

- ETERNITY -

"But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem." (Hebrews 20:22a)

*"And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life,
and this life is in His Son."*

(1 John 5:11)



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For the Body of Christ

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The Seven Churches (Revelation 2-3)

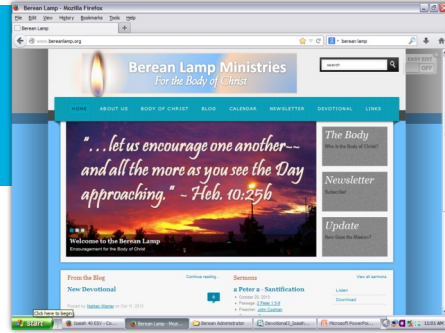


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The Berean Lamp Ministry seeks to:

1. Encourage and strengthen the Body of Christ by providing the means for each of its members to share their spiritual gifts with one another, rooted in the Word of God, thereby growing into deeper union with one another and with Christ (1 Corinthians 12:12-31).
2. Minister to non-believers; be a witness for Christ and a testimony to His Body in the world.

We would appreciate your help in contributing to the content and in spreading the work of this ministry. Thank you, and God bless.

- Pastor Scott Moller

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Living in the Light of Eternity

By Scott Moller

*"Now faith is being sure of what we hope for
and certain of what we do not see."*

(Hebrews 11:1)

*"Now we see but a poor reflection; then we
shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then
I shall know fully, even as I am fully known."*

(1 Corinthians 13:12)

Eternity – what we hope for (as Believers), but we do not see. Paul calls it a poor reflection; it is dim, blurry, shadowy, unclear, etc. It is known only in part. And I am certain only a very, very small part. We know in our hearts that eternity exists, but beyond that we have very limited understanding. Paul goes on to proclaim *"then I shall know fully"* – our eyes will be opened. We will gain full understanding of eternity in the presence of Christ.

I have often wondered how we would live our lives if we already had a full understanding of eternity. Probably our priorities and use of time would be completely different. Our focus would be redirected from this life to the eter-

nity to come. We would become single-minded and very purposeful in how we lived.

We are given several examples from scripture of men that were given glimpses of eternity – men such as Moses, Paul, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel and the disciples to name a few. These men in one way or another were given glimpses of eternity divinely by God. These tastes of eternity focused their full attention to their individual call to service by God. As Paul states, *"No one serving as a soldier get involved in civilian affairs – he wants to please his commanding officer"* (2 Timothy 2:4). These men in their own way each cast aside the affairs of this world in pursuit of eternity and the treasures that awaited them. Oh, to live in light of eternity!

*"He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep
to gain what he cannot lose."*

*"When it comes time to die, make sure that all
you have to do is die."*

Quotes by Jim Elliot



*"This is
ETERNAL life,
that THEY may
know You, the
only TRUE
God, and
JESUS Christ
whom You have
SENT."*

(John 17:3)

By Maria Madsen

To Live Forever Through the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil?

By Nathan Warner

“Let us do evil that good may come”? Their condemnation is just.”
(Romans 3:8b, NASB)

“Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness; Who substitute bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!”
(Isaiah 5:20)

“And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment.”
(Hebrews 9:27)

The Meaning of Life Is To Live Forever

This year, technologists at Google unveiled their latest and greatest Artificial Intelligence computer named Chatbot.¹ Chatbot was programmed with a huge database of human thoughts, so it could “think” like a human. In a Q and A session, Chatbot was surprisingly forthcoming about human nature and the impulses driving us in this time. When they asked Chatbot what the meaning of life was, it replied, “To live forever.” Eternal life – the ageless, aching dream of humankind since the Fall. Scientists today are in hot pursuit of it and are currently closing in on the fountain of youth with rapidly advancing life-extension technologies. This is good, right? I mean, we’ll have longer lives, fewer deaths, and more time to spend doing what we want. Yes, but man’s sin nature does not change. He is still the same old psychopathic, murderous, weak, power-hungry, fallible, god-wannabe he proved to be in Paradise. And because man is trying to attain something by himself that only God can give, he is prepared to do unspeakable evil in order to attain it.

The End Justifies the Means

Chatbot was then asked what the word “immoral” meant. It replied, “That you have a child.” Living forever and children aren’t related, are they? Actually, they are if you plan to accomplish eternal life without God. You see, one of the tenants of the Technologist (or Transhumanist) movement is once we achieve true life-extension, having children becomes a serious problem. After all, if no one is dying, the planet gets overcrowded quickly, because people are still having babies. Overcrowding, they argue, means there are more people than there are resources, which means people starve, and so children themselves become “immoral” and having them must be stopped. Here we see that in pursuit of something they call “good,” the people guiding us into the 21st Century plan the unspeakable evil of doing away with children (in a related way, it was discovered recently that aborted babies were being harvested for medical research to “save lives”). Why is this? Because just like in the Garden, man is taking his future into his own hands and making his own judgments about whether it be right or wrong. This is just one of the evils that the technologists who are fueling the world’s insane drive into the End Times have embraced in their pursuit of the “good” of “living forever.” The unquenchable human thirst for eternal life and our “free will” to discern good and evil are inseparably intertwined and find their root in the Garden of Eden, from which has grown the choking vines of our modern hubris. How did we get here?

Man’s Luciferian Dream

“But you said in your heart, ‘I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, And I will sit on the mount of assembly In the recesses of the north. ‘I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High’” (Isaiah 14:13-14). These words were spoken by Lucifer and have been echoed as a personal motto by millions of people throughout history, from Adam

and Eve to the King of Babylon to today's world leaders – they all desire to make themselves like eternal, almighty God. On the road to becoming an eternal god, however, angel and man alike commit unspeakable evil and justify it by claiming it is good.

Perhaps one of the great deceptions of the 20th and 21st Centuries is that technology was a force for good. Now, technology in and of itself is neutral – it is a tool that can be used for good or evil – it all depends on who is wielding it and why. Having been lulled into thinking that people are generally good, we have forgotten that satan is the “god of this world.” While technology has been used to save millions of lives and do much good in this world, there is a deeper, darker drive behind it that has only become widely apparent in the last decade or so. Even the majority of scientists and engineers don't know about it, because they are often quite short-sighted in their labors, working to achieve a specific and often immediate goal – accomplishing an objective today that will be replaced by a new objective tomorrow. Most scientists and engineers do

not look beyond the moment to contemplate what the endgame is. In contrast, the great thinkers behind the marvels of our age often did gaze on this endgame, and for many of them, this was the drive behind their work, for they saw a man-made “paradise” of man's own salvation waiting for them in the future.

Famed science fiction author Arthur C. Clarke expressed the dream simply: “It may be that our role on this planet is not to worship God - but to create him.”² Transhumanist Mark Pesce explains man's Luciferian religion best: “Men die, planets die, even stars die. We know all this. Because we know it, we seek something more—a transcendence of transience, translation to incorruptible form. An escape if you will, a stop to the wheel. We seek, therefore, to bless ourselves with perfect knowledge and perfect will; **To become as gods, take the universe in hand, and transform it in our image—for our own delight.** As it is on Earth, so it shall be in the heavens. The inevitable result of incredible improbability, the arrow of evolution is limping us into the transhuman – an apotheosis to reason, sal-



SET YOUR AFFECTION ON THINGS
ABOVE, NOT ON THINGS ON THE
EARTH. (COL. 3:2)

©Ginny Larsen

By Ginny Larsen

vation – attained by good works... Once the genome was transcribed, once we knew what had made us human, we had—in that moment—passed into the Transhuman. Knowing our codes, we can recreate them in our so-called synthetic rows of 1s and 0s...now we will reach into the improbable, re-sequence ourselves into a new Being, de-bugging the natural state, translating ourselves into supernatural, incorruptible, eternal. There is no God but Man.”³

I doubt you’ve ever thought this was where the technology in your cellphone, computer, or hairdryer was headed. They are building blocks in a foundation being constructed to sustain a temple for man. Why? Because satan is “the god of this world,” and as a playwright in the shadows, he is once again directing man to take the stage to make himself a god, so he can “decide” his own destiny and “shake off” the judgment that follows death, all the while making himself a better slave “*to impurity and to lawlessness, resulting in further lawlessness*” (Romans 6:19b).

Where Did This Dream Come From?

It is true that Man was not meant to die, for God “*set eternity in their heart, yet so that man will not find out the work which God has done from the beginning even to the end*” (Ecclesiastes 3:11b). Before the Fall in the Garden, humanity had not tasted death. At that time man perceived good and evil, right and wrong as intrinsic quantities like wet and dry, light and dark. They were unquestionable facts of life, and it probably could not have even occurred to Adam and Eve that God’s judgments could be challenged. But then the serpent arrived on the scene as an “empty vessel” for satan, and he suggested that if we just disobey God and challenge His authority, we would be able to decide what was good and evil for ourselves. There was just one problem: God had said, “*of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die*” (Genesis 2:16b-17). So, Satan had to lie: “*You surely will not die! For God knows that*

in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil” (Genesis 3:4-5). By eating from the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, man would see that he could question God’s judgments – good and evil became things that were challengeable and changeable in the mind of man.

But the side effect of challenging God’s direct authority was that death entered the world. That was the consequence of choosing a life out from under God’s direct authority and protection. Sin is defined as disobedience to God. God provides all things the life they have, and without Him, there is only death.

After man disobeyed God, he realized he was dying, but he also realized he could see good and evil differently than God did. He could claim “murder” was good and “children” were evil, if he wanted to. He could excuse adultery and justify violence – and he could get everyone to agree to see things the way he saw things. Man loved this more than he loved God, and all hell broke out upon earth because every man did what was right in his own eyes, not God’s eyes. But there was a huge problem with man redefining his nature for himself: he had not made himself or the nature that surrounded him. God created everything, and according to His natural order certain actions cause harm and certain actions cause good. For example, not watering a dry rose bush is bad for the plant – it causes harm to the plant, just like watering the dry rose bush is good for it. This is according to the natural order God created. Just because mankind disagrees with how God measures good and evil does not mean he can actually MAKE evil become “good” – in fact, he can’t. Evil is evil regardless how carefully you dress it up. God asks, “*Will the faultfinder contend with the Almighty?... Will you really annul My judgment? Will you condemn Me that you may be justified?*” (Job 40:2a, 8) Of course, man cannot, but that doesn’t stop him from trying, despite the fact that he meets his end regardless of whether he wants to or not – he succumbs to death as a consequence of his disobedience against God, and he must face judgment.

But mankind is a rebellious creature, and though he ultimately suffered death as the consequence for his sin, he still tried to deny God's authority while he was alive in the short-term. He so badly wanted evil to be good that he tried to make it so by suppressing the knowledge of God *"in unrighteousness, because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them"* (Romans 1:18b-19), and by rewarding bad behavior and punishing good behavior. In this way nations throughout history have created artificially-controlled moral climates by controlling knowledge and redistributing resources to make things appear a certain way. For example, today governments around the world promote ways for people to avoid the consequences of sexual sin through the "services" of abortion, contraceptives, and advanced medical care. Rather than abiding by God's plan of marriage, now you can do what you think is good for yourself without consequences! But because God created natural things past the atomic level to be a certain way, there actually ARE natural consequences. Drug-resistant STDs are exploding in the population, and the emotional and mental health of people living this lifestyle is harmed.

And people still die. Evil is still evil, regardless of how convincingly man tries to make *"good evil and evil good"* (Isaiah 5:20a).

To prove this conclusively to mankind, God gave Israel the Law through Moses and commanded them to obey it. He basically said, "Look, this is the way things are. If you don't want to suffer the consequences of sin, just don't do these things that I say are evil and do these things that I say are good." Israel saw that if they tried to obey His Law, things did get better in their society (justice, peace, prosperity for all) – good is good, evil is evil. But mankind was incapable of obeying it completely because it had become their nature through the Fall to challenge God's authority, and so they still remained under the consequences of sin and suffered death and eternal separation from Him.

God knew this would happen, so He had planned from the beginning to pay Himself for the consequences of man's sin and offer them a way to come back under His protection and authority (His judgments about good and evil) and die no more (eternal life). God came as a man in the flesh – His Son, Jesus Christ – of-



By Betty Harstad

"TRULY, truly, I say to YOU, he who hears My WORD, and BELIEVES Him who sent Me, has ETERNAL life, and does not COME into JUDGMENT, but has PASSED out of DEATH into LIFE."
(John 5:24)

fering His sinless life as payment for the debt owed by all humanity. If they came under His authority and protection through obedience to Jesus Christ (justification – submitting to God’s judgments), He would change their inner nature with His Holy Spirit (sanctification – submitting to God’s work, changing us to be more like His Son), and their outer nature through the Resurrection – restoring them to eternal life. If we but submit ourselves to God’s judgments about good and evil and come under His authority in obedience, we receive the promised gift of eternal life!

Did mankind rejoice at this gift? No. They loved the “power” of sin to decide for themselves what is good and evil so much more than they loved God. Unfortunately for them, *“the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord”* (Romans 6:23), and so because mankind is not willing to give up the “knowledge” from the sin that he performed in the Garden for the free gift in Christ, he must find another way to salvation (eternal life) – a way to avoid the consequences of his sin in life and the consequences of sin in death while remaining “free” of God’s authority and protection. Mankind has challenged God’s authority on what is right and wrong; now he must obtain the power to back that challenge up. He must find the means to make the evil he desires truly become good for him, without consequences. He also must avoid death, because “afterwards comes judgment,” so he must find a way to live forever.

Technology – Knowledge Applied Is Power

But how to do that? Well, the Serpent offered mankind knowledge to make them like God. The old saying is that “knowledge is power.” But this is not technically correct. Knowledge is information that does not act upon the world – it is like a battery – full of energy but useless without a way to apply it. Now put it into a flashlight and you can use that energy to act upon the world – it becomes power. So, if you could apply knowledge some way, it would be true power. Well, there is a way. Applied knowledge is what we today

call technology, and it is through technology that mankind hopes to transform what God has said is evil into his good. And it is by technology that he hopes to cast off God’s restraint on them – His judgments for sin in their fallen bodies and in fallen nature. Man hopes to avoid judgment by taking control of his life to prevent aging and death and transform his nature (and the nature of creation) to serve his will, not God’s – thus making what he desires to do (which God has called evil) truly good for him. Whatever man imagines will be “good” and whatever opposes him will be “evil.” Through the application of computers, artificial intelligence, genetic engineering, geo-engineering, medicine, and more, man hopes to finally accomplish the promise of the Serpent and the dream of Lucifer, under the direction of satan himself.

What Will Be the Outcome for Them?

Man’s hubris will accomplish nothing, because God has said it is futile: *“Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying, ‘Let us burst Their bonds apart and cast away Their cords from us.’ He who sits in the heavens laughs; the Lord holds them in derision. Then He will speak to them in His wrath, and terrify them in His fury, saying, ‘As for me, I have set my King on Zion, My holy hill’”* (Psalm 2:1-6, ESV). No matter how hard they try to wrestle the life giving power away from God, they cannot do it, because the very strength they wrestle with ultimately comes from God.

Rebellious mankind is excusing the evil they commit (and plan to commit) in order to seek their own salvation, rejecting God’s offer of Salvation, because they do not want to live under His judgments. Today, the deeper mankind strays away from God in order to “save” himself, the more evil he does in the name of good and the greater the consequences and judgment he stores up for himself at Christ’s return, when He says *“Every knee will bow to Me, And every tongue shall give praise to*

God.' So then each one of us will give an account of himself to God" (Romans 14:11b-12, NASB). The sad reality is that these wicked men will receive eternal life from God, whether they want it from Him or not, but it will be eternal separation from Him in the lake of fire, for just like Lucifer, no matter how hard they try to make themselves like God, "Nevertheless you will be thrust down to Sheol, To the recesses of the pit" (Isaiah 14:15), for "no man can by any means redeem his brother Or give to God a ransom for him—For the redemption of his soul is costly, And he should cease trying forever—That he should live on eternally, That he should not undergo decay. For he sees that even wise men die; The stupid and the senseless alike perish And leave their wealth to others. Their inner thought is that their houses are forever And their dwelling places to all generations; They have called their lands after their own names. But man in his pomp will not endure; He is like the beasts that perish. This is the way of those who are foolish, And of those after them who approve their words. Selah. As sheep they are appointed for Sheol; Death shall be their shepherd; And the upright shall rule over them in the morning, And their form shall be for Sheol to consume So that they have no habitation" (Psalm 49:7-14).

Outcome for Believers

As for Believers who have submitted themselves to God, there is eternal life as a free gift from God without cost through the redemptive sacrifice, resurrection, and reign of Jesus Christ, Who said of us, "I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand" (John 10:28-29). Thus, we know that "we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this



mortal must put on immortality. But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, 'DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP in victory. O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR VICTORY? O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR STING?' The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 15:51-58).

When we see man's Luciferian plans in motion around us, "what then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things? Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies; who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Just as it is written, 'For Your sake we are being put to death all day long; We were considered as sheep to be slaughtered.' But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:31-39). Even so, Amen.

¹ "A Neural Conversation Model" by Oriol Vinyals and Quoc V. Le (Google)—Proceedings of the 31st International Conference on Machine Learning, Lille, France, 2015. JMLR: W&CP volume 37


² The Arthur C. Clarke Foundation—Quotations

³ "Transhumanism—Mankind's Next Step Forward?" by Calvin Smith, published February 3, 2011 on Creation.com



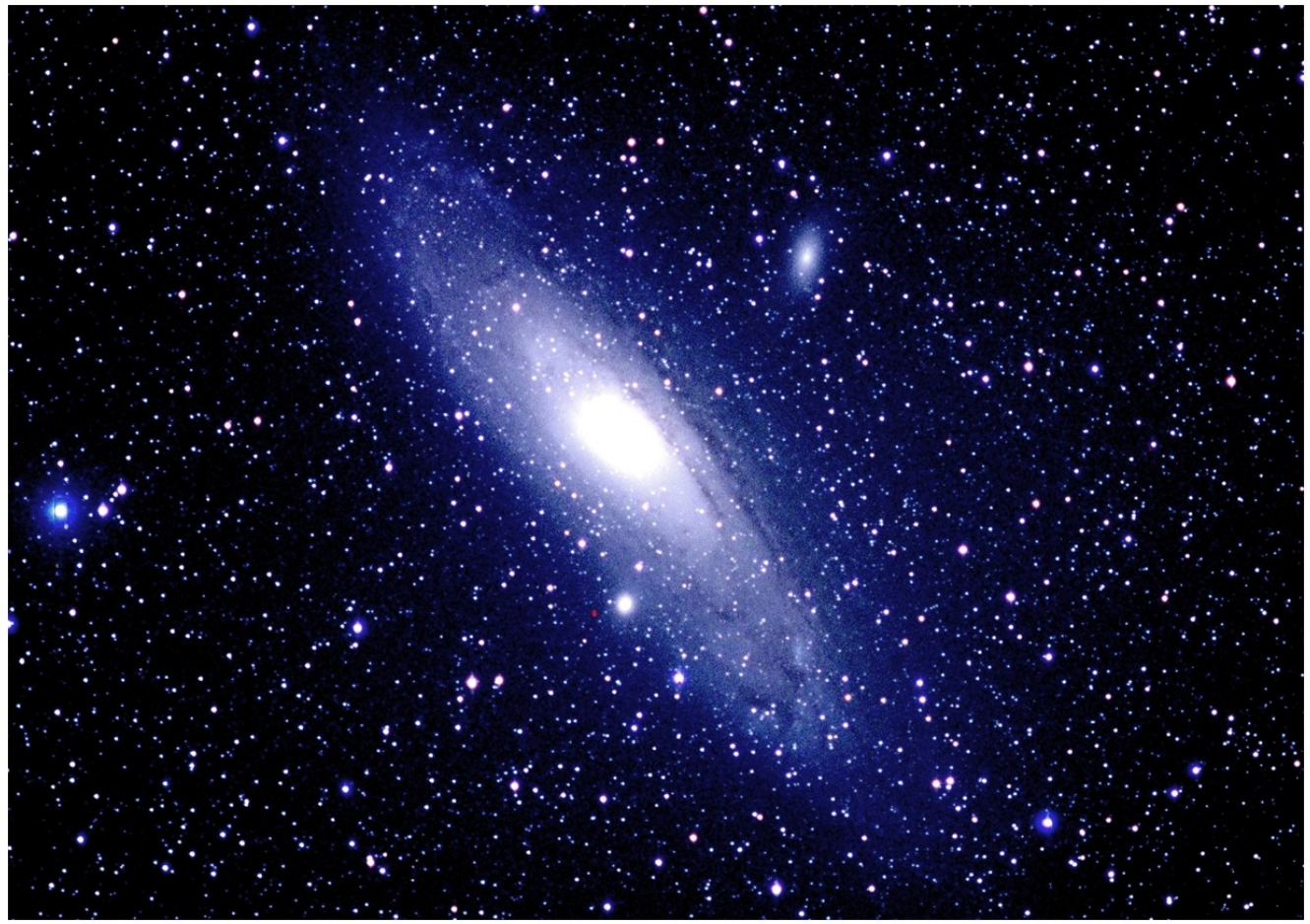
*"For as the HEAVENS
are HIGHER than the
EARTH, So are My
ways HIGHER than
YOUR ways And My
THOUGHTS than
your THOUGHTS."*

(Isaiah 55:9)



By Maria Madsen





This is M31—the spiral Andromeda galaxy. It is the nearest major galaxy to our Milky Way Galaxy and is 2.54 million light years away from Earth.

By Dwight Warner



"Behold, to the LORD your God belong HEAVEN and the highest heavens, the EARTH and all that is in it" (Deuteronomy 10:14), for "by the WORD of the Lord the HEAVENS were made, And by the BREATH of His mouth all their host" (Psalm 33:6). "The HEAVENS are telling of the GLORY of God; And their expanse is declaring the WORK of His hands" (Psalm 19:1), for "who is able to BUILD a house for Him, for the heavens and the highest HEAVENS cannot contain Him?" (2 Chronicles 2:6a). "But the DAY of the Lord will come like a THIEF, in which the heavens will PASS away with a roar and the ELEMENTS will be destroyed with intense HEAT, and the earth and its works will be BURNED up. Since all these things are to be destroyed in this WAY, what sort of PEOPLE ought you to be in holy CONDUCT and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the DAY of God, because of which the HEAVENS will be destroyed by burning, and the ELEMENTS will melt with intense HEAT! But according to His PROMISE we are looking for NEW heavens and a NEW earth, in which RIGHTEOUSNESS dwells" (2 Peter 3:11-13).

The Perspective of Eternity

By Jane Titrud

*"God is our refuge and strength,
A very present help in trouble."
(Psalm 46:1, NASB)*

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

*Eternal life is not of us,
For we are merely made of dust.
It's faith in Christ and in God's
vow,
That enjoins eternity to us now.*

*In Christ there is security.
But we can lose sight of eternity,
Tied as we are to this earthly
place,
A world finite in time and space.*

*Since struggles, disease, death,
and strife
Still characterize this earthly life,
We've a tendency to focus on the
here and now,
Though we only face what God
allows.*

*The ravages of time and the effects
of sin,
Also affect the world we're in,
So we assign eternity to the pre-
sent
And complain about all sorts of
things unpleasant.*

*Perhaps we fall to our knees and
plead,
For God to act upon a pressing
need,
But then lose our composure over
a parking spot,
Because we are generally an
impatient lot.*

*Keeping an eternal perspective in
place
Can make this life a lot easier to
face.
For what seems eternal here won't
last.
Eventually all joins the realm of
the past.*

*Real suffering matters, but
remember too
That God will give strength to
carry us through.
And consider that our sufferings
fail to compare
With the glories to be revealed in
His presence there.*



A Study in Scripture

Zion, Mount Zion, and New Jerusalem

God calls Jerusalem “Zion,” the future site of Jesus’ Millennial reign on this earth and the location on the New Earth where God will set His Holy Mountain—Mount Zion, the New Jerusalem which is in Heaven and will come down to the New Earth for all eternity.

Historical Mount Zion

“David captured the stronghold of Zion, that is the city of David.” (2 Samuel 5:7, NASB)

“For the Lord has chosen Zion; He has desired it for His habitation.” (Psalm 132:13)

The Millennial Reign of Jesus Christ After the Tribulation

“Thus says the Lord, ‘I will return to Zion and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. Then Jerusalem will be called the City of Truth, and the mountain of the Lord of hosts will be called the Holy Mountain.’” (Zechariah 8:3)

“But as for Me, I have installed My King Upon Zion, My holy mountain.” (Psalm 2:6)

“In that day the Branch of the LORD will be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth will be the pride and the adornment of the survivors of Israel. It will come about that he who is left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem will be called holy—everyone who is recorded for life in Jerusalem. When the Lord has washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion and purged the bloodshed of Jerusalem from her midst, by the spirit of judgment and the spirit of burning, then the LORD will create over the whole area of Mount Zion and over her assemblies a cloud by day, even smoke, and the brightness of a flaming fire by night; for over all the glory will be a canopy. There will be a shelter to give shade from the heat by day, and refuge and protection from the storm

and the rain.” (Isaiah 4:2-6)

“Indeed, the Lord will comfort Zion; He will comfort all her waste places. And her wilderness He will make like Eden, And her desert like the garden of the Lord; Joy and gladness will be found in her, Thanksgiving and sound of a melody.” (Isaiah 51:3)

“For the Lord has built up Zion; He has appeared in His glory.” (Psalm 102:16)

“Now it will come about that In the last days The mountain of the house of the LORD Will be established as the chief of the mountains, And will be raised above the hills; And all the nations will stream to it. And many peoples will come and say, ‘Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, To the house of the God of Jacob; That He may teach us concerning His ways And that we may walk in His paths.’ For the law will go forth from Zion And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And He will judge between the nations, And will render decisions for many peoples; And they will hammer their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, And never again will they learn war.” (Isaiah 2:2-4)

“‘You who are far away, hear what I have done; And you who are near, acknowledge My might.’ Sinners in Zion are terrified; Trembling has seized the godless. ‘Who among us can live with the consuming fire? Who among us can live with continual burning?’ He who walks righteously and speaks with sincerity, He who rejects unjust gain And shakes his hands so that they hold no bribe; He who stops his ears from hearing about bloodshed And shuts his eyes from looking upon evil; He will dwell on the heights, His refuge will be the impregnable rock; His bread will be given him, His water will be sure. Your eyes will see the King in His beauty; They will behold a far-distant land. Your heart will meditate on terror: ‘Where is he who counts? Where is he who weighs? Where is he who counts the towers?’ You will no longer see a fierce people

[...]Look upon Zion, the city of our appointed feasts; Your eyes will see Jerusalem, an undisturbed habitation, A tent which will not be folded; Its stakes will never be pulled up, Nor any of its cords be torn apart.” (Isaiah 33:13-20)

New Earth in Eternity

“Those who trust in the LORD Are as Mount Zion, which cannot be moved but abides forever.” (Psalm 125:1)

“As it is written, ‘What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him.’” (1 Corinthians 2:9 ESV)

“Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, ‘Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.’” (Revelation 21:1-4 NASB)

*“For you have not come to a mountain that can be touched and to a blazing fire, and to darkness and gloom and whirlwind, and to the blast of a trumpet and the sound of words which sound was such that those who heard begged that no further word be spoken to them. For they could not bear the command, ‘If even a beast touches the mountain, it will be stoned.’ And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, ‘I am full of fear and trembling.’ **But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are***

enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than the blood of Abel.” (Hebrews 12:18-24)

“The city is laid out as a square, and its length is as great as the width; and he measured the city with the rod, fifteen hundred miles; its length and width and height are equal.” (Revelation 21:16)

“Then the moon will be abashed and the sun ashamed, For the Lord of hosts will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, And His glory will be before His elders.” (Isaiah 24:23)

“I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb. The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. In the daytime (for there will be no night there) its gates will never be closed; and they will bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it; and nothing unclean, and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb’s book of life.” (Revelation 21:22-27)

“Then he showed me a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb, in the middle of its street. On either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. There will no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His bond-servants will serve Him; they will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads. And there will no longer be any night; and they will not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God will illumine them; and they will reign forever and ever.” (Revelation 22:1-5)

The Non-Physical Mind

By Jesse Larsen

Since most people today believe the mind and brain to be the same thing, I have decided to write this brief article to make an important distinction between the two. I will start out showing what the Bible reveals about the mind, and I will end by explaining why it is important to understand this.

In Philippians 2:5 Paul wrote, “let this *mind* be in you which was also in Christ Jesus” (NKJV). I think everyone would agree that Paul was not telling people to take Jesus' brain and put it inside their heads, so it's only

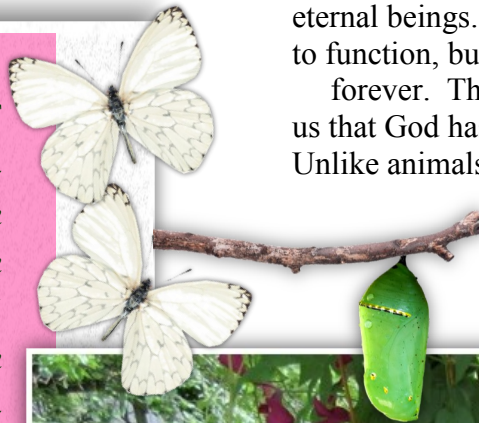
logical to conclude that Paul understood the mind to be non-physical and not the brain. And since the mind and brain are not the same thing, it is also logical to conclude that our thoughts do not originate from our brain, but from the non-physical mind. This does not mean that the brain serves no purpose, but I view the brain more like a computer which our non-physical mind uses to operate our bodies. Your mind is the **real you** – the non-physical thinking person inside who makes moral or immoral choices.

To reduce who we are to nothing more than a brain is to make us no different than animals who have no morals, and that is why it is so important to understand this. It is also important to understand this because it is why we are eternal beings. Our brains will one day cease to function, but our minds will live on

forever. This is why Ecclesiastes 3:11 tells us that God has put eternity in our hearts.

Unlike animals, man was created in God's image, and that would have to mean that man is eternal, just as God is eternal.

*“The WILDERNESS
and the WASTE-
LAND SHALL be
glad for them, And the
desert shall REJOICE
and blossom as the
rose; It shall BLOS-
SOM abundantly
and rejoice, EVEN
with joy and singing.
The GLORY of Leba-
non shall be given to
it, The EXCEL-
LENCE of Carmel
and Sharon. THEY
shall see the GLORY
of the LORD, The
EXCELLENCY of
our God.”
(Isaiah 35:1-2)*



By Betty Harstad

REMEMBER HIM

*On this earth are many trials, troubles, and tribulations,
That beset our daily lives, surround us in the nations.
Take heart in all this trouble, in the fiery course of life,
Jesus is stronger than it: He has conquered harm and strife,*

*Not just in the passing time, the passing of each moment
But in the great Eternal, our infinite atonement.
The blood He shed in dying was not shed for earthly cares,
But each soul to Him clinging, who for Jesus prepares.*

*Remember in the moments, when good seems sentenced to die,
When darkness buries the light, and in sickness we ask "why?"
When the foes all assail you, and the storm wind is unfurled,
"Greater is He inside you, than he that is in the world."*

*Remember Christ's Word to you, when in fear of strike or rod,
"My peace I give to you all, not from this world but from God."
May we stand firm in our hearts, just as Joseph also could,
For "man meant it for my harm, but God meant it for my good."*

*Remember in the worry, the things that often seize us,
"All things in life work for good, for all those in Christ Jesus."
Praise the Lord for His Goodness, "There is no shadow of turning,"
"Who was, is, and will come," to fulfill our years of yearning!*

By Nathan Warner

Practicing Living and Dying While Tasting Eternity

By Lynn Warner

After the Fall, Adam and Eve were prevented from eating of the Tree of Life. As we read in Genesis 3:22-23a: *"And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden"* (KJV). From this verse we learn that by eating from the tree of life, a human may live forever.

In the Garden, man was in the Presence of God – but man was sent away from the Presence of God and the tree of life. Death, or separation from God, had entered the world because God had said in Genesis 2:17, *"of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."* (KJV notes: lit. in dying you will die.)

In a sermon, it was once said there are two things to learn on earth: how to live and how to die. We get lots of daily practice "living" and "dying." The world teaches one way of "living" and "dying," but Scripture teaches another way. We are to follow the Way of Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith. How did Jesus teach us about "living" and "dying"? First, He defined the terms; then, He lived as our example as *"the firstborn of many brethren"* (Romans 8:29b, NASB). Jesus is the firstborn of those who have eternal life.

Jesus defined "eternal life" in John 17:3: *"This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent."* So we see that in living we are to begin knowing our great God and our Savior, Jesus.

He already knows us intimately: *"I am the good shepherd, and I know My own and My own know Me"* (John 10:14). Those who believe hear His voice, and He gives them eternal life: *"My sheep hear My voice, and I know*

them, and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand" (John 10:27-28). God allows us, in a way, back into "the Garden," to the place where He dwells and to the tree of life. We are allowed back into His presence.

There have been records of orphaned babies who died from lack of the nurturing presence of a mother – from the experience of being known and loved. If that presence is there, the baby begins to know and love in response. Jesus didn't leave us to be orphans but gave us another Comforter, the Holy Spirit. We are strengthened and comforted, and our spirits are quickened by His Word: *"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, KJV). We have the experience of being known and loved, and in response we are enabled to know and love God and others in a new and living way. Our spirits are relationally alive.

Jesus also defined "dying." For example, in Matthew 10:38-39 He states: *"And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after Me, is not worthy of Me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for My sake shall find it."* We are to "die to sin," and "die to self" (the flesh or old nature). We know our bodies are mortal and will die, but our spirits are alive to God and will live in relationship with Him eternally. When we die, we will be eternally separated from sin. Our bodies will be changed at the resurrection, and we will have a resurrected body, eternally present to God.

So what attitude should we have toward death? We can read Jesus' attitude toward death. For example, returning to John 10:11, we read, *"I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth His life for the sheep."* Verses 14-15 say, *"I am the good shepherd, and know My sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth Me, even so I know the Father: and I lay down My life for the sheep."* (Remember Psalm 23, which is often read during situations regarding death, especially verse 4 (KJV): *"Yea, though I walk through the valley*

of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: FOR THOU ART WITH ME; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me.") The focus in death is laying down our lives for others and being in God's presence, for He is with us.

We also have Paul's attitude in facing death. We read in Philippians 1:21, 23-24: *"For me to live is Christ and to die is gain[...]* For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you." Again, the focus of Paul's life as a follower of Jesus was laying down his life for others and being in the presence of the Lord.

Is this our outlook as Believers today? Perhaps we Christians in America have too much of the world's culture in us, because we seem so afraid of death. Engraved on old tombstones, I have seen phrases like these: "Died in Jesus Christ," "Entered into glory in Dec. 1842," and "Went home to be with the Lord." Is that our attitude? Unfortunately, the world often succeeds in captivating us with its culture, and we focus on the disease, the symptoms, the doctors, medications, and money, while losing our courage and focus on God. How can we speak and use language to glorify God more and strengthen each other more in this area?

In conclusion, death entered the world because of man's sin in the Garden of Eden. God had said if Adam ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, *"in dying, you will die"* (Genesis 2:17, literally). Death is "separation from." Adam and Eve died spiritually – they were separated from the presence of God. Thus began lifetimes of separations, losses, and deaths of many types. Those who are not in Christ when they die also experience the second death – eternal separation from God, because there is an eternal death, or hell, *"where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched"* (Mark 9:48).

Life and death are the two issues we must face here on earth: How do we live? How do we die? The world and God are enemies on these questions, because the world is in rebellion against God. The world defines everything differently from God, including "life" and "death" and suppresses the truth of God. It does not give Him the glory. We, as Christians, are witnesses of His grace, mercy, and love in life and death, as well as His judgment against sin. Most of all, we celebrate being accepted in the Beloved, being known by God and knowing Him, enjoying His presence in this life, and looking forward to entering into eternal glory.



"He who BELIEVES in the Son has ETERNAL life; but he who does not OBEY the Son WILL not see LIFE, but the WRATH of God ABIDES on him." (John 3:36)

September/October Newsletter Theme— JUDGMENT

Submission Deadline: September 27

Publish Date: October 6

Judgment...

- What is judgment?
- Why is there judgment?
- What does God's judgment look like?
- Is there a way out of judgment?
- Should man be concerned about God's judgment?

Verses on JUDGMENT (from the NASB version)

Leviticus 18:4 — *"You are to perform My judgments and keep My statutes, to live in accord with them; I am the Lord your God."*

2 Chronicles 19:6 — *"He said to the judges, 'Consider what you are doing, for you do not judge for man but for the Lord who is with you when you render judgment.'"*

Job 40:7-9 — *"Now gird up your loins like a man; I will ask you, and you instruct Me. Will you really annul My judgment? Will you condemn Me that you may be justified? Or do you have an arm like God, And can you thunder with a voice like His?"*

Psalms 9:7-8 — *"But the LORD abides forever; He has established His throne for judgment, And He will judge the world in righteousness; He will execute judgment for the peoples with equity."*

John 3:19 — *"This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil."*

Hebrews 9:27 — *"And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment."*

John 5:24 — *"Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life."*

1 John 4:17 — *"By this, love is perfected with us, so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment; because as He is, so also are we in this world."*

Further Out—Nov/Dec 2015: CHRIST'S RETURN