

THE QUESTION OF THE RESURRECTION: THE TWO WORLDS (EARTH AND HEAVEN) DIFFER LUKE 20:27–38

Introduction

This world and the other world — earth and heaven — differ. They differ drastically. Jesus used the attack of the Sadducees to discuss the differences.

- I. Sadducees, the liberal-minded, tried to discredit Jesus (vv. 27-33)
- II. Marriage is different (vv. 34-35)
- III. Entrance is different: must be counted worthy (v. 35).
- IV. Death is different: no longer can die (v. 36).
- V. Personal being (nature) is different (v. 36)
- VI. Life is different: it is a resurrected life (vv. 37-38).

I. *Luke 20:27–33 Religionists Oppose Christ*

The Sadducees, the liberal-minded, tried to discredit Jesus. Note three points.

1. They referred to Levrite marriage (See *Levrite Marriage*, Lk. 20:28)
2. They presented a logical situation: there were seven brothers. The first brother married but died without having children. Each of the other brothers obeyed the law, but each brother died before having children. Finally the woman died also. The point was logical, but most unlikely.
3. They asked an egotistical and blind question. The question was logical, but note two things:
 - a. The spirit that lay behind the questioning. The situation was absurd; the spirit was cold and coarse, egotistical and unbelieving, regrettable and revolting. The unbeliever's spirit is often self-incriminating and self-condemning.
 - b. The blindness and human frailty of the question. The human mind cannot know the spiritual world apart from revelation. The Sadducees were thinking that the spiritual world would be just like the physical world, that it would be nothing more than a continuation of this world both in its nature and in its relationships.

1 Cor 2:14 The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.

LUKE 20: 27 SADDUCEES

These were the religious and political liberals of Jesus' day. They were the wealthy, the aristocratic, the governing class of leaders in Israel. Many Sadducees served on the nation's governing body, the Sanhedrin. The Chief Priest himself was usually a Sadducee who presided over the Sanhedrin. The Sanhedrin ruled the people on behalf of the Roman empire (Acts 4:1-2; 5:27). The Romans readily saw to it that the Sadducees held the positions of leadership in the nation, for the Sadducees favoured Greek customs over Jewish customs. They willingly aided the Romans in doing away with religious practices and instituting Greek and Roman customs (Hellenism).

The Sadducees are thought to have arisen out of the same struggle as the Pharisees around 175 B.C. However, they were always the fewest in number among the various sects of Jewish belief.

Several things should be noted.

1. The Sadducees were secular and materialistic. They were the independent thinkers, the rationalists of their day.
2. They were heavily entrenched in the priesthood of Jesus' day (Acts 4:1-2; 5:17). They readily collaborated with the Roman government in order to protect their position, power and wealth.
3. They denied the supernatural to a great degree: the resurrection and miracles, life after death and the existence of beings in other dimensions such as angels and spirits (Mt. 22:23; Acts 23:8). To them there was no heaven or hell, no existence whatsoever except on this earth. A man died and was annihilated; he ceased to exist. There was no such thing as rewards or punishment in an afterlife; there was no such thing as life that continued eternally. (See Mt. 22:23-33.)
4. The only Scripture they accepted was the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Old Testament. They felt these books were the only Scripture that was binding. They rejected the Oral and Scribal Law. They did not accept the prophets nor the poetic books of the Scripture.
5. By practice, they bordered on being humanists, believing that man was in control of his own life and destiny. God had little if anything to do with life, for there was no afterlife. Whatever was achieved was to be done by man's own will and energy and effort.
6. They were diametrically opposed to the Pharisees.

The liberal position of the Sadducees caused two things.

1. It caused them to stumble at the spiritual and supernatural. They ridiculed and scorned both. Therefore, their minds, the teachings of Jesus were the teachings of an unthinking and illogical man, lacking philosophical analysis and natural proof.
2. Their liberal position caused them to feel threatened and to oppose Jesus. The people were flocking to Jesus and soaking up His teachings. This meant the Sadducees were losing their grip on the people. Their position and wealth were being jeopardized; therefore, they were compelled to attack and discredit Him before the people. □

LUKE 20: 28 LEVRITE MARRIAGE

When a husband died without a son, the Levrite law said that his brother was to marry his wife and bear a son. By law, the son was considered the first-born son of the deceased brother. This assured two things: (a) that the family name continued, and (2) that the property holdings were kept in the family. This was a law that had been given to help preserve and enlarge the nation of Israel (Ruth 4:5). □

II. *Luke 20:34–35 Heaven and Marriage*

Marriage differs in the two worlds. In this world there is marriage, but in the other world there will be no marriage. There is a very special and wonderful reason why there is no marriage in the other world: love is perfected. Future life and relationships will exceed earthly relationships, even the bond of marital relationships. The strong union and bond of earthly marriage will not be less, it will be greater and stronger in heaven, but so will all other relationships.

In heaven our relationships will cease to be as they are on earth. They will be changed in an absolute sense: selfishness and sin will not affect our love and lives. Our love will be perfected; therefore, we will love everyone perfectly. A wife on this earth will not be loved as she was on this earth — imperfectly. She will be loved more, *loved perfectly*. Everyone will love everyone else perfectly. God will change all relationships into perfection, even as the relationships between angels and God are perfected.

III. *Luke 20:35 Entrance to Heaven — Justification*

Entrance into the two worlds differs. A man has nothing to do with his entrance into this world. He is conceived and born by the act of a man and a woman. But note three facts about the next world.

1. Only those who are considered, accounted worthy shall obtain that world. This is significant. A man does not work or earn his way into the next world. He is not worthy; he is only counted worthy. Worthiness is accounted to him, merely laid to his

account: Scripture says that it is his faith that is counted as making him worthy. God takes a man's faith and counts, credits it as "righteousness" (See *Justification*, Rom. 4:22; Rom. 5:1. See Rom. 4:5; 4:1-3, 4:1-25).

Rom 5:1 *Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Rom 4:23-25 *The words "it [righteousness] was credited to him" were written not for him alone, but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness — for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.*

Gal 3:6 *Consider Abraham: "He believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness."*

2. Jesus was speaking of the resurrection of believers only. He did not say "the resurrection of the dead" which would mean all the dead, but He said "the resurrection from the dead" which means the resurrection of believers from among the dead.

John 5:25 *"I tell you the truth, a time is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live."*

John 6:40 *"For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day."*

Acts 24:15 *And I have the same hope in God as these men, that there will be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked.*

Rev 20:6 *Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years.*

3. Every man continues to exist after this world, but all will not enter "that age," that is, heaven. Those who have not lived a life of faith in Christ, who are not counted worthy, will not enter "that age," but will enter hell (See *Hell, Torment*, Lk. 16:24; *Hell Fire*, Mt. 5:22).

Luke 16:24 *So he called to him, 'Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.'*

John 5:28-29 *"Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out — those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned."*

Acts 24:15 *And I have the same hope in God as these men, that there will be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked.*

Dan 12:2 *Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt.*

ROMANS 04:22 JUSTIFICATION: FAITH, RIGHTEOUSNESS

*This is why “it is credited to him as righteousness.” **Romans 04:22***

In simple terms *justification* means that God takes the believer’s faith and counts it as righteousness (Rom. 4:3; see Gen. 15:6)

When a person *really believes* that Jesus Christ is *his Saviour*, God takes that person’s faith and counts it for righteousness (Rom. 4:3, 5, 9, 11, 22, 24). The person is not righteous; he has no righteousness of his own. He is still imperfect, still sinful, still corruptible, still short of God’s glory as a sinful human being. But he does believe that Jesus Christ is *his Saviour*. Such belief honours God’s Son (whom God loves very much), and because it honours God’s Son, God accepts that person’s faith for righteousness. God counts that person’s faith as righteousness. Therefore, that person becomes acceptable to God. A person’s belief — the right kind of belief — is critical.

Gen 15:6 *Abram believed the Lord, and he credited it to him as righteousness.*

Rom 5:1 *Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Gal 3:6 *Consider Abraham: “He believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.”*

1 Cor 6:11 *And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.*

Phil 3:9 *And be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ — the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith. □*

ROMANS 05:01 JUSTIFICATION AND PEACE

*Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. **Romans 05:01***

Justification (*diakioun*) means to count someone righteous. It means to reckon, to credit, to account, to judge, to treat, to look upon as righteous. It does not mean to make a person righteous. It does not mean to make someone something, but merely to count, to judge, to treat someone as something.

The first result of justification is peace with God.

1. The meaning of peace with God is striking. Peace with God does not mean escapism, a quiet atmosphere, the absence of trouble, the control of situations by

positive thinking, the denial of problems, the ability to keep from facing reality. Peace *with* God means the *sense and knowledge...*

- that one has restored his relationship with God.
 - that one is no longer alienated and separated from God.
 - that one is now reconciled with God.
 - that one is now accepted by God.
 - that one is freed from the wrath and judgment of God.
 - that one is freed from fearing God's wrath and judgment.
 - that one is now pleasing God.
 - that one is at peace with God.
2. The source of peace is Jesus Christ. Men can have peace with God only because of Jesus Christ. It is He who reconciles men to God. He has made peace by the blood of His cross.

Eph 2:14-15 For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace.

Col 1:20 And through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

Isa 53:5 But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.

3. The reason we have peace is the glorious truth of justification. □

LUKE 16:24 HELL – TORMENT

*So he called to him, 'Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.' **Luke 16:24***

To be anguished, tortured, and greatly distressed; to suffer pain and sorrow. The Bible unquestionably teaches there is to be a torment for unbelievers in fire. However, it must be remembered that the fire we know is material and temporal; it is not spiritual or eternal. Earthly fire does not last forever. Nothing on earth does. Earthly fire is of the physical dimension of being. The fire of hell, whatever its nature and qualities, is spiritual and eternal. It never ends. And men must face this; they must not shrink

from the truth of hell. Why? Because hell, that is, separation from God, is much worse than any experience here on earth. It will be much worse than any physical experience imaginable. This is the teaching of Scripture. This is the point Jesus was making. Man absolutely must flee from hell. Man absolutely must flee to Christ for salvation (See *Hell Fire*, Mt. 5:22). (See Mt. 5:22, 29; 10:28; 18:9; 23:15, 33; 25:41; Mk. 9:43-48; Lk. 12:5; 16:23; 2 Th. 1:8-9; 2 Pet. 2:4; Rev. 14:10-11; 16:10; 18:10; 19:20; 20:10-15; 21:8.) □

MATHEW 05:22 HELL FIRE OR GEHENNA (GEENNA)

The word is used eleven or twelve times in the New Testament, and in every case it is spoken by Jesus except in the Epistle of James. It illustrates the terrible truth of the second death, of man's final separation from God. Jesus pointed to the burning, repulsive rubbish dump outside the city limits of Jerusalem and said that it was exactly what hell was like. The dump was called Gehenna. It was in the Valley of Hinnom which served as a public incinerator. Hanging over it was a layer of thick, smouldering smoke arising from what seemed to be an eternal flame. The smell and filth became a breeding cesspool for a loathsome worm that was difficult to kill (Mk. 9:44). Thus, Jesus found in Gehenna a description of just what it means to be separated from God eternally and to die the second death. Several facts are said about hell or Gehenna:

- It is the same as the lake of fire, a place of torture (Rev. 19:20; 20:10, 14-15).
- It has to do with the second death (Rev. 21:8; Jn. 8:24).
- It is Hell (Mt. 5:29-30; 10:28; 23:15, 33; Lk. 12:5).
- It is eternal fire (Mt. 18:8).
- It is the fire of Hell (Mt. 18:9; Jas. 3:6).
- It is unquenchable fire (Mk. 9:43-49).

The teaching of Jesus should always be remembered. Remembrance is critical in determining a person's fate. Hell is a definite place, a real place that is specifically located. It was originally prepared for the devil and his angels. But all men who choose to follow self and evil and to reject God shall also be sent to hell eternally.

Mat 3:10 *"The axe is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire."*

Mat 5:29-30 *"If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell."*

Mat 7:19 “Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.”

Mat 10:28 “Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell.”

Mat 11:23 “And you, Capernaum, will you be lifted up to the skies? No, you will go down to the depths. If the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Sodom, it would have remained to this day.”

Mat 13:42, 50 “They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth... And throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

Mat 16:18 “And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.”

Mat 18:8-9 “If your hand or your foot causes you to sin cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life maimed or crippled than to have two hands or two feet and be thrown into eternal fire. And if your eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into the fire of hell.”

Mat 23:15 “Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites: You travel over land and sea to win a single convert, and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of hell as you are.”

Mat 23:33 “You snakes! You brood of vipers! How will you escape being condemned to hell?”

Mat 25:41 “Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.’”

Mark 9:43-48 “If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life maimed than with two hands to go into hell, where the fire never goes out. And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled than to have two feet and be thrown into hell. And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into hell, where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.”

Luke 3:9 “The axe is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.”

Luke 10:15 “And you, Capernaum, will you be lifted up to the skies? No, you will go down to the depths.”

Luke 12:5 “But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear him who, after the killing of the body, has power to throw you into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him.”

Luke 16:23-24 “In hell, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. So he called to him, ‘Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.’” □

IV. **Luke 20:36** *Death and Eternal Life*

Death differs in the two worlds. In the next world there is no death (See *Death*, Heb. 9:27). Note: Jesus said a man “can no longer die.” A man is locked in, given to incorruptible body and existence, living forever with God. (See *Eternal Life*, Jn. 17:2-3. See Jn.1:4.)

1 Th 4:17 After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.

1 Cor 15:53-54 For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: “Death has been swallowed up in victory.”

2 Tim 4:18 The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and will bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

HEBREWS 09:27 DEATH (THANATOS)

Just as a man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgement.
Hebrews 09:23

The basic meaning of death is *separation*. Death never means extinction, annihilation, non-existence or inactivity. “Death is the separation of a person from the purpose or use for which he was intended.” (H.S. Miller. Quoted by Lehman Strauss. *Devotional Studies in Galatians and Ephesians*. Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux Bros. Copyright 1957 by Lehman Strauss, p. 137.)

The Bible speaks of three deaths.

1. Physical death: the *separation* of a man’s spirit or life from the body. This is what men commonly call death. It is when a person ceases to exist on this earth and is buried (1 Cor. 15:21-22; Heb. 9:27).

1 Cor 15:21-22 For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive.

Heb 9:27 Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment.

2. Spiritual death: the *separation* of man's spirit from God while he is still living and walking upon earth. This death is the *natural state* of a man on earth without Christ. Man is seen as still in his sins and *dead* to God (Eph. 2:1; 4:18; 1 Jn. 5:12). Spiritual death speaks of a person who is dead while he still lives (1 Tim. 5:6). He is a natural man living in this present world, but he is said to be dead to the Lord Jesus Christ and to God and to spiritual matters.
- a. A person who wastes his life in wild living is spiritually dead.
Luke 15:32 "But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found."
- b. A person who has not partaken of Christ is spiritually dead.
John 6:53 Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you."
- c. A person who does not have the spirit of Christ is said to be spiritually dead.
Rom 8:9 You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ.
- d. A person who lives in sin is said to be spiritually dead.
Eph 2:1 As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins.
Col 2:13 When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins.
- e. A person who is separated from God is said to be spiritually dead.
Eph 4:18-19 They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts. Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, with a continual lust for more.
- f. A person who sleeps in sin is spiritually dead.
Eph 5:14 For it is light that makes everything visible. This is why it is said: "Wake up, O sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."
- g. A person who lives in sinful pleasure is dead while he lives.
1 Tim 5:6 But the widow who lives for pleasure is dead even while she lives.
- h. A person who does not have the Son of God is dead.
1 Tim 5:6 He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.

- i. A person who does great religious works but does the wrong works is dead.

Rev 3:1 *“To the angel of the church in Sardis write: These are the words of him who holds the seven spirits of God and the seven stars. I know your deeds; you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead.”*

3. Eternal death: the *separation* of man from God’s presence forever. This is the second death, an eternal state of being *dead to God*. (1 Cor. 6:9-10; 2 Th. 1:9). It is spiritual death, separation from God, that is prolonged beyond the death of the body. It is called the “second death” or eternal death.

Rom 6:23 *For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Rom 8:6 *The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace.*

2 Th 1:9 *They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power. □*

JOHN 17:02–03 ETERNAL LIFE (AINIOS)

“For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him. Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.”

John 17:02-03

Life, real life. It is the very life of God Himself. It is the very energy, force, being, essence, principle and power of life. It has more to do with quality and with what life really is than with duration. To live forever in the present world is not necessarily a good thing. The world and man’s body need changing. That changed life is found only in eternal life. The only being who can be said to be eternal is God. Therefore, life — supreme life — is found only in God. To possess eternal life is to know God. Once a person knows God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent, that person has eternal life — he shall live forever. But more essential, the person has the supreme quality of life, the very life of God Himself.

John 3:14-15 *“Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.”*

John 5:24 *“I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.”*

John 6:40 *“For my Father’s will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.”*

John 3:36 “Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God’s wrath remains on him.”

John 11:25-28 Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?” “Yes, Lord,” she told him, “I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who was to come into the world.” And after she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary aside. “The Teacher is here,” she said, “and is asking for you.”

John 12:25 “The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.”

Rom 5:21 So that, just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Gal 6:8 The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.

2 Tim 1:10 But it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Saviour, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

1 John 3:14 We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love our brothers. Anyone who does not love remains in death.

1 Jn 5:11-12 And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. □

V. **Luke 20:36** *Nature of Believers in Heaven*

Personal being, that is, man’s nature, differs in the two worlds. Two things are said about believers.

1. Believers shall be “like the angels.” The Greek word isangelloi means that believers shall have a nature like the angels: be glorified, be their peers, living in the joy of working and serving God just as the angels do. It means believers will have all the glorious being and privileges and responsibilities that angels have.

1 Cor 15:42-44 So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body; there is also a spiritual body.

1 Cor 15:49-53 And just as we have borne the likeness of the earthly man, so shall we bear the likeness of the man from heaven. I declare to you, brothers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed — in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality

2. But there is even more than what angels have. Believers are the children of God, the adopted children of God. (See Gal. 4:5-6.)

Rom 8:15-17 For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear; but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, “Abba, Father.” The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs — heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

Gal 4:4-7 But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons. Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, “Abba, Father.” So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir.

Titus 3:7 So that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.

VI. Luke 20:37–38 The Resurrected Life of Heaven

Life differs in the two worlds. In the other world, it is a resurrected life, a real life, a life that is more real than the life of this world. It is a perfect life that lives for God perfectly. Note three facts.

1. God is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Jesus meant at least two things in this point.
 - a. God’s relationships are active relationships, not inactive. God says, “I am the God of...” not, “I was the God of...” His relationships with His subjects are maintained even after departing this world. God is eternal; therefore, He creates and maintains eternal, active relationships. God’s subjects enter into the spiritual realm of His presence and actively relate to Him. The resurrection is a fact.
 - b. God’s relationships are good and rewarding. The patriarchs of old were promised very personal rewards (see Heb.11:13-16). There has to be a resurrection if our relationship with God is good and rewarding. To die and to be left dead as a decayed corpse is not good nor rewarding. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob have a good and

rewarding relationship with God. They are more alive today than they were while on earth, for they are perfected and eternal. They are with God Himself, and so shall we be. The resurrection is a fact.

2. God is — God exists. Note the two simple words in v. 38. The fact that God is, that God exists, proves the resurrection. The Greek (*ego eimi*) means the self-existent, eternal One (See “*It is I*”, Jn. 6:20; note, 18:4-6).

Mat 22:32 *‘I am the God.’*

Heb 11:6 *Anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists.*

Since God exists, He is God with omnipotent power — power that is perfect and eternal. God can do anything and all things, perfectly and eternally. He can call the elements of a decayed body back together again and raise it up to live in the spiritual dimension, both perfectly and eternally.

Note carefully: God exists (lives) — the argument is irrefutable. Note carefully the great passage in Ephesians dealing with the spiritual blessings that are ours in Christ.

Eph 1:11-12 *In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, in order that we, who were the first to hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory.*

The resurrection is a fact. It will be experienced by all men of all ages because God is. God has willed to give us an inheritance — an inheritance *to be*, that is; to *live eternally* with Him. We will undergo a transformation of nature, a transformation of perfection and permanency. For this reason, we need to pay close attention to what Scripture says.

Heb 11:6 *And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he [God] exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.*

We must believe that God is and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him; that is, He rewards all of us who seek to live eternally with Him.

Phil 3:11 *And so, somehow to attain to the resurrection from the dead.*

Titus 2:12-13 *It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope — the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ.*

1 John 3:2 *Dear friends, now “we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall him as he is.*

Rev 21:1, 5 *Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. He who was seated on*

the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."

3. God is not the God of the dead but of the living. God is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, not the God of dead and decayed corpses. When Moses wrote these words, the three patriarchs had been dead for centuries. If they were dead, God was not their God. Since He was their God, they were alive; they were living in God's presence and in a relationship to Him that was perfect and eternal. There is to be a resurrection.

Rom 14:7-9 *For none of us lives to himself alone and none of us dies to himself alone. If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord. For this very reason, Christ died and returned to life so that he might be the Lord of both the dead and the living.*

One simple fact comes to the forefront ever so clearly in these points made by Jesus: since God is, God is not the God of the dead but of the living.

Acts 26:8 *Why should any of you consider it incredible that God raises the dead?*

Acts 24:15 *And I have the same hope in God as these men, that there will be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked.*

Note also that all believers live. They live unto God, for God is the God of the living. Death cannot break the believer's relationship to God. The believer goes to live with the Lord forever. (Notes, *Reward*, Lk. 12:41-48; 16:10-12; *Reward and Responsibility*, Lk 19:15-19.) ■

JOHN 06:20 "IT IS I" (EIMI)

But he said to them, "It is I; don't be afraid" John 06:20

This is one word in the Greek, eimi, which is simply "I AM" (Jn. 18:6). Jesus was saying, "I AM" has come — fear not. He was reminding the disciples who He was the Son of God Himself. He possessed all power; therefore, there was no need to fear. This was the same message that God gave to Moses at the burning bush, "I AM WHO I AM" (Exo. 3:13-15, esp. 14). It was the same message that Jesus used as a defence against the religionists, "Before Abraham was born, I am" (Jn. 8:58). It is the same message that Col. 1:15-17 claims for Him; and it is the same message that is proclaimed by the book of *Revelation*, He "who is and was and is to come" (Rev. 1:4, 8; 11:17; 16:5).

There are several "I Am's" claimed by Christ.

=> I Am the Messiah (Jn. 4:26).

=> I Am (It is I); don't be afraid (Jn. 6:20).

- => I Am the Bread of Life (Jn. 6:35).
- => I Am from Above (Jn. 8:23).
- => I Am the Light of the World (Jn. 8:12; 9:5; 12:46).
- => I Am before Abraham was born, I am (eternal) (Jn. 8:58).
- => I Am the Gate or Door (Jn. 10:7).
- => I Am the Good Shepherd (Jn. 10:14).
- => I Am the God's Son (Jn. 10:36).
- => I Am the Resurrection and Life (Jn. 11:25).
- => I Am the Lord and Teacher (Jn. 13:13).
- => I Am the Way, the Truth, and the Life (Jn. 14:6).
- => I Am the True Vine (Jn. 15:1).
- => I Am the Alpha and the Omega (Rev. 1:8).
- => I Am the First and the Last (Rev. 1:17). □

LUKE 19: 15–19 REWARDS AND RESPONSIBILITY

Moneymaking was not the purpose of the servants (see note 3, Lk. 19:13). The purpose was to test them, to show how capable and responsible they were. Could they be trusted with responsibility, with the authority of God? The leaders who are needed to rule God's universe in the coming kingdom and world order must be strong and responsible. The dominant idea is that of testing, a time of trial. The Nobleman's purpose is to develop distinguished rulers: leaders that are decisive, firm, and strong.

It is interesting that the Lord spoke in the hundreds of percent — interesting that the one who really pleased the Lord exerted not 100 percent energy but 1000 percent, and the one who showed some fruitfulness worked not just 50 percent but 500 percent. Is there some significance in these percentages? Some message for God's people? Is there a servant who dares to waste a moment of time after studying what the Lord said? □