

The firstborn over all creation (Colossians 1:15)

written by Alfred Persson | November 30, 2023



As a former Jehovah's Witnesses who once quoted "He is...firstborn over all creation" to prove Christ is the "first created", I want to share the context I never saw when I did that.

Let's see what Paul is really saying about Christ:

15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.

16 For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.

17 And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. (Col. 1:15-17 NKJ)

Paul says Christ created all things, that He existed before they did, and that IN HIM "all things consist".

You saw the movie the Matrix. Reality was generated by computers. Our reality is like a matrix, it is generated by the Mind of God. By the power of God's thought, all things "hold together, consist".

Christ created all things by verbalizing God's thought, He is the Word of God. When God wants something to exist, the Word of God gives it concrete existence, IN HIS MIND. He "speaks it into being", actualizing it.

Then it exists.

“for in Him we live and move and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said,`For we are also His offspring.’ (Acts 17:28 NKJ)

That is how Christ is the “firstborn heir of what the Father had Him create, the ” πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως, (Col. 1:15 BGT)

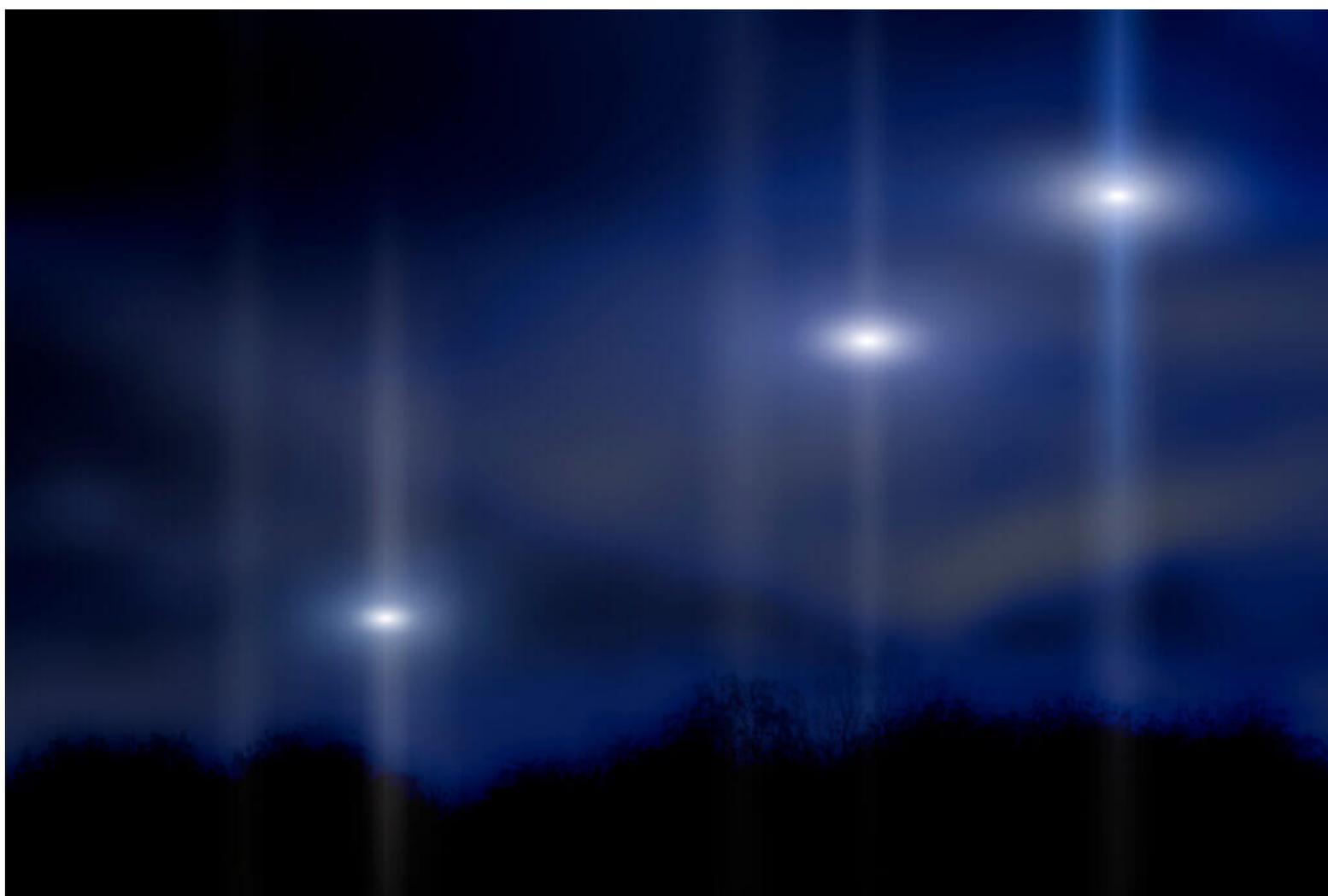
Therefore, I as a Jehovah’s Witnesses was wrong. It is NOT saying Christ is created.

I publicly regret my error.

As the Son of the Father, Jesus is the Firstborn Heir of all God creates.

Star Wars in Daniel

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Star Wars in Daniel

It grew so big it reached the army (06635 צבא' tsaba') of heaven, and it brought about the fall of some of the army (06635 צבא' tsaba') and some of the stars (03556 כוכב kowkab) to the ground, where it trampled them. (Dan. 8:10 NET)

And I, Daniel, fainted and was sick for days; afterward I arose and went about the king's business. I was astonished by the vision, but no one

understood it. (Dan. 8:27 NKJ)

Why was Daniel “astonished” by this vision? Recall God specially gifted Daniel to understand enigma and vision (Dan. 2:47; 4:8-9; 5:11-12). So why couldn't he understand this vision, why didn't his fellow experts in scripture interpretation “understand it”.

How likely is it modern Commentators, who see nothing astonishing in this context, see same thing Daniel is seeing described by his words? Why aren't they also “astonished” and made “sick for days”?

The most likely explanation for their different reaction is, they are seeing different events described by the words. Looked at from another angle. modern commentators claim the “little Horn” is Antiochus and the “army of God” or “stars” may be Israel's saints, priests or chief rulers. How could any of that “astonish” Daniel and his fellow experts in Scripture prophecy? They were living in exile caused by King Nebuchadnezzar when he defeated the “saints” and “army” and then destroyed God's Temple in Jerusalem. How could seeing that duplicated in a vision “astonish” Daniel?

Therefore, the normally sound rule for interpreting ancient documents according to the understanding of the author may not be sound for this prophecy of what will happen in the future, Daniel confesses he is astonished by the vision and neither he nor his friends understood it.

So how can we interpret Daniel's prophecy? Scripture says “the wise shall understand” in the “time of the end”, wise being “critical thinkers” “the wise” and “prudent” able to infer from events in the end time what astonished Daniel. So the predicted events would unseal the words:

8 Although I heard, I did not understand. Then I said, “My lord, what shall be the end of these things?”

9 And he said, “Go your way, Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.

10 “Many shall be purified, made white, and refined, but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand. (Dan. 12:8-10 NKJ)

Therefore, we must look at End Time events to infer what might have astonished Daniel and made him sick for days. Confirming this, Gabriel said the vision occurs in the End Time, not the time of Antiochus Epiphanes.

So he came near where I stood, and when he came I was afraid and fell on my face; but he said to me, “Understand, son of man, that the vision refers to the time of the end.” (Dan. 8:17 NKJ)

We who live in the End Times know what the coming “strong delusion” (2 Thess. 2:9-12) , “Ancient Alien Theory” that promotes Atheism. The

spectacular rise of UFO spectacles is causing a massive falling away from belief in God.

Given that context, what could the “army of heaven” and “Stars” be?

All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; He does according to His will in the army of heaven And among the inhabitants of the earth. No one can restrain His hand Or say to Him, “What have You done?” (Dan. 4:35 NKJ)

Then he said, “Do you know why I have come to you? And now I must return to fight with the prince of Persia; and when I have gone forth, indeed the prince of Greece will come. (Dan. 10:20 NKJ)

They fought from the heavens; The stars from their courses fought against Sisera. (Jdg. 5:20 NKJ)

And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, (Rev. 12:7 NKJ)

And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. (Rev. 19:14 NKJ)

Daniel saw a version of “Star Wars”, God’s angels fighting Satan’s angels in service to the Antichrist, in the end time.

Today, words describing such battles are “unsealed”, easily understood.

Gabriel distinguishes between “the mighty” (= the stars) and “the holy people” (=the army of heaven):

24 His power shall be mighty, but not by his own power; He shall destroy fearfully, And shall prosper and thrive; He shall destroy the mighty (06099 אֲטֻמִּים `atsuwm), and also the holy people. (Dan. 8:24 NKJ)

In Joel 2:11 “mighty” refers to angels:

ADONAI shouts orders to his forces- his army is immense, mighty (06099 אֲטֻמִּים `atsuwm), and it does what he says. For great is the Day of ADONAI, fearsome, terrifying! Who can endure it? (Joel 2:11 CJB)

Joel stopped talking about locusts or humans, he telescopes to the End Time when he speaks of “the day of the LORD great and terrible.” Therefore, the “mighty army” are angels who in the End Time slay the armies of the Beast, the Assyrian Antichrist whose name is Adonikam (Mic. 5:5-6; Isa. 10:24, 32; 14:25-27; 30:31-33; Zeph. 2:13-15; Zech. 12:2-3; 14:1-4; Rev. 19:17-21).

A “Star Wars” event WOULD astonish and confuse Daniel and all his contemporaries. Especially when the “sanctuary” is the Body of Christ the Temple of God and “the Daily” is their taking up Christ’s cross daily and

counting 2,300 days from the start of the End Time Week, the vindicated^[1] Church the Temple of God celebrates in heaven (Rev. 15:1-4).

The army (“host”) of heaven denotes both redeemed humanity (Ps. 110:3; Exod. 7:4; Rev. 19:14) and angelic soldiers (1 Kings 22:19). Even some of “the stars” (angels Job 38:7; Ps. 148:2) were brought down, meaning they crashed to the earth (Judg. 5:20; Dan. 10:13, 20; Rev. 12:7-9) and both are dishonored.

Its power reached to the heavens, where it attacked the heavenly army, throwing some of the heavenly beings and some of the stars to the ground and trampling them. (Dan. 8:10 NLT)

The Interpretation

The Assyrian Antichrist (Mic. 5:5-6; Isa. 10:24, 32; 14:25-27; 30:31-33; Zeph. 2:13-15; Zech. 12:2-3; 14:1-4; Rev. 19:17-21) rises from the remnants of the Seleucid dynasty, ancient Grecian Syria. Hence the end time revived Byzantine Roman Empire has a leopard body (Dan. 2:40-44; 7:7-9, 17-27; Rev. 13:2). I infer from the parallels with Antiochus Epiphanes he will rise up in modern Turkey near Antioch his ancient capital.

END NOTES

[1]

The usual translation of Dan. 8:14 “sanctuary will be cleansed” is chosen over a more literal and likely meaning, “will be vindicated” because translators refuse to allow Daniel’s prophecy actually foretelling events. The vindication of the church’s faith is pictured in Revelation 15:1-8. It appears suddenly disconnected to the surrounding events. Chronologically, it 2,300 days after the beginning of the end time week, after everyone is raptured or gathered by Christ angels. Their faith in God now vindicated and celebrated in heaven.

Commentators reject the literal reading because:

will be purified. The Hebrew verb, weniṣdaq (the only occurrence of the niphal of ṣdq in the MT!) should mean “will be justified.” But this can hardly be said of the sanctuary. The underlying Aramaic was surely yidkê, “will be cleansed, purified,” which was corrupted into, or misread by the translator as yizkê, “will be victorious, justified.”- Hartman, L. F., & Di Lella, A. A. (2008). The Book Of Daniel: A New Translation With Notes And Commentary On Chapters 1-9 (Vol. 23, p. 227). New Haven; London: Yale University Press.

It is NOT unhistorical the “Temple of God” prophetically in the End Time is the Church (1 Cor. 3:16-17; 6:19. 2 Cor. 6:16. 2 Thess. 2:4. Eph. 2:21), then the literal meaning of the Church being vindicated for her faith in God could be what the text is literally referring to. Of course, reference to the Church, the vision of the Church would likely add to the

reasons why these visions were “sealed” to Daniel, he couldn’t understand them. End time events would unseal the words (Dan. 12:8-9).

Unidentified Aerial Phenomena Wing of Abominations in Daniel 9:27

Nephilim Fallen Angels and the Sons of God

The Powerful Delusion: The Coming Tsunami of Spiritism

Three Unclean Spirits Like Frogs: The Big Lie God is an ET

The Antichrist: His Names Titles and Descriptions

What did the apostle John reveal when he said: “It is the last hour”?

Where Is The Judgment Of Fallen Angels?

Do Ancient Aliens Appear in the Bible?

The Coming False Christ and His Followers Revealed

Is it better to defend Christian doctrine, or have disputers prove their ideas?

written by Alfred Persson | November 30, 2023



I was converted by the classic Apologetic [Apostles of Denial, E.C. Gruss] from JW belief to Orthodox Trinitarianism, over 40 years ago. Since that time I’ve tried to convince other JW’s, and failed. They endlessly dispute every text I bring to support the Christian idea of God.

What if I have been doing this backwards? When a JW says, “the Trinity is not taught in the Bible,” perhaps I should respond: “what is? What is your concept of God.”

Ironically enough, for a group so invested in claiming Christians got their ideas from pagans, The JW’s believe Jehovah God is the biggest “spirit body” on top of something like a pagan Greek Parthenon of “Elohim”, and like them not omnipresent. Although Almighty, infinite in

power unlike the angels, He lives in a “spirit-body” just like them.

In between God the biggest “spirit” in the Parthenon and the smaller “angel spirits”, is the arch-angel Jesus (a.k.a. Michael)—unlike them Jesus is an “a-god”. Above all other angel “Elohim” “sons of God”, but below their Creator Jehovah God. They all live spatially in a place called “heaven:

“While there are physical bodies visible and palpable, there are also spiritual bodies, invisible to human eyes and entirely beyond human senses. (1 Cor. 15:44) The bodies of spiritual persons (God, Christ, the angels) are glorious...The true God is not omnipresent.”—Aid To Bible Understanding, p. 247, 665 (Watchtower Bible & Tract Society, 1971)

Perhaps we would have more success demanding they prove from the scriptures their odd “pagan” view of a finite God?

Then the “shoe” is on the other foot, their proofs are being contradicted.

Whereas before, they ignored our “proofs”, they can’t ignore how their “proofs” didn’t hold up to scrutiny.

Homosexuality is no worse than heterosexual fornication, both keep practitioners out of the kingdom of God

written by Alfred Persson | November 30, 2023



I said: "Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, The LORD of hosts." (Isa. 6:5 NKJ)

Without Christ's sacrifice covering sins, even Isaiah the Prophet shrank back in sheer Terror at the sight of our Holy God. Paul said:

Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men (2 Cor. 5:11 NKJ)

All sinners have a glorious opportunity for life open to them, if they repent and believe in the Name of our LORD Jesus Christ.

Homosexuality is no worse than heterosexual fornication, both keep committed practitioners out of the kingdom of God:

*9 Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither **fornicators**, nor idolaters, **nor adulterers**, **nor homosexuals**, **nor sodomites**,
10 **nor thieves**, **nor covetous**, **nor drunkards**, **nor revilers**, **nor***

extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. (1 Cor. 6:9-10 NKJ)
Hell is the last chance to repent, be purged of the darkness that prevents the God from allowing the sinner into His presence.

God cannot change His nature, He is Holy and cannot abide with sin. He is light, darkness cannot dwell with Him; as light destroys darkness so will unredeemed sinners be banished into eternal darkness.

If anyone practicing darkness wants to live with God, it is THEY who must change. God cannot and will not.

God gives everyone in Hell, who did not in full knowledge and will reject Him, the chance to repent and be saved. **First He liberates them from the power of sin, the fire of God's inspection burns it out of them.** Then, when all self-delusion about sin is removed, the gospel is preached so they can repent and live according to God in the Spirit:

When the Lord has washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and purged the blood of Jerusalem from her midst, by the spirit of judgment and by the spirit of burning,

5 then the LORD will create above every dwelling place of Mount Zion, and above her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day and the shining of a flaming fire by night. For over all the glory there will be a covering.

6 And there will be a tabernacle for shade in the daytime from the heat, for a place of refuge, and for a shelter from storm and rain. (Isa. 4:4-5:1 NKJ)

God wants everyone to be saved and goes the extra mile trying to make that happen.

But He will not violate free will. If a sinner rejects the gospel in full knowledge and will, there is no "second chance." They had their chance. But all who repent of things God simply cannot allow into His presence, can be saved in the name of Jesus, the only name whereby salvation is possible:

For this reason the gospel was preached also to those who are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit. (1 Pet. 4:6 NKJ)

Go here for more:

<https://endtimenews.net/is-the-rich-man-and-lazarus-story-about-hell-prophecy-parable-or-both/>

Billy Graham, John Ankerberg, Ron Rhodes claim 2 Cor. 6:2 limit the time of salvation to this life

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Nowhere does the Bible teach that we will have a second chance to receive Christ and be saved after we die. This is one reason why the Bible says, "I tell you, now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation" (2 Corinthians 6:2). I pray that you will take this warning very seriously.-Billy Graham

Over 20 verses implicitly or explicitly refer to a literal or figurative "second chance": 1.) All who obey Christ's voice in the grave rise to life: "All who are in the graves will hear His voice "and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life" (John 5:28-29); 2.) All passing the Judgment after death eagerly wait for salvation: " It is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment...those who

eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation". (Heb. 9:27-28); 3.) Departed Spirits in prison give the answer of a good conscience to Christ's preaching: "He went and preached to the spirits in prison...an antitype... now saves us— baptism...the answer of a good conscience toward God" (1 Pet. 3:19-21); 4.) Gospel also preached to the dead so they could live according to God in the Spirit: "For this reason the gospel was preached also to those who are dead, that they might...live according to God in the spirit (1 Pet. 4:6 NKJ)." See also Dt. 32:39; 1Sam. 2:6; 2Sam. 22:5-7; Ps. 16:10-11; Ps. 30:3-6; Ps. 40:1-3; Ps. 49:12-15; Ps. 56:13; Ps. 68:18-20; Ps. 69:13-18; Ps. 71:19-23; Ps. 86:13; Ps. 102:18-22; Ps. 116:1-9; Hos. 13:14; Jon. 2:1-10; Zec. 9:9-11; Mt. 12:30-3; Rm. 11:25-3; 1 Cor. 5:5; Eph. 4:8-10; Rev. 20:12:

Paul wasn't limiting "the time of God's favor" or "day of salvation" to those living in the 1st century Corinthian Church, he was pleading the Corinthians reject the false gospel of the Judaizers (2 Cor. 3:12-16; Gal. 3:1-6) who were adding Mosaic Law to the Gospel , rendering faith "vain" (2756 κενός kenos empty) of effect. "Now" was a good time for them to repent (2 Cor. 5:20-21; 6:1-2).

The "time of God's Favor" is always "now", unlimited by time or place. All repenting in Isaiah's Day whom Paul quoted (Isa. 49:8), or today would find God favorable to their appeal. It follows the opportunity is also not limited by place, whether one is alive in Corinth, or departed in Hades...If they repent, that too is in the "now", an "acceptable time" to God.

The Seven Spirits of God

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The Seven Spirits of God

*And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and **seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth.** (Rev. 5:6 NKJ)*

*John, to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come, **and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne,** (Rev. 1:4 NKJ)*

*“And to the angel of the church in Sardis write, `These things says **He who has the seven Spirits of God** and the seven stars: “I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead. (Rev. 3:1 NKJ)*

*And from the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices. **Seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.** (Rev. 4:5 NKJ)*

9 “The hands of Zerubbabel Have laid the foundation of this temple; His hands shall also finish it. Then you will know That the LORD of hosts has sent Me to you.

*10 For who has despised the day of small things? **For these seven rejoice to see The plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel. They are the eyes of the LORD, Which scan to and fro throughout the whole earth.”** (Zech. 4:9-11 NKJ)*

□If Sherlock Holmes were to view this, he would piece the details given into a picture, like pieces of a puzzle.

Evidently there are “seven spirits” before the throne of God, just as there are seven angels (Re. 8:2) also called “stars” (Rev. 1:20) in scripture. These “seven spirits” “scan to and fro throughout the while earth” therefore they see everything that happens on the “seven seas” (The Artic Ocean, North Atlantic Ocean, South Atlantic Ocean, Indian Ocean, North Pacific Ocean, and South Pacific Ocean, and Antarctic Ocean) and “seven continents” (Asia, Africa, Europe, North America, South America, Australia/Oceania and Antarctica), and report all to God.

They can empower whoever holds the “plumb line” of the LORD, to accomplish God’s will.

As all things have been subjected to Christ (1 Cor. 15:27-28) He is symbolized as a Lamb having the seven eyes or seven spirits of God under His command.

END NOTE

A sound principle of interpretation is misused when applied to prophecy. We see the meaning of words in the culture of the author, unless he is prophesying future events (like Daniel and the end time), where words can convey meaning the prophet didn’t know (1 Pt. 1:10-12; Compare Daniel 12:8-10). Yes, John may not have known about the “seven seas” and “seven continents”, but scripture testifies the “eyes” go everywhere on earth.

Christ preached to the spirits in prison (1 Peter 3:18-22)

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18 For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit (ζωοποιηθεῖς δὲ πνεύματι) :

19 By which also (ἐν ᾧ καὶ) he went and preached (2784 κηρύσσω kerusso) unto the spirits in prison;

20 Which sometime were disobedient (544 ἀπειθέω apeitheo), when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.

21 The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:

22 Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him. (1 Pet. 3:18-4:1 KJV)

Many claim the word “preach” means “proclaim doom”. Why Christ would go to a prison in hades and proclaim doom to spirits who surely would have figured that out, is never explained.

Its also inconsistent with Christ's mission:

The same precise word for preach (2784 κηρύσσω kerusso) is also used in these two verses:

18 "The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim (2784 κηρύσσω kerusso) liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed;

19 To proclaim (2784 κηρύσσω kerusso) the acceptable year of the LORD."
(Lk. 4:18-19 NKJ)

Wouldn't proclaiming (2784 κηρύσσω kerusso) liberty to the captives be more consistent with Christ's mission than proclaiming doom?

Did Jesus proclaim doom to us?

When physically alive as the Ark was being prepared, the "spirits in prison" disobeyed Noah's preaching:

who formerly were disobedient(544 ἀπειθέω apeitheo), when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water. (1 Pet. 3:20 NKJ)

544 ἀπειθέω apeitheo {ap-i-theh'-o}

Meaning: 1) not to allow one's self to be persuaded 1a) to refuse or withhold belief 1b) to refuse belief and obedience 2) not to comply with.-Strong's Concordance

Why couldn't they believe Noah and obey his preaching? They didn't believe God would forgive the defilement of the "image of God", its corruption with the "image of angels".

There is good reason for disbelief. Its clear God does not like mixed breeding:

'You shall keep My statutes. You shall not let your livestock breed with another kind. You shall not sow your field with mixed seed. Nor shall a garment of mixed linen and wool come upon you. (Lev. 19:19 NKJ Compare Dt. 22:9, 11))

Ignorance of God makes room for divine forgiveness (1 Tim. 1:13; Lev. 5:18; Ez. 45:20; Lk. 12:48) in the "age to come" (Mt. 12:30-32).

As these disembodied "men of renown" (Gen. 6:4) were a "special case Christ made a special trip proclaiming (2784 κηρύσσω kerusso) "liberty to the captives" (Lk. 4:18) because they were not evil, they simply couldn't believe Noah's preaching God would forgive their "mixed breeding":

Formerly they were disobedient. Not when Christ Triumphant appeared clothed in Shekhina glory. They responded to Christ's preaching giving "the answer of a good conscience towards God" just as did the Church, which reminded Peter of the "like-figure" (499 ἀντίτυπος antitypos) of Baptism: "Buried with Christ and raised up with Him to new life" (Rom. 6:4; Eph. 2:3-7; Col. 2:12-14) through the resurrection power of Christ (1 Pet. 3:21-22). Just as the Church is saved by responding to Christ's preaching with new life, so were these "spirits in prison." Christ led them "captives in His train" (Eph. 4:8-10), receiving "gifts" from the formerly rebellious for they were glad the LORD God could now dwell among them (Ps. 68:18).

18 You have ascended on high, You have led captivity captive; You have received gifts among men, Even from the rebellious, That the LORD God might dwell there.

19 Blessed be the Lord, Who daily loads us with benefits, The God of our salvation! Selah

20 Our God is the God of salvation; And to GOD the Lord belong escapes from death. (Ps. 68:18-20 NKJ)

8 Therefore He says: "When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, And gave gifts to men."

9 (Now this, "He ascended"— what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth?

10 He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.) (Eph. 4:8-10 NKJ)

Therefore, ζῶσθαι ἐν πνεύματι is a "dative of reference" indicating the Holy Spirit is the sphere of existence which enveloped Christ's human soul (Ps. 16:10; Acts 2:31) reviving it (LXX ἐζωοποίησας Ps. 70:20; Is. 57:15; 2 Cor. 13:4) and 'in that sphere of the Holy Spirit' (ἐν ᾧ καὶ) Christ Triumphant (Ac. 2:24; Eph. 4:8-10; Heb. 4:14) went and preached proclaiming (2784 κηρύσσω kerusso) "liberty to the captives (Lk. 4:18) "spirits in prison" who "could not believe" (544 ἀπειθέω apeitheo) Noah's preaching and so "disobeyed" it.

The antithesis: Jesus was "put to death in the flesh" (by the hand of man), His soul went to Hades/Sheol (Ac. 2:24), but then Jesus is quickened (by the Holy Spirit).

The anthesis is precise because "death of the flesh" is not annihilation as the JWs suppose.

The Holy Spirit formed a protective life strengthening sphere of power and lifegiving energy around the human soul of Jesus, and "in that sphere of the Spirit" ἐν ᾧ καὶ (1 Pet. 3:19 BYZ), He proclaimed liberty to the captive spirits in prison.

According to Bible revelation, human souls are weak when unclothed (2 Cor. 5:2-4) in death, only when clothed in the resurrection of the body

do both become “immortal” and powerful (1 Cor. 15:42-53). Therefore, as Jesus’ soul was truly human, it was too weak to endure the pangs of Sheol and proclaim liberty to the captives.

Therefore, in Hades Jesus soul was “quickenened in the sphere of the Holy Spirit, revived and strengthened”. Then emanating the Shechinah glory of God, Christ Triumphant descends to the lowest hells fully protected from all harm, in brilliant light without variation (Isa. 9:2-3; Jas. 1:17; 1 Tim. 6:14-16), proclaiming liberty to the captive spirits in prison.

The people who walked in darkness Have seen a great light; Those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, Upon them a light has shined. (Isa. 9:2 NKJ)

Christ proclaimed liberty to the captives to the glorious end of His earthly ministry, in glorious Triumph over Satan and Death.

45 And so it is written, “The first man Adam became a living being.” The last Adam became a life-giving spirit.

46 However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural, and afterward the spiritual.

47 The first man was of the earth, made of dust; the second Man is the Lord from heaven.

48 As was the man of dust, so also are those who are made of dust; and as is the heavenly Man, so also are those who are heavenly.

49 And as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Man.

”

55 “O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?”

56 The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law.

57 But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord. (1 Cor. 15:45-49, 55-58 NKJ)

Then Peter returns to the theme of “Christ preaching liberty to the dead”. This time to a different group of unsaved humans, dead folks just like those speaking evil of Christians and mocking the gospel to Peter’s church:

4 In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of you.

5 They will give an account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.

6 For this reason the gospel was preached also to those who are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit. (1 Pet. 4:4-6 NKJ)

End Note

At Christianforums.com a poster suggested:

"These spirits in prison refers to:

- 1. the deceased patriarchs and the Old Testament saints. (Papists' Limbus)*
- 2. the people who died in Noah's flood a long time ago.*
- 3. those who are alive but spiritually dead. (Amplified Bible)*
- 4. the good Christians who died as martyrs.*
- 5. everyone who is dead but all will head to heaven eventually. (Origen, universal salvation)*
- 6. to the general dead. Some to heaven; others to hell.*
- 7. to a selected (or elected) group of dead people who never heard of the gospel when alive but would believe it if they heard it.*

I think options 6 and 7 are most likely."

None of those options are correct if we focus on the facts given by Peter and Scripture.

The "spirits in prison" were "disobedient...in the days of Noah when the ark was a preparing" (1 Pet. 3:19-20).

That rules out #1, the patriarchs and OT saints weren't alive then.

#2 and #3 are ruled out because "unregenerate humans" or "spiritually dead" are never called "spirits".

The tripartite nature of man, "body soul spirit" (1 Thess. 5:23) came into existence when Divine Breath was "breathed into" "dust"(Job 33:4) and the body and soul became animated by spirit (Gen. 2:7). "Soul" often stands for the whole person (Gen. 12:5; 17:14) and "is the immaterial person himself". When the "soul" becomes weak in animating spirit it diminishes into a "shade or shadow" (**07496** רָפָא rapha' Is, 26:19) of its former self. But when it is "revived" it is said "his spirit returned" (Gen. 45:27). But when a person's life is preserved it is his "soul" that "lives" (Jer. 38:17-17). Jesus' human soul went to hades when He physically died on the cross (Ps. 16:10; Ac. 2:27), OT saints "under the altar" are not normally called "spirits" (Rev. 6:9).

When a believer is "regenerated" he partakes in divine nature (2 Pt. 1:4), that changes their souls, infused with Holy Spirit ("born from above" Jn. 3:3, 7 NRS) they become "new creatures" (2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15) and can rightly be called "spirits of just men made perfect" (Heb. 12:23).

They can't be either the Nephilim fallen angels or their contemporaries the "sons of God" (Gen. 6:4) who left their habitation to sin with women (Gen. 6:2), because these fallen angels either are in the Abyss (Rev.

9:1ff) or tartarus (Pet. 2:4) and won't be forgiven, and they know they are damned forever.

They both however sired the "men of renown" (Titans of Greek myth, perhaps builders of ancient megalithic sites now being discovered above and under the ocean). These "men of renown" were hybrid human-angel "men". Disembodied, that hybrid nature would make them "spirits" in death.

#4) Christians didn't exist in the Days of Noah to end up as "spirits in prison" and they don't go to prison when they die, they go to "paradise" (Lk. 23:43) which is in "third heaven" (2 Cor. 12:3) beneath the altar of God (Rev. 6:9).

#5) Universalism is incorrect, but even if it were true that wouldn't identify these "spirits in prison" as those physically alive when Noah's Ark was being built.

#6) The dead in paradise/heaven are never called "spirits in prison" in Scripture.

#7) These "disobeyed" Noah's preaching, so #7 is incorrect. "Sometime were disobedient" (1 Pt. 3:20) denotes disobedience that arises from "disbelief", they couldn't "believe" (544 ἀπειθέω apeitheo) Noah's preaching so they disobeyed it:

544 ἀπειθέω apeitheo {ap-i-theh'-o}

Meaning: 1) not to allow one's self to be persuaded 1a) to refuse or withhold belief 1b) to refuse belief and obedience 2) not to comply with

In Genesis 6 Noah, his family, "sons of God" angels, "Nephilim" (fallen ones) and "men of renown" are mentioned. So the "spirits in prison" must be one of these. They wouldn't be Noah and the 7 souls saved with him. They can't be either the Nephilim fallen angels or their contemporaries the "sons of God" (Gen. 6:4) who left their habitation to sin with women (Gen. 6:2), both evil and good angels siring the "men of renown" (Titans of Greek myth, perhaps builders of ancient megalithic sites now being discovered above and under the ocean). These "men of renown" were hybrid human-angel "men". Disembodied, that hybrid nature would make them "spirits" in death.

Genesis 6:4 doesn't suggest these "men of renown" were wicked. Peter says they couldn't believe and so disobeyed Noah's preaching. Its likely they couldn't believe God would forgive the corruption of the image of God they represented. If you study the OT's prohibition against "breeding with another kind" (Lev. 19:19), they had a solid reason "not to believe Noah".

As the "men of renown" who died physically in the flood went to a "prison" in hades, segregated from other human dead, they became the "spirits in prison" Christ preached liberty to. They are the human dead Christ took with Him as He ascended, depositing them with the other

saints in paradise or “Abraham’s bosom” (Lk. 16:22; 32:43; 2 Cor. 12:2, 4; Rev. 6:9).

John Ankerberg and Dr. Ron Rhodes refuted re “Is there a second chance for those who never heard”

written by Alfred Persson | November 30, 2023



The John Ankerberg site posted excerpts of Dr. Ron Rhodes articles claiming “No Second Chance After Death”.

No Second Chance After Death

While I agree those who reject God in full knowledge don't get a second chance, billions of have died before Christ came, or in lands which the gospel wasn't fully and convincingly preached. Or they were slaughtered in their mothers womb. The "second chance" will actually be their "first chance".

Dr. Rhodes will be contradicted after each statement.

Some people believe sinners will have a second chance to become saved after they die.

More than "some" believe it. Dr. Jonathan observes there has been a "Revival of interest in the destiny of the unevangelized In more recent times, there has been an upturn in scholarly interest in the fate of those who have never heard. Okholm and Phillips claim that "the debate within the evangelical academy regarding salvation and the unevangelized is intense and fierce, dominating all other discussions."- Grace beyond the Grave: Is Salvation Possible in the Afterlife? A Biblical, Theological, and Pastoral Evaluation (Stephen Jonathan). Other books on the subject: "What About Those Who Never Heard?: Three Views On The Destiny Of The Unevangelized" (John Sanders); "PostMortem Opportunity: A Biblical and Theological Assessment of Salvation After Death" (James Beilby).

In some cases, they misinterpret a particular Bible verse they think supports this idea. "

The following verses explicitly or implicitly describe redemption from Sheol, or use the imagery of that to describe deliverance from death in this life:

'See now that I, I am He, And there is no god besides Me; It is I who put to death and give life. I have wounded and it is I who heal, And there is no one who can deliver from My hand. (Deut. 32:39 NAU)

"The LORD kills and makes alive; He brings down to Sheol and raises up. (1 Sam. 2:6 NAU)

10 For You will not abandon my soul to Sheol; Nor will You allow Your Holy One to undergo decay.

11 You will make known to me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; In Your right hand there are pleasures forever. (Ps. 16:10-11 NAU) [Although applied to Christ, verse 11 shows it also applies to David.]

O LORD, You have brought up my soul from Sheol; You have kept me alive, that I would not go down to the pit. (Ps. 30:3 NAU)

But God will redeem my soul from the power of Sheol, For He will receive me. Selah. (Ps. 49:15 NAU)

1 For the choir director. A Psalm of David. I waited patiently for the LORD; And He inclined to me and heard my cry.

2 **He brought me up out of the pit of destruction**, out of the miry clay, And He set my feet upon a rock making my footsteps firm.

3 He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God; Many will see and fear And will trust in the LORD. (Ps. 40:1-3 NAU)

19 For Your righteousness, O God, reaches to the heavens, You who have done great things; O God, who is like You?

20 You who have shown me many troubles and distresses **Will revive me again**, And will bring me up again from the depths of the earth. (Ps. 71:19-20 NAU)

For Your lovingkindness toward me is great, And **You have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol**. (Ps. 86:13 NAU)

Shall I ransom them from the power of Sheol? Shall I redeem them from death? O Death, where are your thorns? O Sheol, where is your sting? Compassion will be hidden from My sight. (Hos. 13:14 NAU)

As for you also, **because of the blood of My covenant with you, I have set your prisoners free from the waterless pit**. (Zech. 9:11 NAU)

“Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come. (Matt. 12:32 NKJ)

25 “Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when **the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live.**

26 “For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself,

27 “and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man.

28 “Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which **all who are in the graves will hear His voice**

29 **“and come forth— those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.** (Jn. 5:25-29 NKJ)

25 For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, **that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.**

26 **And so all Israel will be saved**, as it is written: “The Deliverer will come out of Zion, And He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob;

27 For this is My covenant with them, When I take away their sins.”

28 Concerning the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but concerning the election they are beloved for the sake of the fathers.

29 For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.

30 For as you were once disobedient to God, yet have now obtained mercy

through their disobedience,

31 even so these also have now been disobedient, that through the mercy shown you they also may obtain mercy.

32 **For God has committed them all to disobedience, that He might have mercy on all.** (Rom. 11:25-32 NKJ)

18 For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, **being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit,**

19 **by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison,** (1 Pet. 3:18-19 NKJ)

For this reason the gospel was preached also to those who are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit. (1 Pet. 4:6 NKJ)

deliver such a one to Satan **for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.** (1 Cor. 5:5 NKJ)

8 Therefore He says: **“When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, And gave gifts to men.”**

9 (Now this, “He ascended “– what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth?

10 He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.) (Eph. 4:8-10 NKJ)

27 And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment,

28 so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. **To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.** (Heb. 9:27-28 NKJ)

12 And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. **And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life.** And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.

13 The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works.

14 Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

15 And **anyone not found written in the Book of Life** was cast into the lake of fire. (Rev. 20:11-15 NKJ)

In other cases, they assume that God’s love will compel Him to provide another chance.

Would a Just God make the Opportunity for Salvation a matter of temporal and geographical luck, so that those born before Christ or after in lands where Jesus was unknown had no opportunity to be saved? No, that would be unjust. Therefore, Salvation in Jesus is Universally offered to every

soul born into the Cosmos since the foundation of the world, past present or future.

16 "For God so loved the world (2889 κόσμος kosmos) that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

17 "For God did not send His Son into the world (2889 κόσμος kosmos) to condemn the world (2889 κόσμος kosmos) , but that the world (2889 κόσμος kosmos) through Him might be saved.

18 "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. (John 3:16-18 NKJ)

John 3:16-18 delivers a powerful message of love and redemption: 'For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.'

The Greek κόσμος (kosmos) appears four times positioning 'the world' opposite to Heaven from whence God's Son came. This shows the "universality" of God's offer, κόσμος signifies the entirety of creation, including every person born into it. God's love reaches out to every corner of the *kosmos*, offering salvation to all who believe in Him. This vast scope implies that God's redemptive love is not limited by time, place, or circumstance. Therefore, the *kosmos* could not possibly exclude those born before Christ or those who did not hear the Gospel of Christ after the 1st century.

Nor would God sacrifice His Only Begotten Son if He is not the only way to salvation. Therefore, Salvation is possible only for those who grasp the opportunity God gives, by believing in His only begotten Son.

God sent His Son to save the entire *kosmos* (Jn. 1:9, 29; 4:42; Rm. 5:10; 8:32; 2 Cor. 5:19) encompassing all of humanity whether living or dead (Jn. 5:24-25, 28-29; Heb. 9:27-28; 1 Pt. 4:6). This universal aspect of God's plan is clearly taught in the following Scriptures (Col. 1:20; Heb. 9:24-26; 1 Jn. 2:2; 4:9-10; 8:32).

Is there a second chance after death?

Such a view contradicts the clear teachings of Scripture. Consider the words of Jesus in Luke 16:19-31:

"There was a rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. And at his gate was laid a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, who desired to be fed with what fell from the rich man's table. Moreover, even the dogs came and licked his sores. The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried, and in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side. And

he called out, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in anguish in this flame.' But Abraham said, 'Child, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner bad things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish. And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, in order that those who would pass from here to you may not be able, and none may cross from there to us.' And he said, 'Then I beg you, father, to send him to my father's house—for I have five brothers—so that he may warn them, lest they also come into this place of torment.' But Abraham said, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.' And he said, 'No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.' He said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead.'"

Once the rich man died and was in a place of great suffering, he had no further opportunity for redemption. Nothing could be done at that point to ease his situation. There was no possibility of a second chance. The Believer's Bible Commentary affirms: "We learn here that the choices of this life determine our eternal destiny, and once death has taken place, that destiny is fixed."

Dr. Rhodes quoted the parable, to ignore it. Yes, he was in great suffering, but nothing else Dr. Rhodes said is in the text.

The parable does not depict the Rich man as irredeemably wicked. Nor does he act like a Reprobate. When his cries for aid are refused he doesn't begin cursing both Abraham and Lazarus. Throughout this context he reverently refers to "Father Abraham", pleading "have mercy" (1653 ἐλεέω *eleeo*) not a whit differently than did blind Bartimaeus who called out to Jesus for the same thing: "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" (Mk. 10:47 NKJ). The aorist tense indicates both had specific acts of mercy they wanted, relief from thirst or blindness. Nothing in either's cries for pity implies unrepentant hearts or hostility against God's justice and truth.

"Repentance" is on the Rich Man's mind, he proves that when he begs Lazarus warn his brothers so "they will repent" (Lk. 16:30).

Moreover, its "twisting" to say Hades is the final place of the damned, when everyone knows Hades will be emptied of its souls, and anyone found in the book of life will live:

13 The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works.

14 Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

15 And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the

lake of fire.

(Rev. 20:13-15 NKJ)

This parable has many indications the Rich Man was actually getting his "second chance" in Hades.

1.) We would expect an irredeemably wicked man would curse both Abraham and Lazarus for refusing to help him. Instead, he shows great reverence for "Father Abraham" and selfless concern for his family (Luke 16:27).

2.) Abraham affectionately calls the Rich Man "son" (Luke 16:25). That would be impossible if the Rich Man were an irredeemable enemy of God: "Do I not hate them, O LORD, who hate you? And do I not loathe those who rise up against you?" (Psalm 139:21).

3.) Abraham and others with him wanted to comfort the Rich Man, but a "great gulf" prevented them (Luke 16:26). It is impossible they would rebelliously desire to subvert God's just punishment, therefore that is not what the Rich Man is experiencing.

4.) Although translators have the Rich Man crying "I am tormented (3600 ὀδυνάω odunao) in this flame", the reverse of the "comfort" (3870 παρακαλέω parakaleo) Lazarus was experiencing, ὀδυνάω can denote "anxiety (Lk. 2:48) and "sorrow" (Ac. 20:38). These could be part of the Rich Man's torment.

5.) Christ did not use the common word for "fire" (4442 πῦρ pur) that appears when speaking of God's judgment (Lk. 3:9, 17; 17:29). He chose "flame" (5395 φλόξ phlox)" which is the "visible aspect of a fire that springs upward and is usually orange"(Logos Bible Sense Lexicon). It is this "flame" that often accompanies revelation of God (LXX: Ex. 3:2; Judges 13:20; Isa. 66:15; Acts 7:30; 2 Th. 1:8). When Christ is revealed His eyes are "like a flame of fire" (Rev. 1:14; 2 Th. 1:7-8).

6.) In Hades was "where he was being tormented(931 βάσανος basanos)...this place of torment" (Lk. 16:23, 28 NRS). The word denotes "a touchstone, which is a black siliceous stone used to test the purity of gold or silver by the colour of the streak produced on it by rubbing it with either metal 2) the rack or instrument of torture by which one is forced to divulge the truth.-Strong's Concordance. The symbolism suggests a refining process (Zech. 13:9; Ps. 51:7; 66:10; Isa. 1:25; 6:7; 48:10; Ezek. 24:13; Dan. 11:35), a purging of sin that reveals the truth of the individual, the "gold" within:

But who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand when He appears? For He is like a refiner's fire And like launderer's soap. He will sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver; He will purify the sons of Levi, And purge them as gold and silver, That they may offer to the LORD An offering in righteousness. (Mal. 3:2-3 NKJ)

7.) The symbolism of water, extreme thirst (Lk. 16:24) alludes to Christ's triumphal trip to the "spirits in prison":

As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit (0953 βωρ bowr) wherein is no water. (Zec. 9:11 KJV)

This is even more evident in Hebrews 9:27, which assures us that "it is

appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment." We live once, die once, and are judged once. The idea of a second chance cannot be forced into this verse.

We don't have to force it into Hebrews 9:27 because Hebrews 9:28 says after their judgment some "eagerly wait" for Christ's salvation:

27 And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment,

28 so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. **To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.** (Heb. 9:27-10:1 NKJ)

In keeping with the judgment mentioned in Hebrews 9:27, we can observe in Scripture that the primary basis of judgment has to do with one's behavior during earthly life.

Incorrect. Jesus said the dead in graves will hear his voice, and all who heed will rise to the resurrection of life on Judgment Day:

24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

25 Verily, verily, I say unto you, **The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice (ἀκούσονται τῆς φωνῆς) of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live...**

28 Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which **all that are in the graves shall hear his voice (ἀκούσονται τῆς φωνῆς),**

29 **And shall come forth; they that have done good (ἀγαθὰ ποιήσαντες aorist participle), unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil (φαῦλα πράξαντες aorist participle), unto the resurrection of damnation (Jn. 5:28-29 KJV)**

The aorist participle in John 5:29 rendered "done" in many translations can be translated "do" or "did" (YLT, NAS, NJB), the action occurring AFTER hearing Christ's voice:

"Many commentators minimize the subsequent (following) use of the aorist participle. Even such scholars as Robertson and Moulton, who recognize that the participle is not time-bound, resist this category of usage. But there are a number of examples in biblical and extra-biblical Greek where an aorist participle is used to refer to an action occurring after the action of the main verb. In virtually all of these examples, the aorist participle is placed after the main verb in syntactical order."-Porter, S. E. (1999). Idioms of the Greek New Testament (p. 189). JSOT.

Revelation 20:12 tells us that God's record books will be opened, and the dead will be "judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done."

We are likewise told that Death and Hades will give up the dead that are in them, and they will be “judged, each one of them, according to what they had done” (Revelation 20:13). If there were a second chance after death, such verses would make no sense. We cannot rewrite God’s Word to say: “Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and—assuming they don’t respond to the second chance they will be given in the afterlife to trust in Jesus for salvation—they will be judged, each one of them, according to what they had previously done on earth.”

If there weren’t any raised from Hades to “the resurrection of life” the “book of life” would not be opened to confirm their names are in it. ONLY those “not found” in the book of life are cast into the lake of fire:

12 And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. **And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life.** And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.

13 The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works.

14 Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

15 And **anyone not found written in the Book of Life** was cast into the lake of fire. (Rev. 20:12-15 NKJ)

Scripture is clear: We live once, die once, and are judged once!

Hebrews 9:27 says judgment happens immediately after death:

And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment, (Heb. 9:27 NKJ)

That’s when the gospel is preached to them, and those who repent and believe the gospel “live according to God in the Spirit” and “eagerly wait for Christ’s Second Coming to rise with the Church at the Rapture:

For this reason the gospel was preached also to those who are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit. (1 Pet. 4:6 NKJ)

28 so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation (Heb. 9:28 NKJ)

Although these repentant dead remain in Hades, God the Holy Spirit shields them from anything unpleasant and “time flies” because they rest as though they are asleep. Christ revealed that when he spoke of the righteous dead as “asleep” (John 11:11). The same Holy Spirit who protected the human soul of Christ as He went and proclaimed liberty (2784 κηρύσσω kerusso, Luke 4:18) to the spirits in prison:

18 Because Christ also suffered for sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God; being put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit;

19 in which also he went and preached (2784 κηρύσσω kerusso) unto the spirits in prison, (1 Pet. 3:18-19 ASV)

It is therefore no wonder that the apostle Paul spoke to the Corinthians with such urgency: "Now is the day of salvation" (2 Corinthians 6:2). No one should wait to respond to the gospel, for death could come at any time (see Ecclesiastes 9:12).

I agree. Now is the best time to repent and believe. Hades should be avoided at all costs, as the Rich Man testified, he was in "torments" (Luke 16: 24). Why go through that when it can be avoided by believing now, in this life.

"Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life. (Jn. 5:24 NKJ)

This brief life on earth is the only time we have to decide for or against Christ. Once we die, there is no further opportunity to believe in Jesus for salvation.

Christ said there is, all in the grave will hear His voice and those who obey the voice, will rise to the resurrection of life:

28 "Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice

29 "and come forth— those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation. (Jn. 5:28-29 NKJ)

Assessing The Claim That 1 Peter 3:18-19 Implies A Second Chance

In 1 Peter 3:18-19 we read, "Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit, in which he went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison." The King James Version renders the latter part of the verse, "...he went and preached unto the spirits in prison." Some people reason that if spirits in the afterlife can listen to preaching, they must be able to respond to gospel preaching and become believers in the afterlife. This implies there is a second chance for everyone to believe in God in the afterlife.

Such a view is untenable...

The Greek word rendered "preach" (kerusso) in the King James translation of 1 Peter 3:19 is not the word typically used for preaching the gospel, but instead points to a proclamation, as in a declaration of victory.

I agree, Christ was victorious over Satan and Death. Christ Triumphant then proclaimed (2784 κηρύσσω kerusso) victory, and liberty to the captive spirits in prison:

18 "The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim (2784 κηρύσσω kerusso) liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed;

19 To proclaim (2784 κηρύσσω kerusso) the acceptable year of the LORD."

20 Then He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him.

21 And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing." (Lk. 4:18-21 NKJ)

One cannot read this account and others without seeing the "triumphal aspect" of Christ's victory on the cross!

That is why Peter chose this word, to remind everyone Christ proclaimed liberty to captives, just like the spirits in prison!

Because Dr. Rhodes cites multiple interpretations of others and doesn't pick any of them, I deleted the rest of his argument. The good Dr and his scholars **are easily contradicted by the elegant fact the spirits in prison "gave the answer of a good conscience towards God", just like the church and this reminded Peter of Baptism: "Dying with Christ and being raised with Christ".**

Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. (Rom. 6:3-4 NKJ)

buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. (Col. 2:12 NKJ)

So the identity of the "spirits in prison" doesn't matter, they clearly played a role in Christ's Triumph over Satan and Death. Just as the Church responded to Christ's preaching and were made alive in Christ, so were these "spirits".

Christ led them captives in His train when He ascended to heaven:

8 This is why it says: "When he ascended on high, he took many captives and gave gifts to his people."

9 (What does "he ascended" mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions?

10 He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.) (Eph. 4:8-10 NIV)

They reject a "second chance" because Scripture emphatically teaches

that those who refuse to turn to Christ by faith in this present life are irrevocably consigned to a destiny in the lake of fire (Daniel 12:2; Matthew 25:46; Mark 9:44-48; Luke 16:23; 2 Peter 2:4; Revelation 20:15; 21:8).

That begs the question what happens to those who never had a “first chance” and never refused Christ at all. They either never heard, or were so poorly evangelized they remained unbelieving and so never refused Christ either. Its called a “second chance” because they weren’t evangelized when alive. The willfully wicked or those who knowingly rejects the gospel of Christ, don’t get a “second chance.” They are condemned forever.

Assessing the Claim that 1 Peter 4:6 Implies a Second Chance

First Peter 4:6 states: “This is why the gospel was preached even to those who are dead, that though judged in the flesh the way people are, they might live in the spirit the way God does.”

Some interpret this verse to mean that people might be able to respond positively to the gospel in the afterlife and thus have a “second chance” for salvation after death.

This verse is difficult to interpret. An important principle of Bible interpretation, however, is that we ought always to interpret difficult verses in light of what the clearer verses teach.

Its not difficult to interpret, especially when Peter just revealed Christ preached to the spirits in prison. Those who mocked Christians and the gospel didn’t fully understand the gravity of their situation:

3 For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles— when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries.

4 In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of you.

5 They will give an account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.

6 For this reason the gospel was preached also to those who are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit. (1 Pt. 4:3-6 NKJ)

Because of their ignorance of Christ, He forgives their blasphemy and gives them a second chance:

“Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him... (Matt. 12:32 NKJ)

Dr. Rhodes then repeats passages I have already commented on:

The clearer verses teach that our decision for or against Christ is made during this one life on earth. For example:• The rich man, suffering in

agony, was given no second chance after he died (Luke 16:19-31).

- “It is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment” (Hebrews 9:27). This verse alone negates any possibility of a second chance.
- The Lord knows how “to keep the unrighteous [dead] under punishment until the day of judgment” (2 Peter 2:9, insert added for clarification). This verse indicates that the Lord is keeping the wicked dead in spirit prison until the future great white throne judgment (Revelation 20:11-15). No mention is made of a second chance.

As for the meaning of 1 Peter 4:6, it apparently refers to those who are now dead but who heard the gospel while they were still alive.

This makes sense in view of the tenses used in the verse: The gospel was preached in the past to those who are presently dead.

These individuals heard the gospel of Christ when they were still alive, but had died by the time Peter wrote this letter. The Amplified Bible translation reflects this understanding: “The good news [of salvation] was preached [in their lifetimes] even to those who are dead.” Seen in this light, 1 Peter 4:6 does not support the idea of a second chance.

What About The Love Of God?

Some people argue for a second chance of salvation based on the love of God. They reason: Surely God in His love, compassion, and mercy will give those who reject Christ another chance for salvation beyond death’s door. So, no worries!

Scripture reveals that God is indeed characterized by love (John 3:16; Romans 5:8; 1 John 4:8,16,19). But He is also characterized by holiness (Exodus 15:11; Leviticus 11:44; 19:2; 20:26; 21:8; Psalm 99:3; Isaiah 6:3; 57:15; 1 Peter 1:15; Revelation 4:8) and justice (Genesis 18:25; Deuteronomy 32:4; Job 34:12; Psalm 9:7; 89:14; Jeremiah 5:5; Zephaniah 3:5).

God, in His love, gives human beings plenty of opportunities to turn to Him for salvation during earthly life. But once a person dies, that person will face God in judgment, and God will render a verdict in accordance with His holiness and justice. There are no second chances.

That means that time is running out for every person still alive on earth. Ecclesiastes 9:12 tells us that “man does not know his time [that is, the time of his death]. Like fish that are taken in an evil net, and like birds that are caught in a snare, so the children of man are snared at an evil time, when it suddenly falls upon them” (insert added for clarification). If this passage tells us anything, it tells us that death often comes suddenly, without warning. The implication is that we must take steps now to be prepared for the moment. This sense of urgency would be unnecessary if we had a second chance following death.

Likening human beings to fish taken in an evil net, when proving the love of God, is odd...perhaps irrational. The opening proved God's Love was so great He gave His only begotten Son so everyone born into the fallen realm had a chance to be saved.

I don't disagree with what follows so I will let Dr. Rhodes have the last word:

People would be wise to take Proverbs 27:1 to heart: "Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring." Each new day may bring the prospect of death. It is therefore wise to turn to Christ for salvation while there is still time.

Now is the day of salvation!

This article was adapted from three of Ron Rhodes' books:

- *What Happens After Life: 21 Amazing Revelations About Heaven and Hell (Harvest House Publishers, 2014).*

- *The Big Book of Bible Answers (Harvest House Publishers, 2013).*

- *Commonly Misunderstood Bible Verses (Harvest House Publishers, 2008).*

<https://jashow.org/articles/no-second-chance-after-death/#comments>

Will there be a second chance for salvation after death?

written by Alfred Persson | November 30, 2023



Google “Will there be a second chance for salvation after death?” and dozens of respected sites will appear emphatically proclaiming “No”.

What about those who do not believe? Wouldn't they repent and believe if they were given a second chance? The answer is no, they would not because their hearts are not changed simply because they die. Their hearts and minds “are at enmity” against God and won't accept Him even when they see Him face to face. This is evidenced clearly in the story of the rich man and Lazarus in Luke 16:19-31. If ever someone should have repented when given a second chance to see clearly the truth, it was the rich man. But although he was in torment in hell, he only asked that Abraham send Lazarus back to earth to warn his brothers so they didn't have to suffer the same fate. There was no repentance in his heart, only regret for where he found himself. Abraham's answer says it all: “And he said to him, If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, they will not be persuaded, even though one rose from the dead” (Luke 16:31). Here we see that the witness of the Scriptures is sufficient for salvation for those who believe it, and no other revelation will bring about salvation to those who do not. No second, third, or fourth chances would be enough to turn the heart of stone into a heart of flesh. -Got

GotQuestions is clearly wrong, this prophetic parable spoken against the Scribes and Pharisees who refused to hear Moses and the prophets that Jesus is the Christ, and would continue to do so even after they received the ultimate sign from God of the risen Lazarus, contains more than enough indications the Rich Man was experiencing his "second chance" in Luke 16:19-31.

The Rich man is not said to be irredeemably wicked. Nor does he act like a Reprobate. When his cries for aid are refused he doesn't begin cursing both Abraham and Lazarus.

Throughout this context he reverently refers to "Father Abraham", pleading "have mercy" (1653 ἐλεέω eleeo) not a whit differently than did blind Bartimaeus who called out to Jesus for the same thing: "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" (Mk. 10:47 NKJ). The aorist tense indicates both had specific acts of mercy they wanted, relief from thirst or blindness. Nothing in their cries for pity implies unrepentant hearts or hostility against God's justice and truth. "Repentance" is on the Rich Man's mind, he proves that when he begs Lazarus warn his brothers so "they will repent" (Lk. 16:30).

Gotquestions claims the torments of hades are unpersuasive, but Abraham doesn't say that. He says the living who refuse to "hear Moses and the Prophets" won't be persuaded by someone rising from the dead.

This context is more than a parable. Its clearly a prophetic warning to the Scribes and Pharisees who mocked Christ refusing to hear Moses and the Prophets like everyone else (Lk. 16:13-16), never believing any of the incredible signs Jesus did right before their eyes. Even the sign of Lazarus risen from the dead failed to convince them, instead they "plotted to put Lazarus to death also" (John 12:10). In this prophetic parable Christ contradicts their tradition Abraham will prevent their descent into hell:

"In the Hereafter Abraham will sit at the entrance of Gehinnom and will not allow any circumcised Israelite to descend into it."- Genesis Rabbah XLVIII. 8

Therefore, the claim this parable proves there is no second chance is false. Moreover, it "twists scripture" because Hades will be emptied out and destroyed on Judgment Day (Rev. 20:11-15), destroying the "impassible barrier" separating the Rich Man from Abraham (Lk. 16:26).

This parable has many indications the Rich Man was getting his "second chance".

1.) We would expect an irredeemably wicked man would curse both Abraham

and Lazarus for refusing to help him. Instead, he shows great reverence for "Father Abraham" and selfless concern for his family (Luke 16:27).

2.) Abraham affectionately calls the Rich Man "son" (Luke 16:25). That would be impossible if the Rich Man were an irredeemable enemy of God: "Do I not hate them, O LORD, who hate you? And do I not loathe those who rise up against you?" (Psalm 139:21).

3.) Abraham and others with him wanted to comfort the Rich Man, but an "great gulf" prevented them (Luke 16:26). It is impossible they would rebelliously desire to subvert God's just punishment, therefore that is not what the Rich Man is experiencing.

4.) Although translators have the Rich Man crying "I am tormented (3600 ὀδυνάω odunao) in this flame", the reverse of the "comfort" (3870 παρακαλέω parakaleo) Lazarus was experiencing, ὀδυνάω can denote "anxiety (Lk. 2:48) and "sorrow" (Ac. 20:38). These could be part of the Rich Man's torment.

5.) Christ did not use the common word for "fire" (4442 πῦρ pur) that appears when speaking of God's judgment (Lk. 3:9, 17; 17:29). He chose "flame" (5395 φλόξ phlox)" which is the "visible aspect of a fire that springs upward and is usually orange"(Logos Bible Sense Lexicon). It is this "flame" that often accompanies revelation of God (LXX: Ex. 3:2; Judges 13:20; Isa. 66:15; Acts 7:30; 2 Th. 1:8). When Christ is revealed His eyes are "like a flame of fire" (Rev. 1:14; 2 Th. 1:7-8).

6.) In Hades was "where he was being tormented(931 βάσανος basanos)...this place of torment" (Lk. 16:23, 28 NRS). The word denotes "a touchstone, which is a black siliceous stone used to test the purity of gold or silver by the colour of the streak produced on it by rubbing it with either metal 2) the rack or instrument of torture by which one is forced to divulge the truth.-Strong's Concordance. The symbolism suggests a refining process (Zech. 13:9; Ps. 51:7; 66:10; Isa. 1:25; 6:7; 48:10; Ezek. 24:13; Dan. 11:35), a purging of sin that reveals the truth of the individual, the "gold" within:

But who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand when He appears? For He is like a refiner's fire And like launderer's soap. He will sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver; He will purify the sons of Levi, And purge them as gold and silver, That they may offer to the LORD An offering in righteousness. (Mal. 3:2-3 NKJ)

7.) The symbolism of water, extreme thirst (Lk. 16:24) may allude to this text:

As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit (0953 בֹּרַחַת bowr) wherein is no water. (Zec. 9:11 KJV)

The idea of redemption from Hades is not foreign to the Old Testament:

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.

(Jon. 2:2 KJV)

*I called on Your name, O LORD, From the lowest pit (0953 אֲבֵרָה בֹרַר).
(Lam. 3:55 NKJ)*

1 I waited patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry.

2 He brought me up also out of an horrible pit (0953 אֲבֵרָה בֹרַר), out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.

3 And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD. (Ps. 40:1-3 KJV)

Scriptures explicitly or implicitly refer to redemption from Sheol Hades.

'See now that I, I am He, And there is no god besides Me; It is I who put to death and give life. I have wounded and it is I who heal, And there is no one who can deliver from My hand. (Deut. 32:39 NAU)

"The LORD kills and makes alive; He brings down to Sheol and raises up. (1 Sam. 2:6 NAU)

10 For You will not abandon my soul to Sheol; Nor will You allow Your Holy One to undergo decay.

11 You will make known to me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; In Your right hand there are pleasures forever. (Ps. 16:10-11 NAU) [Although applied to Christ, verse 11 shows it also applies to David.]

0 LORD, You have brought up my soul from Sheol; You have kept me alive, that I would not go down to the pit. (Ps. 30:3 NAU)

But God will redeem my soul from the power of Sheol, For He will receive me. Selah. (Ps. 49:15 NAU)

1 For the choir director. A Psalm of David. I waited patiently for the LORD; And He inclined to me and heard my cry.

2 He brought me up out of the pit of destruction, out of the miry clay, And He set my feet upon a rock making my footsteps firm.

3 He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God; Many will see and fear And will trust in the LORD. (Ps. 40:1-3 NAU)

19 For Your righteousness, O God, reaches to the heavens, You who have done great things; O God, who is like You?

20 You who have shown me many troubles and distresses Will revive me again, And will bring me up again from the depths of the earth. (Ps. 71:19-20 NAU)

For Your lovingkindness toward me is great, And You have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol. (Ps. 86:13 NAU)

Shall I ransom them from the power of Sheol? Shall I redeem them from death? O Death, where are your thorns? O Sheol, where is your sting?

Compassion will be hidden from My sight. (Hos. 13:14 NAU)

As for you also, **because of the blood of My covenant with you, I have set your prisoners free from the waterless pit.** (Zech. 9:11 NAU)

“Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come. (Matt. 12:32 NKJ)

25 **“Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live.**

26 **“For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself,**

27 **“and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man.**

28 **“Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice**

29 **“and come forth— those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.** (Jn. 5:25-29 NKJ)

25 For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, **that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.**

26 **And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: “The Deliverer will come out of Zion, And He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob;**

27 **For this is My covenant with them, When I take away their sins.”**

28 Concerning the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but concerning the election they are beloved for the sake of the fathers.

29 For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.

30 For as you were once disobedient to God, yet have now obtained mercy through their disobedience,

31 even so these also have now been disobedient, that through the mercy shown you they also may obtain mercy.

32 **For God has committed them all to disobedience, that He might have mercy on all.** (Rom. 11:25-32 NKJ)

18 For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, **being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit,**

19 **by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, (1 Pet. 3:18-19 NKJ)**

For this reason the gospel was preached also to those who are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit. (1 Pet. 4:6 NKJ)

deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. (1 Cor. 5:5 NKJ)

8 Therefore He says: **“When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, And gave gifts to men.”**

9 (Now this, “He ascended “– what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth?

10 He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.) (Eph. 4:8-10 NKJ)

27 And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment,

28 so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. **To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.** (Heb. 9:27-28 NKJ)

12 And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. **And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life.** And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.

13 The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works.

14 Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

15 And **anyone not found written in the Book of Life** was cast into the lake of fire. (Rev. 20:11-15 NKJ)

Scripture that liken deliverance in life, to deliverance in the afterlife. The association is so strong its reasonable to say they believed it happens in the afterlife also:

5 “For the waves of death encompassed me; The torrents of destruction overwhelmed me;

6 **The cords of Sheol surrounded me;** The snares of death confronted me.

7 “In my distress I called upon the LORD, Yes, I cried to my God; And from His temple He heard my voice, And my cry for help came into His ears. (2 Sam. 22:5-7 NAU)

For You have **delivered my soul from death,** Indeed my feet from stumbling, So that I may walk before God In the light of the living. (Ps. 56:13 NAU)

18 You have ascended on high, **You have led captive Your captives;** You have received gifts among men, Even among the rebellious also, that the LORD God may dwell there.

19 Blessed be the Lord, who daily bears our burden, The God who is our salvation. Selah.

20 God is to us a God of deliverances; And **to GOD the Lord belong escapes from death.** (Ps. 68:18-20 NAU)

13 But as for me, my prayer is to Thee, O LORD, at an acceptable time; O

God, in the greatness of Thy lovingkindness, Answer me with Thy saving truth.

14 **Deliver me from the mire, and do not let me sink;** May I be delivered from my foes, and from the deep waters.

15 **May the flood of water not overflow me, And may the deep not swallow me up, And may the pit not shut its mouth on me.**

16 Answer me, O LORD, for Thy lovingkindness is good; According to the greatness of Thy compassion, turn to me,

17 And do not hide Thy face from Thy servant, For I am in distress; answer me quickly.

18 **Oh draw near to my soul and redeem it;** Ransom me because of my enemies! (Ps. 69:13-18 NAS)

18 This will be written for the generation to come, That a people yet to be created may praise the LORD.

19 For He looked down from His holy height; From heaven the LORD gazed upon the earth,

20 To hear the groaning of the prisoner, **To set free those who were doomed to death,**

21 That men may tell of the name of the LORD in Zion And His praise in Jerusalem,

22 When the peoples are gathered together, And the kingdoms, to serve the LORD. (Ps. 102:18-22 NAU)

1 I love the LORD, because He hears My voice and my supplications.

2 Because He has inclined His ear to me, Therefore I shall call upon Him as long as I live.

3 **The cords of death encompassed me And the terrors of Sheol came upon me; I found distress and sorrow.**

4 Then I called upon the name of the LORD: "O LORD, I beseech You, save my life!"

5 Gracious is the LORD, and righteous; Yes, our God is compassionate.

6 The LORD preserves the simple; **I was brought low, and He saved me.**

7 Return to your rest, O my soul, For the LORD has dealt bountifully with you.

8 For **You have rescued my soul from death,** My eyes from tears, My feet from stumbling.

9 I shall walk before the LORD In the land of the living (Ps. 116:1-9 NAU)

and he said, "I called out of my distress to the LORD, And He answered me. **I cried for help from the depth of Sheol;** You heard my voice. (Jon. 2:2 1 NAU)

Go here for more:

Does the Bible teach there is a Second Chance to be saved by Jesus?

The "second chance" was well known in the ancient church.

Clement of Alexandria (150–215) Christian teacher at Alexandria who spent his twilight years with his friend Alexander when he became bishop of Jerusalem, had this to say about souls in Hades:

So I think it is demonstrated that God (being good) and the Lord (being powerful) both save with a righteousness and equality that extends to all who turn to God, whether here or elsewhere. For it is not here alone that the active power of God is present. Rather, it is everywhere and is always at work.... For it is not right that those persons [who died before Christ] should be condemned without trial, and that those alone who lived after His coming should have the advantage of the divine righteousness. Clement of Alexandria (c. 195, EE Eastern), 2.491. Dead, Intermediate State of The. (1998). In D. W. Bercot (Ed.), A Dictionary of Early Christian Beliefs: A Reference Guide to More than 700 Topics Discussed by the Early Church Fathers (p. 192). Hendrickson Publishers.

God's Plan for the Lost

Elect Rise From Hell On Judgment Day?

Preaching to the Dead (Postmortem Evangelism)

Does the Lake of Fire Symbolize Eternal Torment for all cast into it?

Jesus Preached to the Dead

What did the apostle John reveal when he said: "It is the last hour"?

Where Is The Judgment Of Fallen Angels?

The Origin of Satan and Demons

The Coming False Christ and His Followers Revealed

How can we survive the coming Apocalypse?

Why then are they baptized for the dead? (1 Cor. 15:29 NKJ)

written by Alfred Persson | November 30, 2023



Otherwise, what will they do who are baptized for the dead, if the dead do not rise at all? Why then are they baptized for the dead? (1 Cor. 15:29 NKJ)

The practice of vicarious baptism only existed among the Montanists in the early centuries. Mormons practice it today. The passage has generated over 400 different interpretations. I thought I'd make it 401.

Paul was a student of Gamaliel, a rabbi of the school of Hillel. The Rabbis often arranged their dialectic in a structure of three, to bring completeness and emphasis.

Rabbi Aqiba said...“Whoever eats unhealthy food transgresses thrice: he despises himself, as well as the food, and pronounces a benediction upon unwholesome things.”- Tosephtha, Aboth of R. Nathan, The Babylonian Talmud, (M. L. Rodkinson, trans.; Vol. 9a, p. 93). (1918).

“Wherefore is this repeated thrice? Infer from this, it is a merit that they be, first, equal in color; secondly, in stature; thirdly, in price.-The Babylonian Talmud.

An example of Paul arranging his sermon by Three is in 1 Corinthians 13:8-13

Love never fails (1 Cor. 13:8-13)

1. Prophecies will fail

2. Tongues will fail

3. Knowledge will fail

Statement: We know in part and prophesy in part

1. When I was a child

2. I spoke as a child

3. I understood as a child

Statement: When I became a man I put away childish things

1. Now we see in a mirror dimly

2. Then face to face

3. Now I know in part

Statement: Then I shall know just as I am known

Conclusion:

And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love. (1 Cor. 13:13 NKJ)

The arrangement in threes in 1 Corinthians 15

“If there is no resurrection” (1 Cor. 15:13-15)

1) Christ not risen;

2) Our preaching empty;

3) Their (the resurrection deniers) faith empty

Statement: We then are false witnesses

“If the Dead don’t rise” (1 Cor. 15:16-19)

1) Christ not risen;

2) your faith futile;

3) You are still in your sins

Statement: Then all who have fallen asleep have perished, and we of all men most pitiful.

“But now Christ is risen from the dead” (1 Cor. 15:20-24)

1) He is the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep;

2) By man came death

3) By man came the resurrection of the dead

Statement: “As in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive”

“But each in his own order”: (1 Cor. 15:23-26)

1) Christ the first fruits;

2) those dead raised at Christ’s coming;

3) The rest of the dead in the End.

Statement: Christ will reign until he puts all enemies under his feet, last enemy to be destroyed is death.

Momentarily Paul departs from the argument to derail any foolish idea Christ’s reign would subject God forever to the risen humanity of Christ (1 Cor. 13:27-28).

The return:

Otherwise (1893 ἐπεὶ epei), what will they do (4160 ποιέω poieo) who are

baptized for the dead (3498 νεκρός nekros) , if the dead (3498 νεκρός nekros) do not rise at all (3654 ὅλως holos)? Why (5101 τίς tis) then (2532 καί kai) are they baptized for the dead (3498 νεκρός nekros)?

That translation loses the flow of the argument, “otherwise” should have been translated “since” and then its clearly referring back to verse 26, Death the last enemy destroyed.

“Since” (1893 ἐπεὶ epei) [the dead rise], “what is produced (4160 ποιέω poieo, achieved, accomplished) by those baptized for the dead?” “If wholly dead (3654 ὅλως holos) are not raised up, what also(τί καὶ) [explains] being baptized for the dead?

“Dead” (3498 νεκρός nekros) is repeated thrice each time revealing the folly of the resurrection deniers, their illogic. Without a “good” to obtain, why are they being baptized if the dead don’t rise?

Paul then turns the illogic on himself:

Τί καὶ ἡμεῖς κινδυνεύομεν πᾶσαν ὥραν (1 Cor. 15:30 BYZ)

“What also [is our reason for] standing in danger every hour” [if the dead don’t rise?] (1 Cor. 15:30-32)

1) “Why die daily”

2) “Why fight beasts”

3) “What advantage exist for me if the dead don’t rise”

Statement: “If the dead do not rise, Let us eat and drink for tomorrow we die!”

Therefore, vicarious baptism was not being practiced by anyone in Corinth. That explains the universal rejection of the “novelty” when the Montanists misinterpreted this verse.