

Title: **QUESTIONS MOURNERS ASK**
Text: Ecclesiastes 7:2-4
Subject: *Questions About Life, Death and Eternity*
Date: Sunday Morning — November 26, 2006
Tape#: Z-15a
Reading: Job 14:1-22

JOB 14:1-22

1. Man *that is* born of a woman *is* of few days, and full of trouble.
2. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not.
3. And dost thou open thine eyes upon such an one, and bringest me into judgment with thee?
4. Who can bring a clean *thing* out of an unclean? not one.
5. Seeing his days *are* determined, the number of his months *are* with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass;
6. Turn from him, that he may rest, till he shall accomplish, as an hireling, his day.
7. For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease.
8. Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground;
9. *Yet* through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant.
10. But man dieth, and wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where *is* he?
11. *As* the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up:
12. So man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens *be* no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep.
13. O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave, that thou wouldest keep me secret, until thy wrath be past, that thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me!
14. If a man die, shall he live *again*? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come.
15. Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands.
16. For now thou numberest my steps: dost thou not watch over my sin?
17. My transgression *is* sealed up in a bag, and thou sewest up mine iniquity.

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18. And surely the mountain falling cometh to nought, and the rock is removed out of his place.
19. The waters wear the stones: thou washest away the things which grow *out* of the dust of the earth; and thou destroyest the hope of man.
20. Thou prevailest for ever against him, and he passeth: thou changest his countenance, and sendest him away.
21. His sons come to honour, and he knoweth *it* not; and they are brought low, but he perceiveth *it* not of them.
22. But his flesh upon him shall have pain, and his soul within him shall mourn.

INTRODUCTION:

Needless to say, my mind has been almost completely consumed with thoughts about death this week. Monday morning I flew to New Jersey to preach the funeral of a 33 year old police officer, a young man who had survived two tours of duty in Iraq, hazarding his life for his country. Then, on Friday, I preached my father's funeral. I appreciate, so very much, your kind expressions of tender love and care.

How helpless we feel, when we try to comfort people who mourn the loss of someone they love! You cannot imagine how utterly helpless I feel as a preacher, trying to preach a funeral. When the person who has died is a believer, the task is painful because we must part company with a cherished friend for a while. At the same time, the task of preaching a believer's funeral is a delight because the heaven-born soul has simply gone home. But when I have to preach the funeral of an eternally lost soul, I cannot express how helpless I feel.

I know you feel just as helpless. Because we cannot find words to express ourselves, people often say foolish things, simply repeating what we've heard others say, or what we think people want to hear, though they are seldom true.

- "He's in a better place."
- "He's better off now."
- "His suffering is over."
- "He's with the Lord."

As I stood beside my dad's coffin Friday, after listening to the local pastor, a religious cheerleader, do his best to keep us from facing the reality of the

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fact that a man had died and passed out of this world into eternity, I said to the congregation, “There is nothing I can say that will affect my dad in any way. He is dead, gone into eternity. In just a few minutes, like Abraham of old, we will bury our dead out of our sight. But I have earnestly sought, and I believe the Lord has given me, a message for you who are living, for you who must soon meet God in judgment just as he has.”

If God the Holy Spirit will enable me, I want to preach the same message to you this morning that I preached to my family and friends at dad’s funeral Friday. May God graciously give me your attention. Turn with me to the book of Ecclesiastes.

THE HOUSE OF MOURNING

Jeremiah, the weeping prophet, wrote, in the book of Lamentations, — “*My strength and my hope is perished from the LORD: Remembering mine affliction and my misery, the wormwood and the gall. My soul hath them still in remembrance, and is humbled in me*” (3:18-20). — “*The joy of our heart is ceased; our dance is turned into mourning. The crown is fallen from our head: woe unto us, that we have sinned! For this our heart is faint; for these things our eyes are dim*” (5:15-17).

None of us would ever choose to visit the house of mourning, if we did not have to do so; but the Word of God tells us plainly that it is good for us to have our merriment interrupted and our dancing turned into mourning, that it is good for eternity bound sinners to be found in the house of mourning (Ecc. 7:2-4).

(Ecclesiastes 7:2-4) “*It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting: for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to his heart. (3) Sorrow is better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better. (4) The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning; but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth.*”

We go to the house of mourning because we are compelled to go by the arrangement of God’s wise and good providence. In the house of mourning, as we view the cold, dead body of a mortal, we are forced to face the fact that death is the sure and certain “*end of all men.*” — “*It is appointed unto men once to die, and after this the judgment.*” It is my prayer that God the

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Holy Spirit will graciously cause you to lay these things to heart. Will you lay this to heart?

Serious people are people of thoughtful contemplation. They take serious things seriously. They ask serious questions. **God's servant Job was such a man.** His experiences in life caused him to ask some very thoughtful, serious questions about life, death, and eternity. **I want us to look at five questions Job asked, as he contemplated life, death and eternity.** They are questions that every man and women, even small children, ask themselves every time they find themselves in the house of mourning. You will find these five questions in the 14th chapter of the book of Job. I want to each of these questions from the Word of God. I am confident they are questions each of you have, in one way or another, asked yourselves many times. They are questions you cannot help asking when you are suddenly forced to look upon the coffin of a dead man.

JOB'S LIFE EXPERIENCE

We do not really know who wrote the book of Job; but it was probably written by Job himself, or, perhaps, by Moses. **This much we do know:** The book of Job is one of the oldest books in the Bible, if not the oldest. It describes the life experiences of a man who walked with God in those earliest days, when very few people knew and worshipped the Lord. Some suggest that Job probably lived in the days of Abraham. Others suggest that he lived in the days of Enoch, or perhaps in the days of Noah, after the flood. No one can say for certain. But we do know that **Job walked with, worshipped, and served the Lord God when very few did.** God said, there was "*none like him in the earth,*" and described him as a perfect and upright man who feared God and eschewed evil (1:8). God himself owned Job as one who served him, one who had been saved by his grace and made perfect in Christ.

Job frankly acknowledged and confessed his sin before God. He said, "*If I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me: if I say, I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse*" (9:20). And if anyone confesses his sin God, God declares himself faithful and just in forgiving his sin (1 John 1:9). This is very important because unless you understand who Job was and what kind of man he was, you simply cannot understand the book of Job.

1. **Job was a faithful, faithful servant of God** (1:8; 2:3).

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(Job 1:8) “And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that *there is* none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?”

(Job 2:3) “And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that *there is* none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause.”

2. **Job was a man whose faith was greatly tried.**

- The Loss of His Children
- The Loss of His Health
- The Speech of His Wife
- The Loss of His Reputation and Influence
- The Accusations of His “Friends”

3. **At times, Job showed signs of weakness, frustration, and even unbelief; but even in his lowest times he worshipped God, maintained his integrity, and believed God** (1:20; 2:10; 13:15; 19:25-27).

(Job 1:20-22) “Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped, 21 And said, Naked came I out of my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD. 22 In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.”

(Job 2:10) “But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips.”

(Job 13:15) “Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: but I will maintain mine own ways before him.”

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(Job 19:25-27) “For I know *that* my redeemer liveth, and *that* he shall stand at the latter *day* upon the earth: 26 And *though* after my skin *worms* destroy this *body*, yet in my flesh shall I see God: 27 Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; *though* my reins be consumed within me.”

4. **In the midst of his heavy, heavy trials this man Job acknowledged God’s total sovereignty and absolute dominion over all things** (1:20-21; 12:14-16).

(Job 1:20-21) “Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped, 21 And said, Naked came I out of my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.”

(Job 12:14-16) “Behold, he breaketh down, and it cannot be built again: he shutteth up a man, and there can be no opening. 15 Behold, he withholdeth the waters, and they dry up: also he sendeth them out, and they overturn the earth. 16 With him *is* strength and wisdom: the deceived and the deceiver *are* his.”

5. **In the end, God honored Job and made even his enemies to know that the Lord accepted him**, condemning the harsh judgment of Job’s three “friends” (42:7-8).

(Job 42:7-8) “And it was *so*, that after the LORD had spoken these words unto Job, the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me *the thing that is* right, as my servant Job *hath*. 8 Therefore take unto you now seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you: for him will I accept: lest I deal with you *after your* folly, in that ye have not spoken of me *the thing which is* right, like my servant Job.”

6. **And the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before he was afflicted** (42:9-17). — So it shall be with all God’s elect.

(Job 42:9-17) “So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite *and*

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Zophar the Naamathite went, and did according as the LORD commanded them: the LORD also accepted Job. *10* And the LORD turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before. *11* Then came there unto him all his brethren, and all his sisters, and all they that had been of his acquaintance before, and did eat bread with him in his house: and they bemoaned him, and comforted him over all the evil that the LORD had brought upon him: every man also gave him a piece of money, and every one an earring of gold. *12* So the LORD blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she asses. *13* He had also seven sons and three daughters. *14* And he called the name of the first, Jemima; and the name of the second, Kezia; and the name of the third, Kerenhappuch. *15* And in all the land were no women found *so* fair as the daughters of Job: and their father gave them inheritance among their brethren. *16* After this lived Job an hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, *even* four generations. *17* So Job died, *being* old and full of days."

Divisions: Here are five questions that arose from Job's experiences in this world, questions about life, death and eternity.

1. "Dost thou open thine eyes upon such an one?" (v.3).
2. "Bringest (thou) me into judgment with thee?" (v.3).
3. "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?" (v.4).
4. "Man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?" (v. 10).
5. "If a man die, shall he live again?" (v.14).

Proposition: If we are wise, we will give thoughtful consideration to these serious questions about the most serious of matters: life, death, and eternity.

- I. "**DOST THOU OPEN THINE EYES UPON SUCH AN ONE?**" (vv. 1-3).

(Job 14:1-3) "Man *that is* born of a woman *is* of few days, and full of trouble. 2 He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not. 3 And **dost thou open thine eyes upon such an one**, and bringest me into judgment with thee?"

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This question arose from Job's consideration of the frailty, brevity, and utter insignificance of a man like he knew he was. We all like to think that we are somebody, that our lives count, that some part of this world depends upon us. In a natural sense, of course, certain things do depend upon us, because God has so ordered it. Even in spiritual matters, it can be said that certain things depend upon us, again, because God has so ordered it. But once a man starts to look beyond his nose and sees that the first cause of all things is God (12:14-16; Rom. 8:28; 11:36; 2 Cor. 5:18), once he sees that "*all things are of God,*" he realizes that before God he is utterly insignificant.

"Man that is born of woman is of few days." — The longer I live, the more thankful I am that life in this world is but a very brief part of my existence. I am truly thankful that since the days of the flood, the life span of the human race has been shortened. Wouldn't you hate to live in this world, in its present condition, in your present condition, for 969 years, like Methuselah did? I much prefer the expectation of threescore years and ten to 969!

Yet, we ought to learn to recognize the brevity of this life, number our days, and learn to apply our hearts unto Christ, who alone is Wisdom. None of us is guaranteed seventy years in this world, or even another moment. But if we should live to be the age of 80, 90, or even 100 years, that is just a speck, when you think of eternity. And those few days will pass by quicker than a weaver's shuttle.

(Psalms 90:12) "So teach *us* to number our days, that we may apply *our* hearts unto wisdom."

The few days we have upon this earth, because we are sinners in a world full of sin and sorrow, are "full of trouble." — The word "*trouble*" here is one of those words with many shades of meaning. — It might be translated ***trouble*** because sin and trouble always go hand in hand. Where there is sin, trouble is sure to follow. — It might be translated ***commotion*** because the lives of men in this world are, like the troubled sea, restless. Fallen man is in a constant state of uneasiness. — The word might also be translated ***trembling***. The reason for man's restlessness is, to a very great extent, the trembling of his soul in the prospect of death, judgment, and eternity.

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Troubled man, whose life is but a momentary thing in this world, is as insignificant as withered flowers after the first winter freeze. — *“He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not”* (v. 2). Put your hand in a bucket of water sometime, pull it out, and then look into the bucket for some evidence that you put your hand in it. That is just how important we are.

In the light of these facts, Job was simply overwhelmed with the knowledge that the holy, infinite, eternal, omnipotent Lord God should take notice of him. — *“And dost thou open thine eyes upon such an one?”*

(Psalms 8:4) “What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?”

(Psalms 144:3-4) “LORD, what *is* man, that thou takest knowledge of him! *or* the son of man, that thou makest account of him! 4 Man is like to vanity: his days *are* as a shadow that passeth away.”

Think of it. What a wondrous thing this is — That God almighty should look our way, that he should cast his glance upon us! Job was simply overwhelmed by the thought of it. Aren’t you?

“And can it be that I should gain
An interest in the Savior’s blood?
Died He for me, who caused his pain,
For me, who Him to death pursued?
Amazing love! How can it be
That Thou, my God, shouldst die for me?”

Does God almighty open his eye upon such useless, sinful wretches as we are? Indeed, he has, and he does!

- In Electing Love!
- In Redeeming Grace!
- In Providential Goodness!
- In Saving Mercy!
- In the Exercise of His Preserving Power!

II. **“AND BRINGEST THOU ME INTO JUDGMENT WITH THEE?”**
(v.3).

What a horrible realization this is for a sinful man to come to. Sooner or later you and I must face up to the fact of divine justice and judgment.

- The Word of God teaches it.
- History illustrates it
- Your conscience bears witness to it.
- Calvary declares it!

When Job thought of God exercising the rigor of his strict justice, it was no laughing matter to him. He knew that the standard of judgment in that great day would not be the opinions of men, but God himself. He does not say, “*Bringest me into judgment before thee?*” That would be bad enough. But his question is, “*Bringest thou me into judgment with thee?*” Here are two facts that I hope will get your heart’s attention and cause your soul trouble from which you can find no rest until you flee away into the arms of Christ.

1st **There is a day appointed by God when we must appear before his august, great, white throne to be judged by him.**(2 Corinthians 5:10-11; Hebrews 9:27; Revelation 20:11-15).

(2 Corinthians 5:10-11) “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad. (11) Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.”

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

(Revelation 20:11-15) “And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. (12) And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is *the book* of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. (13) And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. (14) And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. (15) And whosoever was not found written in the

book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”

2nd **In that great and terrible day, the standard of judgment will be God himself.** God will bring us into judgment **with** himself. Someone once asked, “**How good does a person have to be to get to heaven?**” The answer is, you have to be as good as God. God almighty will not and cannot accept anything less than perfection (Leviticus 22:21; Revelation 21:27).

(Leviticus 22:21) “And whosoever offereth a sacrifice of peace offerings unto the LORD to accomplish *his* vow, or a freewill offering in beeves or sheep, it shall be perfect to be accepted; there shall be no blemish therein.”

(Revelation 21:27) “And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither *whatsoever* worketh abomination, or *maketh* a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb’s book of life.”

(Psalms 130:3) “If thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?”
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(Psalms 130:4) “But *there is* forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared.”

III. Understanding both the brevity of life and the certainty of divine judgment, Job asked this next question: — “**WHO CAN BRING A CLEAN THING OUT OF AN UNCLEAN?**” (v.4-6).

(Job 14:4-6) “Who can bring a clean *thing* out of an unclean? not one. 5 Seeing his days *are* determined, the number of his months *are* with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass; 6 Turn from him, that he may rest, till he shall accomplish, as an hireling, his day.”

When Job asks, “*Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?*” Our translation reads, in response to this question, “*not one.*” **A better translation might continue the question to the end of the fourth verse.** “*Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean, is there one?*” Realizing that man who is altogether unclean, by the imputation of Adam’s sin and because Adam’s fallen by nature is imparted to us by birth, unclean by

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birth, by nature, by choice and by practice, must stand in judgment with the holy Lord God, this question is one for which every sensible soul must seek an answer.

- The number of our days in this world was determined by God's decree before ever we were born.
- God himself has appointed the boundaries of every man's existence in this world, beyond which none can pass.

“As the time of a man's birth, so the time of his death is according to the purpose of God; and all the intervening moments and articles of time, and all things that befall a man throughout the whole course of his life, all fall under the appointment of God, and are according to his determinate will; and when God requires of a man his soul no one has power over his spirit to retain it one moment.”

— *John Gill*

If man has no power over his own life and death, or even his own health, it is certain that no man has the power to bring a clean thing out of an unclean. No mortal can give himself spiritual life. No man can give himself faith in Christ, regenerate himself, justify himself, save himself, or even put himself into a savable condition (Job 9:20; Romans 3:9-19).

(Job 9:20) “If I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me: *if I say, I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse.*”

(Romans 3:9-19) “What then? are we better *than they*? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; (10) As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: (11) There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. (12) They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. (13) Their throat *is* an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps *is* under their lips: (14) Whose mouth *is* full of cursing and bitterness: (15) Their feet *are* swift to shed blood: (16) Destruction and misery *are* in their ways: (17) And the way of peace have they not known: (18) There is no fear of God before their eyes. (19) Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.”

But there is One who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean. The Lord God our Savior can bring a clean thing out of an unclean! He does so by three marvelous works of grace.

- A Clean Record by Redemption (Rom. 3:24-26)
- A Clean Nature by Regeneration (John 3:5)
- A Clean Life in the Resurrection (Phil. 3:21) — “*Salvation is of the Lord!*” (Ephesians 2:8-9; 2 Timothy 1:9-10)

(Philippians 3:21) Christ “shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.” — Imagine that!

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

(2 Timothy 1:9-10) “Who hath saved us, and called *us* with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, (10) But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel:”

IV. Here is Job’s fourth question (vv. 7-13). — “**MAN DIETH, AND WASTETH AWAY: YEA, MAN GIVETH UP THE GHOST, AND WHERE IS HE?**” (v. 10)

(Job 14:7-13) “For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease. (8) Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground; (9) *Yet* through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant. (10) But **man dieth, and wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?** (11) *As* the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up: (12) So man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens *be* no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep. (13) O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave, that thou wouldest keep

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me secret, until thy wrath be past, that thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me!”

When a person dies, you can be sure: — Wherever he is, he is forever. Whatever he is he is forever (2 Cor. 4:18. **When the wicked die in their sins, though their bodies are in the grave, they are in hell.**

Illustration: *The Rich Man* (Luke 16)

If you die without Christ, as soon as you close your eyes in death, you will lift up your eyes in hell, tormented in the flames of the damned, forever imprisoned in darkness with Satan, the fallen angels, and in company with all the damned, all the wicked who have lived and died in rebellion against God. There, in eternal misery, forever banished from God, goodness, and righteousness, you shall suffer the wrath of God forever and forever! Oh, what horror awaits you in hell!

But when the righteous die in faith, though their bodies are in the grave, awaiting the resurrection, they are with Christ in heaven. — *“For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens”* (2 Corinthians 5:1). As soon as the righteous close their eyes in death in this world they open their eyes in glory, in heaven, in the paradise of God, in Abraham’s bosom. There we shall forever be in the presence of Christ, the holy angels, God the Father, God the Holy Spirit, the spirits of just men made perfect, free of sin and perfectly righteous, serving Christ in that house not made with hands until the resurrection of our bodies.

This blessed state of death (life) is for the believer a matter of hope and expectation, not dread and fear. Job prayed for the Lord to graciously take him out of this vale of tears and keep him, hiding his body in the grave and his soul in heaven until the days of God’s wrath and judgment against men is over — *“O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave, that thou wouldest keep me secret, until thy wrath be past, that thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me!”* (v.13).

(Isaiah 26:19-21) “Thy dead *men* shall live, *together with my dead body shall they arise.* Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew *is as the dew of herbs,* and the earth shall cast out the dead. *20 Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors*

about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. *21* For, behold, the LORD cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.”

(Isaiah 57:1-2) “The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth *it* to heart: and merciful men *are* taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil *to come*. *2* He shall enter into peace: they shall rest in their beds, *each one* walking *in* his uprightness.”

When God takes one of his elect out of this world, he graciously takes him away from sorrow and trouble.

V. “***IF A MAN DIE SHALL HE LIVE AGAIN?***” (v.14).

(Job 14:14-15) “If a man die, shall he live *again*? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come. *15* Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands.”

DEATH

Death, the conqueror of all is set before us in the Word of God in three ways: spiritual death, physical death, and eternal death. We were all born in spiritual death, “*dead in trespasses and sins*” (Eph. 2:1; Rom. 5:12). Because we are sinners, all must die physically. Physical death is the separation of the soul from the body. “*The body without the spirit is dead*” (James 2:16). Eternal death is the everlasting separation both of body and soul from God to all eternity. “*Fear him, which after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him*” (Luke 12:5).

But, the Lord Jesus Christ makes his elect conquerors of that great conqueror of men, Death. He delivers sinners from spiritual death and from eternal death in hell by putting spiritual life in us in the new birth. He even delivers us from physical death, by making the death of our bodies the avenue by which we enter into the blessed fulness of spiritual life without sin. And, at the last day, he shall even raise our bodies from the dust of mortality into the glory of immortality, transforming our natural bodies into

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spiritual bodies (1 Cor. 15:42-58). Therefore, he declares, “*whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die*” (John 11:26). If I am assured of God my Savior that I shall never die, how absurd, how dishonoring to him it would be to him for me to fear death! The fact is, there are some people who shall never die. The Son of God declares, “*Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die*” (John 11:26; Rev. 20:6).

(Revelation 20:6) “Blessed and holy *is* he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.”

Illustration: *The Robin's Eggs*

When I have breathed my final breath
dropped this robe of flesh in death,
When my appointed work is done
and my allotted time is gone,
Don't stand around my grave and cry. —
I'll not be there. I did not die.

My Savior came to call me home,
and I with Him to heav'n have gone!
Now I am free from sin and pain;
and with the glorified I reign!
Don't stand around my grave and cry. —
I'm glorified! I did not die!

Seated with Jesus on His throne,
glorified by what He has done,
I am a trophy of His grace.
Rejoicing, I behold His face:
Don't stand around my grave and cry. —
I am with Christ! I did not die!

My body lies beneath the clay
until the resurrection day.
In that day when Christ comes again,
body and soul unite again!
Don't stand around my grave and cry. —

Rejoice with me! I did not die!

THE RESURRECTION

Job had absolutely no question about the blessed hope of the resurrection. He said, "*Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands.*" Let every saved sinner be so confident, "*looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.*"

(1 Corinthians 15:42-58) "So also *is* the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: (43) It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: (44) It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. (45) And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam *was made* a quickening spirit. (46) Howbeit that *was* not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. (47) The first man *is* of the earth, earthy: the second man *is* the Lord from heaven. (48) As *is* the earthy, such *are* they also that are earthy: and as *is* the heavenly, such *are* they also that are heavenly. (49) And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. (50) Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. (51) Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, (52) In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. (53) For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality. (54) So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. (55) O death, where *is* thy sting? O grave, where *is* thy victory? (56) The sting of death *is* sin; and the strength of sin *is* the law. (57) But thanks *be* to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. (58) Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

(1 Thessalonians 4:13-18) "But I would not have you to be

ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. *14* For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. *15* For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive *and* remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. *16* For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: *17* Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. *18* Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”

THE ROOT OF THE MATTER

Let me show you one more thing in the book of Job. In chapter 19 Job rebukes his pretentious friends, his religious persecutors. Let’s pick up his words at verse 21.

(Job 19:21-28) “Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends; for the hand of God hath touched me. (22) Why do ye persecute me as God, and are not satisfied with my flesh? (23) Oh that my words were now written! oh that they were printed in a book! (24) That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever! (25) For I know *that* my redeemer liveth, and *that* he shall stand at the latter *day* upon the earth: (26) And *though* after my skin *worms* destroy this *body*, yet in my flesh shall I see God: (27) Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; *though* my reins be consumed within me. (28) But ye should say, Why persecute we him, seeing the root of the matter is found in me?”

The root of the matter was in him. What was that? It is Christ himself! The root of the matter is “*Christ in you, the hope of glory.*” The root of the matter is God’s great gift of faith in Christ. Job believed God. That is the root of the matter.

- He bowed to and worshipped the sovereign Lord, resigning all to him. — “*He hath done all things well!*”
- He knew that his Redeemer lived!
- He knew that his Redeemer is coming again.

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- He knew that he shall be raised from the dead.
- He knew that he would live in his Redeemer's presence forever!

Can anything be more comforting? Can anything in this world of sin, sorrow, and death be more delightful, blessed and comforting than the blessed reality of grace, of life and faith in Christ? Never! I am passing through this valley of the shadow of death, passing through this world of sin and sorrow, rapidly moving toward eternity, "*looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.*" — Eternal life! Oh, what a gift! — Eternal life! Oh, what a prospect! — Eternal life! Oh, what a blessed hope!

Are you prepared to die? Oh, may God graciously grant you life and faith in his dear Son.

“Come, ye sinners, poor and needy,
Weak and wounded, sick and sore:
Jesus ready stand to save you,
Full of pity, love and power:
He is able, He is able,
He is willing: doubt no more.

Now, ye needy, come and welcome:
God's free bounty glorify:
True belief and true repentance—
Every grace that brings you nigh—
Without money, without money
Come to Jesus Christ and buy.

Let not conscience make you linger,
Nor for fitness fondly dream;
All the fitness He requireth
Is to feel your need of Him;
This He gives you, this He gives you,—
'Tis the Spirit's rising beam.

Come, ye weary, heavy-laden,
Bruised and ruined by the Fall;
If you tarry till you're better,
You will never come at all:
Not the righteous, not the righteous,—

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Sinners, Jesus came to call.

View Him prostrate in the garden,
On the ground your Maker lies!
On the bloody tree behold Him,
Hear Him cry before He dies,
“*It is finished!*” “*It is finished!*”
Sinner, will not this suffice?

Lo, the incarnate God, ascended,
Pleads the merit of His blood:
Venture on Him, venture wholly,
Let no other trust intrude:
None but Jesus! None but Jesus
Can do helpless sinners good.

Before the sun sets tonight, I pray the “*the root of the matter*” will be found in you. O blessed Son of God, invade the hearts of chosen sinners today, and bring your banished ones home for the glory of your own great name!

Amen.