given its own view, its own choices, and its own results, so that oneness could be lived and not just talked about. Jesus prayed for exactly this, that we "may be made perfect in one" (John 17:23).

The goal was never for the individual to disappear back into the whole. It was for the individual, still fully itself, to wake up to a oneness that was true the whole time.

Heaven, Hell, And What Presses On The Soul

Heaven and hell are not places a soul travels to. They are a distance: how close or how far a soul's inner life sits from the good it came from. Fear, shame, and despair are hell because they are what the good feels like when it is squeezed down. Joy, gratitude, and peace are heaven for the same reason, from the same source, only loosened. Part Five will show this in full.

And that distance is not measured by one standard for everyone. A soul still full of suspicion needs a different trial than a soul close to trusting. What is a real test for one may be nothing at all to another further along. That is not unfair. In a school built for each soul's growth, fair was never going to mean the same conditions for everyone. It

means the conditions each soul actually needs.

None of this denies that real spiritual influences act on a soul from outside, in both directions. On the side of good, angels are sent to help, and the spirit within prompts us:

> "*Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?*" (Hebrews 1:14)

> "*But there is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.*" (Job 32:8)

On the other side, the pull toward separation presses just as really:

> "*For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.*" (Ephesians 6:12)

But influence is not the same as decision. Scripture draws the line of responsibility right here:

> "*Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.*" (James 1:13-14)

Even Christ felt real pressure of this kind without it changing who He was:

> "*For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.*" (Hebrews 4:15)

A soul that gives in to fear under real pressure has still chosen to give in. A soul that holds on to trust under the same pressure has still chosen to hold on.

Scripture already says hell is not cut off from God's reach: "if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there" (Psalm 139:8). And the dwelling Jesus promised is less a future address than a present home within us. The Greek word for "mansions" in John 14:2 is the same word translated "abode" later in the same chapter:

> "*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.*" (John 14:23)

The house with many mansions and the home God makes within a person are, in the original, the same word. And "hell" in our English Bible is not even one word in the

original, as Part Four will show. A single English word standing in for several different ideas is a big part of why people came to think of hell as a place.

Representation, Not Rivalry

Scripture already reads some individuals as carrying more than their own life story. Isaiah spoke against the king of Babylon, and Ezekiel against the king of Tyre. Both were speaking to men, and both said things no man could live up to:

> "*How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!*" (Isaiah 14:12)
>
> "*Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God … Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.*" (Ezekiel 28:13-15)

Christians have long read both passages as describing Lucifer's fall, because the words grow bigger than the man they were spoken to. A real individual carrying a meaning larger than himself is simply how Scripture works.

The same holds true going forward. Jesus is one soul, and Jesus is also the name for the pattern of returning to oneness. Satan and Lucifer are each one soul, and their names carry the pattern of separation, the good turned inward and squeezed down. A soul caught in fear, pride, or deceit is not under attack from a rival god. It is living out, in a small way, the same pattern Lucifer's fall shows in full. A soul choosing trust, humility, or forgiveness is living out the pattern Jesus shows. These are not two forces fighting over territory. One is the good. The other is what the good becomes when it is squeezed down and acted on.

Lucifer's fall also shows, as we saw earlier, that choosing against God began in heaven, not in the flesh. What the flesh adds is the veil, the waiting, and the softer stakes: a gentler form of the same choice. Seen that way, the flesh is not only a classroom. It is a mercy, built in answer to what heaven had already revealed.

There is one Source, God, and a great many souls choosing, moment by moment, which pattern to live out of it.

Forgiveness As The Exam

In the spirit, peace costs nothing, because nothing pulls against it. In the flesh, peace has a price, and paying it is what turns peace from something given into something chosen. Letting go of resentment, forgiving a wrong that still hurts, choosing love while the wound is still fresh: that choice, made in a body that cannot see how things will

turn out, is the real exam this whole design was built for. It is not a side effect of life on earth. It is close to the point of it.

Scripture gives the clearest picture of this, forgiveness chosen from inside the very body that was suffering:

> "*Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.*" (Luke 23:34)

And Paul names it as the pattern every soul is asked to follow:

> "*Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.*" (Colossians 3:13)

In Summary

A soul does not enter the flesh because something went wrong in heaven. It enters because what was whole in the spirit could only be given there, never chosen. The flesh supplies what the spirit could not: a veil that hides where the soul came from, time that softens each choice into steps, and the squeezing of every good thing into its felt opposite, so that trust, worth, and peace can be chosen back against something that feels real. Negativity is not a second power; it is the good, squeezed down. Heaven and hell are not places but the distance between what a soul is living and the love it came from. Influences for good and for evil press on every soul, yet the choosing is always its own. And through all of it, the soul never leaves the oneness it came from. It wakes up to it, still fully itself. Knowledge becomes wisdom only by being lived, and the flesh is where it is lived.

Few of us were ever taught this. How differently might you have understood your own hardest days if you had been?

So What Does This Change Today?

None of this asks you to stop feeling sadness, tiredness, or anger. Those feelings are doing exactly what they were made to do. What changes is what the feeling means. A hard feeling is not proof that something has gone wrong in your life or between you and God. It is the classroom doing its work.

What feeling are you carrying right now, and what sits across from it?

The task is not to escape the feeling before it is finished, but to keep choosing while you are still inside it: patience over collapse, trust over dread, forgiveness over bitterness. That choosing is what the whole design of flesh and spirit was made to

produce.

One last thing needs saying plainly. This only runs one way. The good was never waiting on the flesh to become real. A spirit-soul is not bare knowledge without a body of its own. Scripture says outright, “There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body” (1 Corinthians 15:44).

In that spiritual body, love, joy, and peace are already lived, not just known. Coming into the flesh does not complete heaven or make it more real. What the flesh supplies is the one thing the spirit-body could never produce on its own: contact with the negative, and the chance to choose the good again in spite of it. Wisdom comes from that side alone. The task was never to make heaven real. It was to choose it, once something else had become real enough to make the choice mean something.

PART TWO

What Separation?

God, Creation, and the Soul Are One

Ask almost any Christian how salvation works and you will hear some version of the same story. God is holy and far away. Sin opened a great gap between us and Him. God cannot even look at sin, so He turned His face from us. Now we must seek Him, cross the gap, and get back to Him before it is too late.

It is told so often that few people ever stop to check it. This study does. We will look at where God actually is, what the Bible's "separation" verses really say, what the Hebrew and Greek words mean, and why it can feel so real that we are cut off from God when we are not.

Part One showed why the soul comes into the flesh, and the veil it takes on there. Here we take on the biggest picture that veil produces: the belief that we are separated from God. Part Three will show that, because there is no separation, God cannot condemn Himself, and Part Four will show how fear grows out of that false picture.

> "*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.*" (Acts 17:27-28)

Notice that the verse most used to tell us to seek God says, in the same breath, that He is not far from any of us. We seek Him, and He was never away.

And notice who Paul was speaking to. Not believers, but the idol worshippers of Athens, standing beside their altar "TO THE UNKNOWN GOD" (Acts 17:23). He even quoted their own Greek poets: "For we are also his offspring" (Acts 17:28).

The word is genos: family, kin. Paul told a crowd of pagans that every one of them lives in God and is His kin. The words "feel after him" are pselaphao, to grope the way a blind man feels around a dark room, for Someone who is standing right beside him the whole time.

Where Is God?

Before we can talk about being separated from God, we have to ask a simpler question: where is He? Scripture answers plainly.

> "*Am I a God at hand, saith the* LORD, *and not a God afar off? Can any hide*

himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the LORD. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the LORD." (Jeremiah 23:23-24)

"*Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there.*" (Psalm 139:7-8)

"*One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.*" (Ephesians 4:6)

God fills heaven and earth. There is no place, not even the grave, where He is not. If there is no place where God is not, then there is no place a soul can be that is separate from Him.

And it is not only that God is everywhere. Everything is in Him and held together by Him:

"*For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible... and he is before all things, and by him all things consist.*" (Colossians 1:16-17)

"*For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever.*" (Romans 11:36)

"*In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind.*" (Job 12:10)

Of Him, through Him, to Him. The soul of every living thing is in His hand. That is not separation. That is the opposite of separation.

All of Creation Is One in Him

The oneness is not only between God and the soul. It runs through all of Creation, because all of it came from one Source and lives by one life.

"*All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men.*" (John 1:3-4)

"*Yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast.*" (Ecclesiastes 3:19)

Man and beast share "one breath," the same breath God breathed into Adam (Genesis 2:7). Everything that lives, lives by the one life that is in Him. When we look at a tree, an animal, or a stranger, we are not looking at something separate from God. We are looking at His Creation, held together by Him, full of His glory.

And Creation is not just a backdrop. Scripture speaks of it as alive in its own way, waiting and longing right along with us:

> "*For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God… Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.*" (Romans 8:19, 21-22)

The whole creation groans together, and the whole creation is promised the same liberty. Jesus said that if His disciples held their peace, "the stones would immediately cry out" (Luke 19:40). The psalmist calls on the sun, moon, and stars, the mountains, trees, and beasts to praise the LORD (Psalm 148:3-10). A rock, a tree, an animal, and a person are not alive in the same way or to the same degree. But nothing that comes from the one life is empty of it.

And people are one with each other for the same reason:

> "*Have we not all one father? hath not one God created us? why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother?*" (Malachi 2:10)
>
> "*So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.*" (Romans 12:5)
>
> "*There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.*" (Galatians 3:28)

The Words Behind Oneness

A few words in the original languages open this up even further.

- **Echad (Hebrew):** "One." Israel's great confession is "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one [echad] LORD" (Deuteronomy 6:4). It is the same word used when a man and his wife "shall be one [echad] flesh" (Genesis 2:24): a oneness that holds more than one within it. It is unity, not loneliness.
- **Atonement:** When William Tyndale first translated the Bible into English, he used the word "atonement" in its plain English sense: at-one-ment, making two "at one." In the King James Bible the word appears in the New Testament only once (Romans 5:11), translating the Greek katallage.
- **Katallage and katallasso (Greek):** "Reconciliation," "to reconcile." The word means an exchange, a change from one state to another, restoring harmony. It is something that happens in us. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them" (2 Corinthians 5:19). God is

never the one who needs reconciling. He reconciles the world to Himself.

- **Apallotrioo (Greek):** "Alienated." Paul says people were "alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart" (Ephesians 4:18), and "alienated and enemies in your mind" (Colossians 1:21). The alienation is in the mind, through ignorance and blindness. Not in God.
- **Metanoia (Greek):** "Repentance." Literally a change of mind. If the separation is in the mind, then repentance is the mind changing back to see what was always true.
- **Hamartia (Greek):** "Sin." The word means to miss the mark, like an arrow falling short of the target. Sin is a miss, not a wall. Missing the mark does not move the target.
- **Logizomai (Greek):** "Imputing," to count, to keep an account. It is the "not imputing their trespasses" of 2 Corinthians 5:19 above. God reconciles the world to Himself by not keeping the ledger that would hold a gap open.
- **Hen (Greek):** "One." When Jesus said, "I and my Father are one" (John 10:30), the word is hen. When He prayed "that they all may be one" (John 17:21), it is the very same word. He prayed that we would share the same kind of oneness He has with the Father.
- **Qadosh (Hebrew):** "Holy." Many are taught that "holy" means God is set apart, and therefore separate from us. But listen to what the angels sing in the very same breath: "Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory" (Isaiah 6:3). The Holy One is not away from the earth. He fills it.
- **En pasin (Greek):** "In all." In Ephesians 4:6 the King James reads "in you all." Many of the oldest Greek manuscripts read simply "in all." Either way, God is "above all, and through all, and in" all.

By the Numbers

The King James Bible uses the words "separate," "separated," and "separation" 91 times. Nearly all of them describe setting something apart for God (a Nazarite, the Levites, the holy things) or separating people from one another.

- **One verse:** In the whole Bible, one verse says sins "separated between you and your God": Isaiah 59:2. And in the one other verse that speaks of a man being separated from God, it is the man who does it: he "separateth himself from me, and setteth up his idols in his heart" (Ezekiel 14:7).
- **The New Testament:** The word appears only 11 times in the New Testament, and not once does it say God separates Himself from anyone. The only time it speaks of anything separating us from God, it says nothing can: "Who shall separate us

from the love of Christ?" (Romans 8:35). "Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God" (Romans 8:39).

- "**In him" and "in Christ":** Meanwhile the New Testament says "in Christ" 78 times and "in him" 69 times. The Bible's own weight falls overwhelmingly on being in Him, not apart from Him.

The Separation Verses, Answered

Every teaching of separation rests on a handful of verses. Here they are, read whole.

"*Your iniquities have separated between you and your God*"

> "*But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.*" (Isaiah 59:2)

Read the verse right before it: "Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear" (Isaiah 59:1). The problem is not on God's side. And look at who does the separating: the iniquities, not God. The Hebrew word is mavdilim, from badal, the same verb used when "God divided the light from the darkness" (Genesis 1:4). It is written as something ongoing, "are making a division," and the iniquities are the ones doing it. Even the hiding of His face is something the sins do. Sin clouds our sight of Him, the way a cloud hides the sun without moving it an inch.

Then read how the chapter ends. God sees, and He acts: "therefore his arm brought salvation unto him" (Isaiah 59:16). And His promise: "My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth... from henceforth and for ever" (Isaiah 59:21). The chapter that is used to teach separation ends with God saying His Spirit will never depart.

"*Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil*"

> "*Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity.*" (Habakkuk 1:13)

This is quoted to prove God cannot look at sinners. But it is only half the verse. Habakkuk goes on: "wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he?" In the very same breath, the prophet complains that God does look on the wicked. Habakkuk is not stating a doctrine; he is wrestling with God, and the book ends with him rejoicing in God (Habakkuk 3:18). And Scripture is plain elsewhere: "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight" (Hebrews 4:13).

"*All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God*"

> "*For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.*" (Romans 3:23-24)

The verse is almost always stopped at the comma. But the same "all" who have sinned are the "all" who are "justified freely by his grace." To come short of the glory is to not yet live up to who we are; it is not to be cut off from the One who made us.

"*Without God in the world... far off*"

> "*Ye were without Christ... having no hope, and without God in the world: but now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh.*" (Ephesians 2:12-13)

Paul is describing how non-Jewish believers felt and lived before they knew: without hope, without God, as far as they knew. But he wrote this to people he had just told were "chosen... in him before the foundation of the world" (Ephesians 1:4). They were never outside His plan. The "far off" was in their knowing, and it was made nigh.

"*My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*"

> "*And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*" (Matthew 27:46)

Many are taught that at this moment God turned His back on His Son. But Jesus was quoting the first line of Psalm 22, and every Jew listening knew how that psalm turns out:

> "*For he hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; neither hath he hid his face from him; but when he cried unto him, he heard.*" (Psalm 22:24)

Neither hath He hid His face. In the darkest moment, God did not leave. And the Greek word for "forsaken" is enkataleipo, the very same word God uses in His promise: "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Hebrews 13:5). The one thing people say God did on the cross is the one thing He promised He would never do. And a moment later, "the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom" (Matthew 27:51). Torn from the top, God's side, opening what had seemed closed.

"*Be ye separate*" *and* "*separate from sinners*"

> "*Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and*

> *touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.*" (2 Corinthians 6:17-18)

This is the one place the New Testament tells people to "be separate," and look at what it is: separate from the unclean thing, so that God can be a Father to us. It is a call to leave behind what harms us, not a statement that God has left us. It ends in "I will receive you."

Hebrews calls Jesus "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners" (Hebrews 7:26). Separate in His nature, untouched by sin. But never separate in His company: "many publicans and sinners came and sat down with him and his disciples" (Matthew 9:10), and the religious leaders complained, "This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them" (Luke 15:2). The holiest One who ever walked the earth was the One who sat closest to sinners.

Adam and Eve in the garden

> "*And Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden. And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?*" (Genesis 3:8-9)

The first "separation" in the Bible was not God leaving people. It was people hiding from God, and God coming to look for them. It has been that way ever since.

The Seeking Verses, Answered

If God is everywhere, why does Scripture tell us to seek Him? Because seeking is how the soul wakes up to what is already there.

> "*And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.*" (Jeremiah 29:13)

> "*For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off... But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it.*" (Deuteronomy 30:11, 14)

> "*Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.*" (Luke 17:21)

Look at who Jesus said that to. The verse before says He was answering the Pharisees (Luke 17:20), the very men who opposed Him. He told them the kingdom of God was within them. (The Greek entos can be read "within" or "among," and the King James chose "within.")

We do not seek God the way we search for lost keys, hoping He is somewhere out there. We seek Him the way we wake up in the morning: by opening our eyes to what was there all night. "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you" (James 4:8). The moment we turn, we find Him already turned toward us.

Jesus showed it in the parable of the lost son. While the son was "yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him" (Luke 15:20). And to the elder son, who never left but felt distant all the same, the father said: "Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine" (Luke 15:31).

Why It Feels So Real: The Veil

If there is no separation, why does almost everyone feel it? Because the soul in the flesh lives behind a veil. As we saw in Part One, the soul comes into the flesh to learn through contrast, and part of that contrast is the feeling of being apart: alone, small, on our own. The separation is an appearance, a lesson the soul is living through. It is not reality.

> "*But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away... Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away.*" (2 Corinthians 3:14, 16)

The veil is over the mind, not between us and God. When the heart turns, the veil is taken away, and what was always there is seen.

This is also why teaching separation is so harmful. A soul that believes it is far from God will try to earn its way back, or live in fear of never getting there, or give up and stop trying. A soul that knows God is within it begins to live from that: from love instead of fear, from peace instead of striving.

One in Christ: Jesus' Own Prayer

The clearest word on oneness comes from Jesus Himself, in His prayer the night before the cross:

> "*That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us.*" (John 17:21)
>
> "*I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.*" (John 17:23)

And He told His disciples what they would come to understand:

> "*At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.*" (John 14:20)

The Father in the Son, the Son in us, us in Him. And the Spirit too: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" (1 Corinthians 3:16). Paul put it simply: "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Colossians 1:27). And he lived it: "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me" (Galatians 2:20).

> "*But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit.*" (1 Corinthians 6:17)

Jesus even pointed His accusers to a psalm when they objected to His oneness with the Father: "Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods?" (John 10:34). The psalm He quoted says, "I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High" (Psalm 82:6). Not that any soul is God in His fulness, but that every soul is His child, made of His breath, sharing His life.

Living From Oneness

When the soul knows there is no separation, everything changes. It stops living on defense, guarding itself, justifying itself, fearing it will be found out. It starts living on offense: from love, because love is what it is made of.

> "*God is love*; *and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.*" (1 John 4:16)

And oneness changes how we see each other. If God dwells in every soul, then how we treat our neighbor is how we treat Him:

> "*Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.*" (Matthew 25:40)

> "*For he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?*" (1 John 4:20)

This is why the two great commandments are really one. "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Mark 12:31), because, in the deepest sense, your neighbor is not separate from yourself.

All in All

Where is all of this going? Scripture tells us the end from the beginning:

> "*That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him.*" (Ephesians 1:10)

> "*And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself.*" (Colossians 1:20)

"*That God may be all in all.*" (1 Corinthians 15:28)

All things gathered together in one. All things reconciled. God all in all. The story does not end with a great gap between God and most of humanity. It ends with oneness made visible, the veil gone, every soul seeing what was always true.

Summary

- God fills heaven and earth; there is no place where He is not (Jeremiah 23:24).
- All things are of Him, through Him, and to Him, and by Him all things consist.
- All of Creation shares one life and one breath, and all people are one body.
- Atonement means at-one-ment; reconciliation changes us, not God, and God does not count our trespasses against us.
- Sin is missing the mark, not a wall; it does not move the target.
- Alienation is in the mind, "through the ignorance that is in them," not in God.
- Only one verse in the Bible says sins separate us from God, and the same chapter promises His Spirit will never depart.
- "Forsaken" on the cross is the same word God uses when He promises, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."
- Jesus prayed that we would be one with Him and the Father with the very same oneness He has.
- In the New Testament, the only "separation" from God it speaks of is the one that cannot happen: nothing can separate us from His love.
- The feeling of separation is the veil of the flesh, and when the heart turns, the veil is taken away.
- We seek God by waking up to Him, and He is never far from any of us.
- The end is oneness: God all in all.

There was never a gap to cross. There was only a veil to see through.

PART THREE

Ultimate Freewill

The Soul That Judges Itself

Picture the scene so many of us were raised on: one day we will stand before God in a great courtroom while He weighs our lives and hands down a sentence. But read the words of Jesus closely, and look at what the words "judge" and "judgment" actually mean in the Greek and Hebrew, and a very different picture comes into view. God is not sitting in eternity waiting to react to us. The soul has total free will within itself, and the soul judges itself.

This is not well known, and in most cases it is the opposite of what we were raised to believe. So let us take it one step at a time.

God Lives Outside of Time

Before anything else, we have to remember where God is. We live one moment after another. God does not. As Part One showed, He is "Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending… which is, and which was, and which is to come."

> "*One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.*" (2 Peter 3:8)
>
> "*For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night.*" (Psalm 90:4)

If God holds the beginning and the end at once, then God is not waiting to see how our story turns out before deciding what to do with us. Every moment is already present to Him.

A Finished Work

Because God is outside of time, Creation is not an unfinished project that God keeps repairing as we go. It was finished, and it was finished well.

> "*Although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.*" (Hebrews 4:3)
>
> "*Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.*" (Genesis 2:1)
>
> "*I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to*

it, nor any thing taken from it." (Ecclesiastes 3:14)

"*For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven.*" (Psalm 119:89)

"*Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.*" (Isaiah 46:10)

Notice the words "settled" and "finished." The way things work, how love works, how cause and effect work, how the soul grows, was set in place from the beginning. God's "judgments" are part of that finished work.

God Is in Control, Just Not the Way We Were Taught

Look at how the world works. Seasons turn, seeds grow into exactly what was planted, the sun rises on schedule, wounds heal, and every living thing is fitted to its place. The design is so good that it runs itself.

"*For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made.*" (Romans 1:20)

"*O LORD, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all.*" (Psalm 104:24)

"*He hath made every thing beautiful in his time.*" (Ecclesiastes 3:11)

Most people believe God is in control by stepping in moment by moment, pulling strings and deciding outcomes. But God's control is far greater than that. It is built into the design itself.

"*And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.*" (Colossians 1:17)

"*Upholding all things by the word of his power.*" (Hebrews 1:3)

"*While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.*" (Genesis 8:22)

"*He hath made a decree which shall not pass.*" (Psalm 148:6)

And the design plays no favorites:

"*He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.*" (Matthew 5:45)

This is why God does not have to control our choices to be in control. The order He set in place holds every soul. Sowing and reaping, cause and effect, contrast and growth all work on their own, and they all lead back to Him. God is not pulling the strings. He is

the order the strings move in. That leaves every soul completely free, and completely held.

What "Judgment" Really Means

Here is where the original languages open our eyes. The word "judgment" in our Bibles carries a lot of courtroom weight that the Hebrew and Greek words do not carry on their own.

- **Shaphat / Mishpat (Hebrew):** Shaphat means to judge, govern, or set things right. Its noun, mishpat, is translated "judgment," but it is also translated "manner" and "order." Samuel warned Israel of "the manner [mishpat] of the king" (1 Samuel 8:9), and Manoah asked, "How shall we order [mishpat] the child?" (Judges 13:12). A mishpat is the right way a thing works, its established order.
- **Krino / Krisis (Greek):** Krino means to separate, to distinguish, to decide. From it we get our words "crisis" and "critic." A krisis is a separating, a point of decision, not a burst of anger.
- **Diakrino (Greek):** To separate thoroughly, to discern. This is the word Paul uses for judging ourselves.
- **Katakrino (Greek):** Kata ("against") + krino. To judge against, to condemn.
- **Autokatakritos (Greek):** Auto ("self") + katakritos ("condemned"). Self-condemned. It appears only once in the whole New Testament (Titus 3:11), and the KJV translates it "condemned of himself."
- **Kritikos (Greek):** Able to discern, to separate. Hebrews 4:12 says the word of God is a "discerner [kritikos] of the thoughts and intents of the heart."
- **Paideuo (Greek):** To train a child. It is translated "chastened" in 1 Corinthians 11:32. When God's judgment touches us, it is the training of a child, not the sentencing of a criminal.

Put these together and judgment is not God losing His temper. It is the established order of things, a separating of light from darkness, and a training of the soul.

By the Numbers

The words "judge," "judgment," and their forms appear 758 times in the King James Bible, 557 in the Old Testament and 201 in the New. "Condemnation" appears 12 times, all in the New Testament.

- **Mishpat:** used about 421 times, but translated "judgment" only about 296 times. The rest are "manner," "right," "cause," "ordinance," "order," and "fashion."
- "**Judgments" in the Old Testament:** of the 119 verses where it appears, 64 pair it

with God's statutes, commandments, or laws, as in "keep my statutes, and my judgments" (Leviticus 18:5). More than half the time, God's judgments are His ordinances, the way things work, not sentences handed down.

- **God named as judge:** God is named alongside judging far more often in the Old Testament. But in the New Testament Jesus turns it around: "the Father judgeth no man" (John 5:22), and "I judge no man" (John 8:15).
- **The soul judging itself:** more than a dozen verses show a soul judging or condemning itself, from "Thine own mouth condemneth thee, and not I" (Job 15:6) to "being condemned of himself" (Titus 3:11).

And what of "the judgment seat of Christ" (Romans 14:10; 2 Corinthians 5:10)? There, each one receives "according to that he hath done," the harvest of his own sowing. And Paul tells us what that day brings: the Lord "will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God" (1 Corinthians 4:5). The judgment reveals, and it ends in praise for every man.

God Judges No Man

Now listen to Jesus. If the courtroom picture were true, we would expect Him to describe God as the judge. He says the opposite.

> "*For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son.*" (John 5:22)

> "*Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man.*" (John 8:15)

> "*For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.*" (John 3:17)

The Father judges no man. The Son judges no man. So who does the judging? Jesus tells us plainly:

> "*And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.*" (John 12:47-48)

It is the word, the truth itself, that judges. And Hebrews tells us that word is kritikos, a discerner. Truth does not attack anyone. Truth simply shows what is, the way light shows what is in a room. What a soul does with what it sees is up to the soul.

The Soul Judges Itself

This is the heart of it. Scripture shows us, over and over, souls passing judgment on themselves.

> "*And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light.*" (John 3:19)

The word "condemnation" here is krisis, the separation. Notice who makes it. The light came for everyone. The separating happens when a soul chooses darkness over the light it has been given.

> "*Seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.*" (Acts 13:46)

Paul did not say God judged them unworthy. He said they judged themselves unworthy.

> "*Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself.*" (Titus 3:11)

Condemned of himself: autokatakritos, self-condemned.

> "*Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee.*" (Luke 19:22)
>
> "*For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.*" (Matthew 7:2)
>
> "*Wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself.*" (Romans 2:1)

The measuring stick is the one we choose. The soul writes its own verdict with its own mouth and its own measure.

And where does this judging take place? Within.

> "*Their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another.*" (Romans 2:15)

The Greek word for conscience, suneidesis, literally means "knowing together with," a knowing with oneself. Our thoughts accuse us or excuse us. That is the courtroom, and it is inside of us.

> "*For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God.*" (1 John 3:20-21)
>
> "*Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth.*" (Romans 14:22)

This is why heaven and hell are states of being rather than places. A soul that condemns itself lives in that condemnation, here or beyond, until it chooses to see differently. A soul whose heart does not condemn it has confidence toward God, and lives in that.

Total Free Will Within

If the soul judges itself, then the soul must be truly free. And it is.

> "*I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live.*" (Deuteronomy 30:19)

The Hebrew word for "choose" is bachar, to choose or select after careful thought. God sets the choices before us. He does not make the choice for us.

> "*Choose you this day whom ye will serve.*" (Joshua 24:15)
>
> "*And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.*" (Revelation 22:17)

"Whosoever will" is the Greek thelo, to will, to desire. The door is open to anyone who desires it.

> "*For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he.*" (Proverbs 23:7)
>
> "*Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.*" (Proverbs 4:23)
>
> "*The kingdom of God is within you.*" (Luke 17:21)
>
> "*Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*" (Philippians 2:12-13)

The kingdom is within, the issues of life come out of the heart, and God works within us to will. The freedom is real, and it lives on the inside.

Free will that can only choose good is not free will at all. The soul is just as free to choose negativity, evil, and sin, and God Himself set that choice before us.

> "*See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil.*" (Deuteronomy 30:15)
>
> "*I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these things.*" (Isaiah 45:7)

Evil is not a power outside of God fighting against Him. It is the good, contracted: the same energy at a lower vibration, chosen by a soul that has not yet seen the light. The father in Luke 15 did not stop his son from taking his portion into a far country. He let him go, and he watched for him to come home.

> "*Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.*" (Galatians 6:7)

Sowing and reaping is God's mishpat, the established order. God does not have to step in and punish anyone. The harvest follows the seed, and the soul is free to plant what it chooses.

Judge Yourself: Judgments Exist So That We Learn

Paul gives us the practical side of all this:

> "*For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.*" (1 Corinthians 11:31-32)

Read it again with the Greek in mind. If we would discern (diakrino) ourselves, we would not need to be judged (krino). And when we are judged, it is paideuo, the training of a child, so that we are not condemned (katakrino). Even the judgment that does come is training, not destruction.

> "*Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves.*" (2 Corinthians 13:5)

> "*But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone.*" (Galatians 6:4)

All the knowledge of Creation is already in the Word: "In the beginning was the Word... All things were made by him" (John 1:1, 3). But knowing a thing is not the same as understanding it. Judgments, the cause and effect we meet when we choose, are how knowledge turns into experience, and experience into wisdom.

> "*For when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.*" (Isaiah 26:9)

> "*It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes.*" (Psalm 119:71)

As Part One showed, even the Son learned this way.

> "*Even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.*" (Hebrews 5:14)

The word "discern" here is diakrisis, from the same root as diakrino, judging ourselves. We learn to judge rightly by exercising it, by living it.

> "*Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting*

get understanding." (Proverbs 4:7)

Judgments exist so that we learn and understand, through experience, the knowledge already written into Creation, and so that knowledge becomes wisdom.

Not a Test, but a Proving

Many people feel that life is a test, with God watching to see who passes and who fails. But God declared the end from the beginning; He does not need to test us to find out who we are. Life is where we find out who we are. It is where the truths we already know in spirit become truths we have lived. (This is the heart of Part One.)

> "*But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.*" (James 1:22)

> "*My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.*" (1 John 3:18)

Every hardship and every choice is a place where the soul turns knowing into being.

No Separation: *Why Would God Condemn Himself?*

Here is the bottom line. Part Two showed that there is no separation between God and the soul. In Him we live, and move, and have our being, and the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost all dwell within us. Scripture adds one line that settles who every soul belongs to:

> "*Behold, all souls are mine.*" (Ezekiel 18:4)

If every soul lives in God, moves in God, and has its being in God, then for God to condemn a soul forever would be God condemning Himself. Jesus said it plainly:

> "*Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation.*" (Matthew 12:25)

God is not divided against Himself.

> "*If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself.*" (2 Timothy 2:13)

A soul may judge itself and live in that state for a season, but God cannot deny Himself, and the soul was never anything other than part of Him.

Ultimate Freewill: The Path Is Free, the End Is Settled

Here is what makes free will "ultimate." Most of us were taught that free will is dangerous, that one wrong choice could lose a soul forever. But Scripture says the end

was settled before the beginning:

> "*That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ... who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.*" (Ephesians 1:10-11)
>
> "*Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.*" (1 Timothy 2:4)
>
> "*For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all.*" (Romans 11:32)
>
> "*For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive... that God may be all in all.*" (1 Corinthians 15:22, 28)

The soul is completely free in how it walks, how long it takes, and what it learns along the way. The soul is eternal. It may judge itself unworthy for a season, and it will live in that state for as long as it holds that verdict. But no soul can walk itself outside of a finished Creation, and no soul can choose its way out of God's will that all be gathered in one. The freedom is real, and it is also safe.

Summary

- God lives outside of time and sees the end from the beginning.
- Creation is finished, and God's judgments are its established order (mishpat), not angry reactions.
- God is in control through the design itself, not by pulling strings.
- To judge (krino) is to separate and decide. The Father judges no man; the word, the truth, is the discerner.
- The soul judges itself, within its own heart and conscience, by the measure it chooses.
- The soul has total free will within itself, including the freedom to choose negativity, evil, and sin, and it reaps what it sows.
- Judgments are training (paideuo), so that we learn through experience and knowledge becomes wisdom.
- There is no separation between God and the soul. God cannot condemn Himself.
- The path is free. The end is settled: God will be all in all.

The soul has always held the gavel. What it was never told is that the verdict God wrote at the foundation of the world is love.

PART FOUR

The Fear Verses

What God and Jesus Really Said

Scroll through social media today and you will find picture after picture of flames, falling bodies, and bold red letters: most people are going to hell, heaven and hell are one breath away, depart from me. Each one carries a verse, and each verse is meant to make you afraid.

This study takes the most-posted of those verses and reads them the way they were written: in their setting, in their own words, and alongside the rest of Scripture. It follows the first three parts of this book: why the soul comes into the flesh (Part One), why there was never a separation between God and the soul (Part Two), and why the Father judges no man, the soul judges itself, and God cannot condemn Himself (Part Three). Here we carry those truths into the very verses people use to scare one another.

> "*There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment.*" (1 John 4:18)

Who Is Really Speaking?

We gathered fifty-six of the most frightening verses people say came from God or from Jesus, and checked each one in the King James Bible. Four things stood out.

Many "Jesus said" verses come from parables

Of the thirty-four fear verses credited to Jesus, eight come from parables or are spoken by a character inside one: a master, a bridegroom, a king, a nobleman, a rich man. When the nobleman in Luke 19 says "slay them before me," that is a character in a story, not Jesus giving an order. The same Jesus said, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you" (Matthew 5:44). Quoting a character in a parable as a command is like quoting the villain in a play and saying the author believes it.

Many "God said" verses were written about God

Eleven of the verses often quoted as God's words were written about Him by psalmists, prophets, and apostles, or spoken by an angel in a vision. "Our God is a consuming fire" is the author of Hebrews. "The smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever" is an angel. These are part of Scripture, but they are not God speaking in the first person,

and they should be read in light of what God said of Himself.

Some verses are quoted only halfway

The most famous fear verse in the New Testament is almost never finished. “The wages of sin is death” is posted everywhere, but the verse goes on: “but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Romans 6:23). It does not end in death. It ends in a gift. Again and again, the fear is in the first half of a verse, and the hope is in the half no one posts.

Some words were added by the translators

The King James translators printed words in italics to show they were not in the Hebrew or Greek. One of the most quoted verses about God’s anger is one of these: “God is angry with the wicked every day” (Psalm 7:11). In the Hebrew there is no “with the wicked.” The same psalmist wrote, “his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life” (Psalm 30:5).

The Words Behind the Fear

Most fear verses rest on a handful of English words. Underneath them, the Hebrew and Greek tell a different story.

Hell: four different words

“Hell” appears 54 times in the King James Bible, but it translates four completely different words.

- **Sheol (Hebrew):** The grave, where everyone goes. The KJV translates it “hell” 31 times and “grave” 31 times, the very same word. Jacob expected to go there (Genesis 37:35).
- **Hades (Greek):** The New Testament word for the place of the dead. Jesus went there (Acts 2:27), and He holds its keys (Revelation 1:18).
- **Gehenna (Greek):** The Valley of Hinnom, a real valley just outside Jerusalem (Joshua 15:8), where idol worshippers had once burned their children, something God said He “commanded them not, neither came it into my heart” (Jeremiah 7:31). Eleven of its twelve uses are on the lips of Jesus, speaking to Jews who could see it from the city walls. The apostle Paul, who wrote half the New Testament, never once used the word “hell” in his letters.
- **Tartaroo (Greek):** Used once, of fallen angels “reserved unto judgment” (2 Peter 2:4). Reserved until something.

Everlasting: aionios

The Greek aion means an age, a long period with a beginning and an end; our word "eon" comes from it. Its adjective, aionios, is translated "everlasting" and "eternal," yet Paul uses it of "times" that already ended (Romans 16:25). The Hebrew olam works the same way: Jonah said the earth's bars were about him "for ever" (Jonah 2:6), and he was there three days. Many scholars note that these words describe something belonging to an age, not something that literally never ends.

Punishment: kolasis

The word was first used of pruning a tree, cutting back so that it grows. The philosopher Aristotle set kolasis, punishment for the good of the one who suffers it, against timoria, punishment that satisfies the one who inflicts it. Many scholars note that in Matthew 25:46 Jesus used kolasis, not timoria.

Destruction and perish: apollumi

"Destruction" and "perish" come from the same root as "lost," the word for the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the lost son. It is the word in Jesus' own mission statement: "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10). The "destroyed" are exactly the ones He came to find.

Damnation: krisis

As Part Three showed, krisis means a separating, a decision. The KJV word "damnation" is often simply krisis. "The resurrection of damnation" in John 5:29 is the same word translated "judgment" two verses earlier.

The Foundation

Every fear verse has to be read against what Scripture says plainly and repeatedly about God. These are the anchor points, most of them drawn from Part Three.

- God is love (1 John 4:8), and there is no fear in love (1 John 4:18).
- God "will have all men to be saved" (1 Timothy 2:4), and He "is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe" (1 Timothy 4:10).
- The Father judges no man (John 5:22), and Jesus came "not to judge the world, but to save the world" (John 12:47).
- The soul judges itself, and judgments exist so that we learn: "when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness" (Isaiah 26:9).
- God's chastening is "for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness"

(Hebrews 12:10).

- God never gives up on the banished: "yet doth he devise means, that his banished be not expelled from him" (2 Samuel 14:14).
- Every knee shall bow and every tongue confess Jesus as Lord, "to the glory of God the Father" (Philippians 2:10-11).

The Most-Posted Fear Verses

The narrow gate

The fear: *Most people are going to hell; only a few will make it.*

> "*Wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.*" (Matthew 7:13-14)

What it says: The narrow way leads "unto life," and few "find it." This is the Sermon on the Mount, which is about how to live now. Few find real life in this world, and Jesus is honest about that. "Destruction" is apoleia, lostness, and the lost are who He came to save. In Luke's version He adds that people "shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God" (Luke 13:29).

"*I never knew you: depart from me*"

The fear: *Many who think they are Christians will be sent to hell.*

> "*And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.*" (Matthew 7:23)

What it says: These people said "Lord, Lord," prophesied, and cast out devils in His name (Matthew 7:22), but never came to know Him. "Knew" is ginosko, a knowing that comes only by experience, the very thing Part One describes. They knew about Him without knowing Him. That is a state the soul is in, not a final sentence, and the Shepherd "goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray" (Matthew 18:12).

Everlasting fire and everlasting punishment

The fear: *Hell is conscious torment that never ends.*

> "*Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.*" (Matthew 25:41)

> "*And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.*" (Matthew 25:46)

What it says: This is the parable of the sheep and the goats, and what it judges is whether people fed the hungry and clothed the naked (Matthew 25:40). The fire was "prepared for the devil and his angels," not for people. "Everlasting punishment" is kolasis aionios, which many scholars read as "age-long correction." And God tells us His correction has an end:

> "*For the Lord will not cast off for ever: but though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies.*" (Lamentations 3:31-32)

"*Where their worm dieth not*"

The fear: *In hell, worms eat you and the fire burns forever.*

> "*Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.*" (Mark 9:48)

What it says: Jesus is quoting the last verse of Isaiah, which describes dead bodies, not living souls: "they shall go forth, and look upon the carcases of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die" (Isaiah 66:24). The verse just before says "shall all flesh come to worship before me" (Isaiah 66:23). And the very next verse in Mark:

> "*For every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt.*" (Mark 9:49)

Every one. Salt preserves; it does not destroy.

Outer darkness, weeping and gnashing of teeth

The fear: *Hell is a dark pit where people scream in agony forever.*

> "*But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*" (Matthew 8:12)

What it says: Those cast out are "the children of the kingdom," the ones who assumed they were already in, while a Roman centurion's faith is praised. "Outer darkness" is the dark outside of a brightly lit feast, as in the wedding parable (Matthew 22:13). And gnashing of teeth is anger, not torment: when Stephen preached, his hearers "gnashed on him with their teeth" (Acts 7:54). It is the soul standing outside the joy, frustrated that others are inside, judging itself. And the gates of that city "shall not be shut at all" (Revelation 21:25).

"*Fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell*"

The fear: *God is waiting to destroy you, so be afraid of Him.*

> "*Rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.*" (Matthew 10:28)

What it says: "Hell" is Gehenna, and "destroy" is apollumi, lost. The point is that God, not man, holds the soul. Then read the very next words in Luke's version:

> "*But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows.*" (Luke 12:7)

"Fear" here is awe, the reverence of a child who knows how great his Father is. The One who holds the soul is the One who numbers the hairs on your head.

The rich man in the flame

The fear: *Hell is real; Jesus described a man burning in it.*

> "*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.*" (Luke 16:24)

What it says: Luke 15 and 16 are a run of parables told to the Pharisees, "who were covetous" (Luke 16:14): the lost sheep, the lost coin, the lost son, the unjust steward. Many read this as the fifth. It opens the same way as the one before it, "There was a certain rich man," and it is full of picture-language: a man talking across a gulf with Abraham, asking for a drop of water. Its point is its last line: if they will not hear Moses and the prophets, they will not be persuaded "though one rose from the dead" (Luke 16:31). And its "hell" is Hades, the place of the dead, which itself comes to an end: "death and hell were cast into the lake of fire" (Revelation 20:14).

The unpardonable sin

The fear: *There is a sin God will never forgive, and you may have already committed it.*

> "*Whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.*" (Matthew 12:32)

What it says: The verse before says, "All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men" (Matthew 12:31). The religious leaders had just called the work of God's Spirit the work of the devil. To call the light darkness is to shut the door from the inside. And "this world" and "the world to come" are both aion, ages. Jesus says not in this age or the next; He does not say never. Scripture still promises "the times of restitution of all

things" (Acts 3:21).

"*He that believeth not shall be damned*" *and* "*condemned already*"

The fear: *If you do not believe the right things, you are damned to hell.*

> "*He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.*" (Mark 16:16)
>
> "*He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already.*" (John 3:18)

What it says: "Damned" is katakrino, "judged against." (Mark 16:9-20 is not found in the oldest Greek manuscripts, and most Bibles today note this, though the lesson is the same either way.) "Condemned already" is krino: already separated, already in that state. It describes a present condition, not a future sentence. The verse just before says, "God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved" (John 3:17). And the verse after tells us what the condemnation is, as Part Three showed: "that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light" (John 3:19).

The condemnation is choosing darkness, and darkness is its own result. That is the soul judging itself, and a state changes when the light comes in.

"*Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish*"

The fear: *Repent now or burn.*

> "*I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.*" (Luke 13:3)

What it says: Jesus had just been told about Galileans whose blood Pilate mingled with their sacrifices, and He mentioned eighteen killed when the tower in Siloam fell (Luke 13:1-4). "Likewise" means "in the same way": by violence and falling stones. Many scholars see a warning to that generation, fulfilled when Rome destroyed Jerusalem. Then Jesus told of a fig tree that was given another year, dug about and fed (Luke 13:6-9). "Repent" is metanoeo, to change one's mind, and "perish" is apollumi, lost, the very thing He came to seek and save.

"*The wages of sin is death*"

The fear: *Sin earns you death and hell.*

> "*For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*" (Romans 6:23)

What it says: Wages are what we earn; a gift is what we are given. Sin pays out in its own coin, the dying of the life in us. But the verse turns on the word "but." And Paul wrote in the chapter before: "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound" (Romans 5:20). This is not God handing out death. It is the soul reaping what it sows, and God giving what no one could earn.

"A *fearful thing*" *and* "*a consuming fire*"

The fear: *Falling into God's hands is terrifying, because He burns up sinners.*

> "*It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*" (Hebrews 10:31)
>
> "*For our God is a consuming fire.*" (Hebrews 12:29)

Who is speaking: The author of Hebrews, not God in the first person.

What it says: Between those two verses comes the longest teaching on God's discipline in the Bible: "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth" (Hebrews 12:6), and He does it "for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness" (Hebrews 12:10). A consuming fire consumes dross, not gold. And the hands of God are the same hands Jesus spoke of:

> "*And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.*" (John 10:28)

The lake of fire and the second death

The fear: *The lake of fire is eternal torment for the lost.*

> "*And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.*" (Revelation 20:15)

What it says: Revelation is a book of visions and symbols: a lamb with seven eyes, a woman clothed with the sun. Look at what else goes into the lake: "death and hell were cast into the lake of fire" (Revelation 20:14). Death itself. "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death" (1 Corinthians 15:26). The brimstone is theion, sulfur, which the ancient world burned to purify, and God's fire refines: "I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined" (Zechariah 13:9).

Then read where Revelation goes next. The One on the throne says, "Behold, I make all things new" (Revelation 21:5). The gates of the city are never shut (Revelation 21:25). And the last invitation in the Bible is for anyone still outside:

> "*And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.*" (Revelation 22:17)

The Whole Picture

- Many frightening "Jesus said" verses are spoken by characters in parables.
- Many "God said" verses were written about God, or spoken by an angel in a vision.
- The answer to nearly every fear verse is in the same chapter, often the very next verse.
- "Hell" is four different words: the grave (Sheol, Hades), a valley outside Jerusalem (Gehenna), and a holding place for angels (Tartaroo).
- "Everlasting" belongs to the age, "punishment" is correction, and "destruction" is lostness, and the lost are the ones Jesus came to find.
- God's fire refines. It burns away death and dross, never the soul He made.

Underneath every fear verse is the same God: the Father who judges no man, who "will have all men to be saved" (1 Timothy 2:4), who cannot deny Himself, and who keeps the door open to "whosoever will."

> "*For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.*" (2 Timothy 1:7)

Fear was never the message. Love was always the message.

PART FIVE

The Eternal Soul

Not One Life, And Not One Location

What Most Were Taught

By now we have seen why the soul enters the body, that it was never separated from God, that it judges itself, and that fear was never the message. But for most people one picture is still standing, and it may be the hardest to let go of. You are born. You get one life. You die. Then you go to one of two places, heaven or hell, and you stay there forever.

Many folks already believe the soul is eternal. But notice where their story stops. The soul lives one short life in the flesh, then gets sent to a location, and there it sits, frozen, for the rest of forever. An eternal soul with a seventy-year story and an endless waiting room.

So ask yourself: what is an eternal soul doing for eternity?

The Truth

You are an eternal spirit-soul. You were known by God before the womb, and you go on after the grave. This body is one housing, on this earth, for this season. It is not the only housing a soul will ever wear, and this earth is not the only world a soul will ever walk. Eternity is long, and the soul keeps living, choosing, and learning within its own free will.

And heaven and hell are not two addresses. They are states the soul lives within itself, wherever it happens to be housed. That is the real fight in this study. Not whether the soul is eternal, but whether heaven and hell are physical places a soul is shipped to and locked inside.

One Life, Or One Body?

Here is something worth sitting with: the phrase “one life” does not appear anywhere in the King James Bible. Not once. What the Bible does say, over and over, is that the flesh is short and the spirit is lasting.

> “*Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.*”

(James 4:14)

Notice what James calls a vapour. Not you. Your life in the flesh. The vapour is the earthly part, here for a little time. The question is not whether the vapour vanishes. It does. The question is who was breathing it.

Known Before The Womb

If you began at conception, then God could not have known you before it, because there would have been no "you" to know. Yet this is exactly what He says.

> "*Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.*" (Jeremiah 1:5)

Before I formed thee, I knew thee. The forming of the body came second. The knowing came first. David says the same about himself, that his members were written in God's book "when as yet there was none of them":

> "*My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.*" (Psalm 139:15-16)

And when God asked Job where he was when the earth was made, the answer was not "nowhere." The sons of God were there, shouting for joy:

> "*Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding.*" (Job 38:4)
>
> "*When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?*" (Job 38:7)

Part Two showed that we were chosen in Him "before the foundation of the world." Paul goes further: grace was given us, and eternal life promised, before the world itself existed:

> "*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,*" (2 Timothy 1:9)
>
> "*In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;*" (Titus 1:2)

How can something be given to you before the world began, if you did not exist until a few decades ago? The only way these verses make sense is if you were there to receive it.

Where The Spirit Comes From

> "*And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.*" (Genesis 2:7)

Dust is formed into a body. Then the breath of life comes from God Himself, and only then does man become a living soul. The housing is from the earth. The one living in it is from God. Zechariah says God "formeth the spirit of man within him," and Hebrews draws the line between the two kinds of fathers we have:

> "*The burden of the word of the LORD for Israel, saith the LORD, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him.*" (Zechariah 12:1)

> "*Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?*" (Hebrews 12:9)

You have an earthly father of your flesh and a heavenly Father of your spirit. One gave you a housing that returns to dust. The other gave you yourself. And Moses says God has always been our true dwelling place, from everlasting to everlasting:

> "*Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.*" (Psalm 90:1-2)

What The Words Mean

Much of the confusion comes from English words doing double duty. The original languages make the difference plain.

The Hebrew **nephesh** is the soul, the whole person made alive, as in Genesis 2:7, "a living soul." The Hebrew **ruach** and the Greek **pneuma** mean spirit, breath, or wind: the life that comes from God.

The Greek **psuche** is translated "soul" about 58 times in the King James Bible and "life" about 40 times. In Matthew 16 Jesus uses psuche in back-to-back verses, and the translators wrote "life" in one and "soul" in the next:

> "*For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for*

> *my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?*" (Matthew 16:25-26)

To Jesus they were the same thing. Your real life is your soul.

Greek also has two different words for life. **Bios** is the life of the flesh, daily living, the life full of cares, riches, and pleasures:

> "*And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection.*" (Luke 8:14)

Zoe is life itself, the life of God that does not run out. When people say "you only get one life," they are speaking of bios, and for this housing they are right. But the Bible never once calls eternal life bios. It is always zoe.

One more word. When Hebrews says God "made the worlds," the word is **aion**, the ages. Worlds, plural. Ages, plural. Keep that in mind; it comes back below.

By The Numbers

In the King James Bible, "eternal" appears 47 times, "everlasting" 97 times, and "for ever" or "for evermore" over 400 times. "Soul" and "souls" appear over 530 times. The phrase "one life" appears 0 times. And "hell," as Part Four showed, is not even one word, but four different words poured into one English word and then built into one fixed place.

Jesus' Own Words

Jesus spoke of His own existence as stretching before and beyond His time in the flesh:

> "*And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.*" (John 17:5)

> "*Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.*" (John 8:58)

And He summed up the whole journey in the verse at the head of this book: "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father." When the Sadducees, who believed death was the end, came to argue with Him, He answered that God is not God of the dead at all:

> "*For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him.*" (Luke 20:38)

“All live unto him.” Not some. All. And Jesus showed it. Moses and Elias, men who had left the flesh centuries before, stood and talked with Him on the mount:

> “*And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him.*” (Matthew 17:3)

> “*Jesus said unto her, 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. Believest thou this?*” (John 11:25-26)

He asked Martha, “Believest thou this?” He is asking you the same thing. Then He told His friends plainly what the death of the body can and cannot do:

> “*And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do.*” (Luke 12:4)

> “*It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.*” (John 6:63)

One Soul, Many Housings

Listen to how Paul talks about the body. He never calls it “you.” He calls it a house, a tent, a tabernacle, a garment. Something the soul lives in and wears:

> “*For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.*” (2 Corinthians 5:1)

> “*For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.*” (2 Corinthians 5:2-4)

Not unclothed, but clothed upon. The soul is not left naked when one housing is folded up. It is clothed again. And Paul says the bodies a soul can be given are not all alike:

> “*But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body.*” (1 Corinthians 15:38)

> “*There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory.*” (1 Corinthians 15:40-41)

Celestial bodies, terrestrial bodies. To every seed his own body, as it pleases God. One star differs from another. Does that sound like one body type and one location for every soul for all of eternity? Jesus Himself said His Father's house has many dwelling places, and Hebrews says God made the worlds, the ages, plural:

> "*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.*" (John 14:2)
>
> "*Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;*" (Hebrews 1:2)
>
> "*Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.*" (Hebrews 11:3)
>
> "*That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.*" (Ephesians 2:7)

"In the ages to come." Not the age to come, as if there were only one more. Ages. This earth is one world among the worlds God framed, and this lifetime is one housing among the housings a soul may wear. That is why the people of the Bible called themselves strangers and sojourners here:

> "*For we are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers: our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding.*" (1 Chronicles 29:15)
>
> "*For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.*" (Hebrews 13:14)

A sojourner is someone staying a while, on the way to somewhere else. Ask yourself: if this were your one and only stop before a fixed eternal address, why would scripture keep telling you that you are passing through?

The Real Fight: Heaven And Hell As Places

Here is where the teaching most of us received truly breaks down. It says heaven is a place up there, hell is a place down there, and God sorts every soul into one or the other at death.

Part Two already showed that God fills heaven and earth, and that David said, "if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there." Now hold that up against the teaching of two locations. If hell were a place, God would be standing in it. Solomon saw that no place can even hold Him:

> "*But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded?*" (1 Kings 8:27)

There is no place outside of God to send anyone. A place of eternal punishment would be a place inside God, where God punishes Himself forever. Why would God condemn Himself?

Even heaven is not described as one spot. Paul spoke of a man caught up to the "third heaven," and he could not even tell whether it happened in the body or out of it:

> "*I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven.*" (2 Corinthians 12:2)

A third heaven means there is a first and a second. Degrees. Levels. Something a soul rises through, not a single gate it either passes or fails. And if Paul could not tell whether he was in the body or out of it, then heaven was something he experienced, not somewhere he traveled to by road.

Heaven And Hell Within

If heaven and hell are not addresses, then where are they? Jesus already answered: "the kingdom of God is within you." Paul says the kingdom is not a thing you eat or drink or stand on, but a condition of the soul:

> "*For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.*" (Romans 14:17)

> "*For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.*" (Romans 8:6)

Death and life, hell and heaven, are states of mind before they are anything else. Now look at living men in scripture who said they were in hell while their bodies were still breathing:

> "*The sorrows of hell compassed me about: the snares of death prevented me.*" (Psalm 18:5)

> "*The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow.*" (Psalm 116:3)

> "*And said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the LORD, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice.*" (Jonah 2:2)

Jonah was alive inside a fish and called it “the belly of hell.” David was a living king and said the pains of hell had hold of him. They were not describing a location underground. They were describing what it feels like inside when a soul is in fear, sorrow, and darkness. And notice: every one of them cried out and was heard. Their hell was not a dead end.

This is why each soul’s heaven and hell are its own, tailored to itself and not stamped out the same for everyone. As Part Three showed, the soul reaps what it sows and judges itself. And because the soul carries its heaven and hell within itself, it carries them into whatever housing and whatever world it walks next, until it chooses to sow differently. That is why Jesus taught us to pray for heaven to be done here, now, on earth:

> “*Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.*” (Matthew 6:10)

The Verses That Need Careful Handling

Part Four already answered the rich man in the flame and “fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.” Here are the verses most often used to argue for one life.

> “*And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:*” (Hebrews 9:27)

This is the verse behind “one life, then judgment.” But read what it says. It is appointed unto men once to die. A body dies once. Every body does. It says nothing about the soul ending, and nothing about a location. In fact it says “after this” something comes, which means someone is still there after death for it to come to. As for who judges and how, that is the subject of Part Three: the soul judges itself.

> “*For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten.*” (Ecclesiastes 9:5)

Ecclesiastes is written from the view “under the sun,” as the very next verse says. It is how life looks from the flesh, looking at a body in the ground. The same book ends by telling us where the spirit actually goes, and we will finish there.

And Ezekiel’s “the soul that sinneth, it shall die” is answered at the end of the same chapter:

> “*For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord GOD:*

wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye." (Ezekiel 18:32)

You cannot "turn and live" if you have already ceased to exist. The death spoken of here is what a soul lives through while walking away from God, and it is something a soul can turn from.

Why It Matters

If you believe you get one short life and then a fixed address forever, every day carries a weight no one can bear. You live afraid of dying, afraid of getting it wrong, afraid for everyone you love who does not believe the way you do.

But if you are an eternal soul, everything shifts. This lifetime is one season in one housing, with a purpose: gaining wisdom through experience. Death is not a cliff. It is a change of clothes. The people you love are not lost in some far-off location; they are souls, known by God before they were born and still His after they leave. And heaven is not a reward you must hope to be shipped to someday. It is a state you can begin living right now, within yourself.

So what are you afraid of losing? The body was always going to go. You were never the body. And there is no place you could be sent where God is not.

Going Home

Ecclesiastes closes its picture of old age and death with a phrase that is easy to miss. In the Hebrew, "long home" is beyth olam, the house of the ages:

> "*Also when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way, and the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail: because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets:*" (Ecclesiastes 12:5)
>
> "*Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.*" (Ecclesiastes 12:7)

The dust goes back to where it came from. The spirit goes back to where it came from. Each returns to its source. And when one housing is set down:

> "*For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.*" (1 Corinthians 15:53)

So where is home? Not an address in the sky. Moses already told us: "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations." Home was never a location. Home is God, and the journey home is the soul, housing after housing and world after world, waking

up to the One it was never apart from.

Summary

- The phrase “one life” never appears in the KJV. A body gets one run; the soul has one eternal, continuous existence.
- God knew you before He formed you in the womb, and gave you grace before the world began.
- The body is a housing from the dust. The spirit is from God, the Father of spirits.
- Bios is the life of this housing; zoe is the life of God. Eternal life is always zoe.
- Paul calls the body a tent and a garment; the soul is clothed again, and there are celestial and terrestrial bodies, many dwelling places, and many worlds and ages.
- No place can contain God, so there is no place outside of Him to send anyone. Even heaven has degrees.
- Heaven and hell are states the soul lives within itself, tailored to each soul, as living men in hell show.
- The hard verses, read in full, speak of a body dying once, not of a soul ending or a fixed eternal location.

You did not begin at your birth, and you will not end at your grave. You are not headed to an address. You are on your way home.

PART SIX

The Guarantee Of Salvation

The Promise That Cannot Fail

Yes, If

Ask most churchgoers whether salvation is guaranteed, and you will hear "yes, if." Yes, if you believe in time. Yes, if you repent before you die. Yes, if you hold on to the end. God holds the door open for a few short years, and if you do not walk through it before your body dies, it slams shut forever. Most people, we were told, will miss it.

Under that teaching, the outcome of every soul rests on the soul itself: on getting it right, believing the right thing, in time. God wants everyone saved, but most of the time He does not get what He wants.

So ask yourself: is that the God you read about in scripture? A God who wants something with His whole heart, and loses?

The Truth

Salvation does not rest on you getting it right. It rests on God: on His will, His promise, His mercy, and His power to finish what He started. Scripture does not describe a hopeful offer that most will refuse. It describes a guarantee, sworn by a God who cannot lie.

Part Three showed that the soul has total free will, and that the path is free while the end is settled. This study gathers the promises that settle it.

What God Wants

Start with the simplest question of all. What does God actually want? Scripture does not leave us guessing:

> "*For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.*" (1 Timothy 2:3-4)

> "*The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.*" (2 Peter 3:9)

> "*Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.*" (Matthew 18:14)

All men saved. Not willing that any should perish. Not one of these little ones. That is plain enough. Now the second question, the one most churches never ask out loud: does God get what He wants? Part Three already heard God say, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Paul says the same:

> "*In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:*" (Ephesians 1:11)

He works all things after the counsel of His own will. If God wills all to be saved, and God does all His pleasure, then the only way a soul could be lost forever is if God failed. Ask yourself: which of those two do you want to call untrue?

A God Who Cannot Lie

A promise is only as strong as the one who makes it. A man can promise and fail. Scripture says God is not that kind of promiser:

> "*God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?*" (Numbers 23:19)

Then Hebrews goes further. It says God was so determined that we would trust His promise that He swore an oath on top of it, two unchangeable things, so that our hope would hold like an anchor:

> "*Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;*" (Hebrews 6:17-19)

Notice what the anchor rests on. Not on how tightly we hold on, but on the "immutability of his counsel." And what if we do not believe? Does our unbelief cancel His promise?

> "*For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome*

when thou art judged." (Romans 3:3-4)

Our unbelief does not make the faith of God without effect. "If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself." His gifts and His calling are not taken back, and His word does not come back empty:

> "*For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.*" (Romans 11:29)
>
> "*So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.*" (Isaiah 55:11)

In Part Five we saw that eternal life was promised "before the world began." A promise made before anyone could earn it cannot be lost by anyone failing to earn it.

The Promise To Abraham

Long before the law, God made a promise to Abraham. Listen to how wide it was:

> "*And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.*" (Genesis 22:18)

All the nations of the earth. Paul says this promise was nothing less than the gospel itself, preached ahead of time:

> "*And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed.*" (Galatians 3:8)

The gospel, at its very first telling, was not "some will be blessed if they qualify." It was "in thee shall all nations be blessed." That was the good news from the start.

How Wide Is "All"?

Here is where honest reading matters most. Scripture uses the word "all" again and again about salvation, and most of us were taught to quietly shrink it. Read these slowly and ask yourself what "all" means in each one:

> "*And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.*" (John 12:32)
>
> "*Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.*" (1 Timothy 2:6)
>
> "*For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,*" (Titus 2:11)
>
> "*And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the*

sins of the whole world." (1 John 2:2)

"*The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.*" (John 1:29)

Not for ours only, but for the whole world. The sin of the world. Now look at how Paul sets two "alls" side by side, so that you cannot shrink one without shrinking the other:

"*Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.*" (Romans 5:18)

"*For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.*" (1 Corinthians 15:22)

As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. If the first "all" means every person, and no church denies that every person dies, then the second "all" means every person too. The same word, in the same sentence, cannot mean everyone in one half and a few in the other. Paul even explains why unbelief is allowed at all:

"*For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all.*" (Romans 11:32)

God concluded them all in unbelief, for a purpose: that He might have mercy upon all. Unbelief is not the end of the story. It is part of how mercy reaches everyone. And Paul says plainly whose Saviour God is:

"*For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe.*" (1 Timothy 4:10)

The Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe. Believers are not the only ones saved. They are the ones who know it now, and get to live in the peace of it now.

Mercy That Endures For Ever

The Hebrew word **chesed** is God's steadfast, loyal love, translated "mercy" and "lovingkindness." The Greek **eleos** carries the same meaning: compassion that acts. These are not moods God slips in and out of. Psalm 136 repeats one line in every one of its twenty-six verses:

"*O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.*" (Psalm 136:1)

For ever. Twenty-six times in a row, as if God wanted to make sure no one could miss

it. Part Four heard David say God's anger "endureth but a moment." Micah says why:

> "*Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy.*" (Micah 7:18)

He retains not His anger for ever, because He delights in mercy. Ask yourself: if His anger ends and His mercy does not, which one has the last word over a soul?

> "*The LORD is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works.*" (Psalm 145:9)
>
> "*The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.*" (Psalm 103:8)
>
> "*It is of the LORD's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.*" (Lamentations 3:22-23)

Over all His works. Compassions that fail not, new every morning.

By The Numbers

In the King James Bible, "mercy" and "mercies" appear over 300 times. The exact phrase "his mercy endureth for ever" appears 41 times. "Promise" and "promised" appear over 100 times. The phrase "all men" appears 74 times.

And here is the number that matters most: there is not one verse that says God's mercy ends, or that His promise fails, or that His love runs out. Not one. The verses that seem to say otherwise were answered, one by one, in Part Four.

The Shepherd Who Does Not Stop Looking

Jesus told us how He searches for the lost. Pay attention to how long the search lasts:

> "*What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?*" (Luke 15:4)

Until he find it. Not until the sheep dies. Not until a deadline. Until. And Jesus made it plain that losing any of the ones given to Him is not an option:

> "*All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.*" (John 6:37)
>
> "*And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath*

given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." (John 6:39)

"*And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.*" (John 10:28-29)

Of all which He has given me, I should lose nothing. Who did the Father give Him? Scripture has already answered that: "all things" were delivered into His hands (Matthew 11:27). No man can pluck them out of the Father's hand. And Paul lists everything that might try, and says none of it can:

"*For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*" (Romans 8:38-39)

Neither death, nor life, nor things present, nor things to come. Look at that list again. Death cannot separate you from His love. Neither can anything that comes after death. There is no deadline in that verse.

No Such Thing As Too Late

So where does free will fit? The soul chooses its own path, as long or as winding as it wishes. It can walk away, as the prodigal son did, and live in a far country for as long as it chooses. But Part Two showed what is waiting when it turns around: while he was "yet a great way off," the father ran. He did not wait for the son to arrive, clean up, and prove himself. That is why salvation is never something we earn by getting it right:

"*For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.*" (Ephesians 2:8-9)

"*Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;*" (Titus 3:5)

Not of works. Not of yourselves. According to His mercy. If salvation were the reward for making the right choice before the body dies, it would be a work, and we could boast about it. It is a gift instead, and a gift depends on the Giver.

And because the soul is eternal, as Part Five showed, there is no "too late." There is only "not yet." The soul in the far country is not lost forever. It simply has not turned around

yet.

A Fire That Saves

Even the fire people fear most is, in scripture, a fire that saves. Every time God's fire is explained, it refines:

> "*But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap: And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness.*" (Malachi 3:2-3)

> "*Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.*" (1 Corinthians 3:13-15)

He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver. If any man's work is burned, "he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire." The fire burns what is false, so that what is true remains. The soul is not what burns. The soul is what is saved.

Where It All Ends

Part Two closed with where everything is going: all things gathered together in one, all things reconciled, God all in all. Ask yourself: how can God be all in all if some souls are forever outside of Him? That would be God being all in most.

Then comes the verse many were taught to fear:

> "*That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*" (Philippians 2:10-11)

Many read this as a forced surrender, enemies dragged to their knees. But read what Paul says about who is able to make that confession:

> "*Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.*" (1 Corinthians 12:3)

No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. So when every tongue

confesses it, every tongue is speaking by the Spirit of God. And it is "to the glory of God the Father," which a confession forced at sword-point would never be. Paul was quoting a promise God swore by Himself:

> "*I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear.*" (Isaiah 45:23)

Every knee, every tongue, sworn by God Himself. And the final picture is not of a divided eternity, but of every creature in heaven, on earth, and under the earth, praising together:

> "*And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.*" (Revelation 5:13)

> "*He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the LORD hath spoken it.*" (Isaiah 25:8)

> "*And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.*" (Revelation 21:4-5)

Tears wiped from off all faces. All things made new. And then God adds, as if He knew we would struggle to believe it: "Write: for these words are true and faithful."

Why It Matters

If salvation depends on getting it right before the body dies, then every unbelieving friend, every wayward child, every person who died "outside the church" is a source of terror. You cannot rest, and you cannot love freely, because love is always mixed with fear of losing them forever. That fear is the deepest root of everything Part Four answered.

But if salvation rests on God's will, God's promise, and God's mercy, then you can breathe. You can share the truth out of love instead of panic. You can grieve without despair. You can look at the person who believes nothing at all and see a soul on its way home, just further back on the road.

Does that make the path meaningless? Not at all. The path is where the soul lives its heaven or its hell, as Part Five showed, and where knowledge becomes wisdom, as Part One showed. How you walk matters very much, to you. It simply does not change where the road ends.

Summary

- God wills all men to be saved, and God works all things after the counsel of His own will.
- God cannot lie, swore an oath on His promise, and abides faithful even when we believe not.
- The gospel was first preached to Abraham as “in thee shall all nations be blessed.”
- “As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.” The same “all” both times.
- His mercy endures for ever; He retains not His anger for ever. Not one verse says His mercy ends.
- The shepherd searches until He finds. Nothing, not even death or what comes after, can separate us from His love.
- Salvation is a gift, not a reward. There is no “too late,” only “not yet.”
- God’s fire refines; the soul is saved, “yet so as by fire.”
- Every tongue will confess by the Spirit, every tear will be wiped away, and all things will be made new.

The guarantee was never in your hand holding God. It was always in His hand holding you.

Walking The Way Home

If you have come this far, one question is left: now what?

First, know what this is not. It is not a list of things to do to get saved. You cannot earn what was given to you before the world began. These are not steps to get home. They are how to walk home awake.

Be still. Stop running toward a God who was never away. Take a few quiet minutes each day to remember where you are: in Him.

> "*Be still, and know that I am God.*" (Psalm 46:10)

Name the feeling, then look across from it. When fear, shame, or anger rises, do not fight it or hide from it. Ask what sits across from it: trust, worth, peace. Then choose that, even while the feeling is still there. That choice is the whole reason you came.

Judge yourself gently. Look honestly at your own heart, not to condemn it, but to learn from it. Discern, do not sentence.

> "*Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.*" (Psalm 139:23-24)

Forgive while the wound is still fresh. This is the real exam. Every time you let go of a wrong that still hurts, peace stops being something given to you and becomes something you chose.

> "*And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.*" (Ephesians 4:32)

See every soul as His. The stranger, the enemy, the person who believes nothing at all is a soul on the same road, just further back or further on. Treat them that way.

> "*Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.*" (Romans 13:10)

Let go of fear for the ones you love. No one you love is lost in a far-off place. They are in the same hands you are. Pray for them in peace, not panic.

> "*Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*" (Philippians 4:6-7)

Renew your mind every day. The veil is over the mind, so the mind is where the work is done. Each time you catch an old fear-thought, set the truth beside it.

> "*And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.*" (Romans 12:2)

Search the Scriptures for yourself. Never let anyone, this book included, do your reading for you.

> "*…and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.*" (Acts 17:11)

You came forth from the Father. You are here to learn what love costs, and to choose it anyway. And you are going home.

> "*…who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.*" (1 Peter 2:9)

From the darkness into the light. That is the journey home.

MJI LightWorker

Word Studies

The Greek and Hebrew words used in this book, in alphabetical order. The number after each word is its number in Strong's Exhaustive Concordance, so you can look it up for yourself. Tap a part name under "In this book" to go back to where the word appears.

Aion, Aionios (Greek, G165, G166): Aion means an age: a long period of time with a beginning and an end. Our English word "eon" comes from it. The King James renders it "world" about 38 times and "ever" about 70 times, often in the phrase "for ever." Its adjective, aionios, is translated "eternal" and "everlasting," yet in Romans 16:25, 2 Timothy 1:9, and Titus 1:2 the same word describes times "since the world began" and "before the world began," times that had an end.

In this book: Part Four: Romans 16:25; Matthew 25:46; Matthew 12:32
Part Five: Hebrews 1:2; Hebrews 11:3; Ephesians 2:7

Apallotrioo (Greek, G526): To estrange, to make a stranger of. Used three times: "aliens" in Ephesians 2:12, and "alienated" in Ephesians 4:18 and Colossians 1:21. In each, the estrangement is on the human side, in the understanding and the mind.

In this book: Part Two: Ephesians 4:18; Colossians 1:21

Apollumi, Apoleia (Greek, G622, G684): Apollumi means to lose, to be lost, to perish, or to destroy. The lost sheep, the lost coin, and the lost son of Luke 15, and "that which was lost" in Luke 19:10, are all this same word. Its noun, apoleia, is translated "destruction" (Matthew 7:13) and "perdition."

In this book: Part Four: Matthew 7:13; Matthew 10:28; Luke 13:3; Luke 19:10

Autokatakritos (Greek, G843): Self-condemned: auto ("self") + katakritos ("condemned"). Used only once, in Titus 3:11, translated "condemned of himself." See Katakrino.

In this book: Part Three: Titus 3:11

Bachar (Hebrew, H977): To choose, to select after testing or careful thought. Used in "choose life" (Deuteronomy 30:19) and "choose you this day whom ye will serve" (Joshua 24:15).

In this book: Part Three: Deuteronomy 30:19

Badal (mavdilim) (Hebrew, H914): To divide, to separate, to set apart. First used in Genesis 1:4: "God divided the light from the darkness." In Isaiah 59:2 it appears as

mavdilim, an ongoing form, “are making a division,” with the iniquities as the ones doing it.

In this book: Part Two: Isaiah 59:2; Genesis 1:4

Bios (Greek, G979): Life in the flesh: daily living, livelihood, the means of living. Used about ten times, as in “pleasures of this life” (Luke 8:14) and “the pride of life” (1 John 2:16). It is never used of eternal life. Compare Zoe.

In this book: Part Five: Luke 8:14

Chesed (Hebrew, H2617): Steadfast, loyal, covenant love. The King James most often renders it “mercy,” and also “kindness,” “lovingkindness,” and “goodness.” It is the “mercy” in “his mercy endureth for ever” (Psalm 136). Compare Eleos.

In this book: Part Six: Psalm 136:1; Micah 7:18

Diakrino, Diakrisis (Greek, G1252, G1253): Dia (“through, thoroughly”) + krino: to separate thoroughly, to discern, to make a distinction. Paul uses diakrino for judging ourselves in 1 Corinthians 11:31. Its noun, diakrisis, is “discern” in Hebrews 5:14 and “discerning” in “discerning of spirits” (1 Corinthians 12:10). See Krino.

In this book: Part Three: 1 Corinthians 11:31; Hebrews 5:14

Echad (Hebrew, H259): One: a unity that can hold more than one within it. Used in “The LORD our God is one LORD” (Deuteronomy 6:4), “they shall be one flesh” (Genesis 2:24), and the evening and the morning that were “the first day,” literally “day one” (Genesis 1:5).

In this book: Part Two: Deuteronomy 6:4; Genesis 2:24

Eleos (Greek, G1656): Mercy: compassion that acts. The Greek counterpart of chesed, as in “God, who is rich in mercy” (Ephesians 2:4). Compare Chesed.

In this book: Part Six: Titus 3:5

En pasin (Greek, G1722 + G3956): “In all.” The closing words of Ephesians 4:6. The Greek text the King James followed reads “in you all”; many of the oldest manuscripts read simply “in all.”

In this book: Part Two: Ephesians 4:6

Enkataleipo (Greek, G1459): To leave behind, to abandon, to forsake. Jesus’ cry “why hast thou forsaken me?” (Matthew 27:46) and God’s promise “I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee” (Hebrews 13:5) use this same word.

In this book: Part Two: Matthew 27:46; Hebrews 13:5

Entos (Greek, G1787): Within, inside. Used only twice: "the kingdom of God is within you" (Luke 17:21) and "that which is within the cup and platter" (Matthew 23:26).

In this book: Part Two: Luke 17:21

Gehenna (Greek, G1067): From the Hebrew ge Hinnom, the Valley of Hinnom, just south of Jerusalem (Joshua 15:8; Jeremiah 7:31). It appears 12 times and is translated "hell" every time: 11 times from Jesus, and once in James 3:6.

In this book: Part Four: Matthew 10:28; Joshua 15:8; Jeremiah 7:31

Genos (Greek, G1085): Kin, family, offspring, kind. Paul's "we are also his offspring" (Acts 17:28) is genos. Elsewhere it is translated "kindred," "nation," and "kind."

In this book: Part Two: Acts 17:28

Ginosko (Greek, G1097): To know, especially by experience and relationship rather than by information. Used in "I never knew you" (Matthew 7:23) and "this is life eternal, that they might know thee" (John 17:3).

In this book: Part Four: Matthew 7:23

Hades (Greek, G86): The unseen place of the dead; the Greek counterpart of sheol. The King James renders it "hell" 10 times and "grave" once (1 Corinthians 15:55). Jesus holds its keys (Revelation 1:18), and it is cast into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:14). Compare Sheol.

In this book: Part Four: Acts 2:27; Revelation 1:18; Luke 16:23; Revelation 20:14

Hamartia (Greek, G266): Sin. From a root meaning to miss the mark, like an arrow falling short of the target. The verb form, hamartano (G264), is "sinned" in "all have sinned" (Romans 3:23).

In this book: Part Two: Romans 3:23

Hen (Greek, G1520): One: the neuter form of heis. Used in "I and my Father are one" (John 10:30) and in Jesus' prayer "that they all may be one" (John 17:21-23).

In this book: Part Two: John 10:30; John 17:21

Katakrino (Greek, G2632): Kata ("against") + krino: to judge against, to condemn. Translated "condemn" and, in Mark 16:16, "damned." See Krino and Autokatakritos.

In this book: Part Three: 1 Corinthians 11:32
Part Four: Mark 16:16

Katallage, Katallasso (Greek, G2643, G2644): Katallage is reconciliation: an exchange, a

change from one state to another. It appears four times; the King James renders it "atonement" in Romans 5:11, and "reconciling" or "reconciliation" in Romans 11:15 and 2 Corinthians 5:18-19. The verb katallasso, to reconcile, is used of God "reconciling the world unto himself" (2 Corinthians 5:18-20).

In this book: Part Two: Romans 5:11; 2 Corinthians 5:19

Kolasis (Greek, G2851): Correction, punishment: first used of pruning a tree so that it grows. It appears only twice in the New Testament: "everlasting punishment" (Matthew 25:46) and "fear hath torment" (1 John 4:18). Compare Timoria.

In this book: Part Four: Matthew 25:46

Krino, Krisis (Greek, G2919, G2920): Krino means to separate, to distinguish, to decide, to judge. Its noun, krisis, is a separating, a point of decision; our words "crisis" and "critic" come from this root. The King James mostly renders krisis "judgment," but also "condemnation" (John 3:19) and "damnation" (John 5:29). See Diakrino, Katakrino, and Kritikos.

In this book: Part Three: John 3:19; John 12:47-48
Part Four: John 5:29; John 3:18-19

Kritikos (Greek, G2924): Able to discern, to judge. Used only once: the word of God is "a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Hebrews 4:12). See Krino.

In this book: Part Three: Hebrews 4:12

Logizomai (Greek, G3049): To count, to reckon, to put to someone's account. Translated "impute," "count," "reckon," and "think." Used in "not imputing their trespasses unto them" (2 Corinthians 5:19) and in charity that "thinketh no evil" (1 Corinthians 13:5), love that keeps no account of wrongs.

In this book: Part Two: 2 Corinthians 5:19

Metanoia, Metanoeo (Greek, G3341, G3340): Meta ("after, change") + noeo ("to perceive, to think"): a change of mind. Metanoia is translated "repentance," and the verb metanoeo "repent," as in Luke 13:3.

In this book: Part Two: The Words Behind Oneness
Part Four: Luke 13:3

Mishpat (Hebrew, H4941): Judgment, but also manner, order, custom, right, and ordinance: the right way a thing works. Used about 421 times and translated "judgment" about 296 of them, as well as "manner" (1 Samuel 8:9) and "order" (Judges 13:12). From shaphat. See Shaphat.

In this book: Part Three: 1 Samuel 8:9; Judges 13:12; Leviticus 18:5

Mone (Greek, G3438): A dwelling, an abiding place, from meno, "to abide." Used only twice, both in John 14: "In my Father's house are many mansions" (John 14:2) and "we will come unto him, and make our abode with him" (John 14:23).

In this book: Part One: John 14:2, 23

Nephesh (Hebrew, H5315): Soul, life, the living being: the whole person made alive. "Man became a living soul [nephesh]" (Genesis 2:7). Translated mostly "soul" and "life."

In this book: Part Five: Genesis 2:7

Olam (beyth olam) (Hebrew, H5769): Long duration, the far horizon of time, past or future. Translated "for ever," "everlasting," "perpetual," and "of old." Jonah's "for ever" lasted three days (Jonah 2:6). Beyth olam, "house of the ages," is the "long home" of Ecclesiastes 12:5.

In this book: Part Four: Jonah 2:6
Part Five: Ecclesiastes 12:5

Paideuo (Greek, G3811): To train a child; to instruct, to teach, to chasten. From pais, "child." Translated "chastened" (1 Corinthians 11:32; Hebrews 12:6), "learned" (Acts 7:22), and "teaching" (Titus 2:12).

In this book: Part Three: 1 Corinthians 11:32

Pneuma (Greek, G4151): Spirit, breath, wind. "The wind [pneuma] bloweth where it listeth… so is every one that is born of the Spirit [pneuma]" (John 3:8). The Greek counterpart of ruach. Compare Ruach.

In this book: Part Five: Hebrews 12:9; John 6:63

Pselaphao (Greek, G5584): To feel about, to grope, as a person does in the dark; to touch or handle. Used in "feel after him" (Acts 17:27), "handle me, and see" (Luke 24:39), and "our hands have handled" (1 John 1:1).

In this book: Part Two: Acts 17:27

Psuche (Greek, G5590): Soul, life, the self. From psucho, "to breathe." Translated "soul" about 58 times and "life" about 40. Matthew 16:25-26 uses it four times: twice as "life" and twice as "soul."

In this book: Part Five: Matthew 16:25-26

Qadosh (Hebrew, H6918): Holy, sacred, set apart for God. Used of God in "Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory" (Isaiah 6:3).

In this book: Part Two: Isaiah 6:3

Ruach (Hebrew, H7307): Spirit, breath, wind. Translated "spirit," "wind," and "breath." "The spirit [ruach] shall return unto God who gave it" (Ecclesiastes 12:7). The Hebrew counterpart of pneuma. Compare Pneuma.

In this book: Part Five: Zechariah 12:1; Ecclesiastes 12:7

Shaphat (Hebrew, H8199): To judge, to govern, to vindicate, to set things right. The judges of Israel were deliverers and rulers more than courtroom officials: "the LORD raised up judges, which delivered them" (Judges 2:16). Its noun is mishpat. See Mishpat.

In this book: Part Three: 1 Samuel 8:9; Judges 13:12

Sheol (Hebrew, H7585): The grave, the unseen world of the dead, where all go. Used 65 times: the King James translates it "hell" 31 times, "grave" 31 times, and "pit" 3 times. Jacob expected to go there (Genesis 37:35). Compare Hades.

In this book: Part Four: Genesis 37:35

Suneidesis (Greek, G4893): Conscience: sun ("together with") + eido ("to know"), a knowing together with oneself. Always translated "conscience," as in Romans 2:15.

In this book: Part Three: Romans 2:15

Tartaroo (Greek, G5020): To hold in Tartarus. Used only once, of the angels "reserved unto judgment" (2 Peter 2:4), where the King James reads "cast them down to hell."

In this book: Part Four: 2 Peter 2:4

Theion (Greek, G2303): Brimstone, sulfur. In the ancient world sulfur was burned to cleanse and purify. Used in Luke 17:29 and six times in Revelation.

In this book: Part Four: Revelation 20:10, 15

Thelo (Greek, G2309): To will, to wish, to desire. Used in "whosoever will" (Revelation 22:17) and of God, "who will have all men to be saved" (1 Timothy 2:4).

In this book: Part Three: Revelation 22:17

Timoria (Greek, G5098): Punishment that satisfies the one who inflicts it; vengeance. Used only once in the New Testament, "sorer punishment" (Hebrews 10:29). Compare Kolasis.

In this book: Part Four: compared with kolasis in Matthew 25:46

Zoe (Greek, G2222): Life itself, the life of God that does not run out. "In him was life [zoe]" (John 1:4). Every mention of eternal life in the New Testament uses zoe. Compare

Bios.

In this book: Part Five: John 11:25; John 6:63

About The Author

MJI LightWorker is the pen name of an author who writes for one purpose: to bring forward the truths about God, the soul, and salvation that most of us were never taught.

Every study is built on the King James Bible, read whole and in context, with the original Hebrew and Greek words close at hand. The message running through all of it is the message of this book: there is no separation between God and the soul, fear was never the message, and every soul is on its way home.

Hundreds of free studies, picture studies, and videos are available at stairway2heaven.org, and on the MJI LightWorker YouTube channel, Facebook, and Pinterest.

Questions and comments are always welcome at living2eternity@gmail.com.

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