

Revelation Lesson 20
The Lost Keys

Revelation 1:18 I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold,
I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.

Last week we noted that John's vision turned to reality. For when he looked upon Jesus – in His resurrected, glorified state – he fainted. We also noted where this vision was, as John fainted at Jesus' feet. Then we saw how Christ laid His right hand upon John – thus showing us that this was no mere vision. Tonight's lesson is a deep one, we will see what happened *after* the Death of Christ and *before* His resurrection as He gained possession of *The Lost Keys*....

I am – Here we encounter the title used by Christ in Exodus 3:14 when He revealed His Name to Moses in the Burning Bush. This – as previously taught – speaks of the self Existence of God. Her though, the emphasis is not placed upon this statement as one of the Names of Christ. It rather here in this context denotes by the usage of the *Italics* that the phrase itself is not in the *Textus Receptus* Greek text, but is placed therein by the King James Translators to ensure we understand the proper sentence structure and that the meaning is understood properly. Please remember though that not all uses of Italics indicate the text is not in the Greek text. See 1 John 2:23. The other half of the verse has been validated over the past 400 years as actually being in the text. The KJB translators believed it to be so, but only had a few manuscripts and put it in italics. We know that God was guiding the translators for He promised in Psalm 12:7 that HE (God) would keep (preserve) His Word forever.

He – Here the understanding is that Christ is referring to Himself. This is extremely important due to the nature of the statement that is made. Some denominations, cults and religions deny what Jesus is about to say. If they do, according to the Scriptures, they are lost and have the spirit of antichrist.

that liveth, - Christ proclaims that He is the One that lives! But what of it? We can all declare to the world that we're alive, but Christ's words carry a two-fold meaning. Here we can see Christ's exclamation that He is ALIVE. In light of the next phrase: “and was dead” we see that Christ is affirming His resurrection from the dead. But He also denotes here, I think, that as God (see the previous verse's emphasis upon Him being what Jehovah is: the first and the last) we note that He is the Living God. He is not according to Revelation 9:20 an idol “...of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk.” No, Christ is the living God and as such He is the Author of life. We are given at the moment of salvation, the Bible tells us (John 3:15; John 10:28; John 17:3), Eternal Life. Not conditional life, but eternal life. Life without end. Hence the way we obtain this Eternal Life is by Faith in Jesus Christ. Once we are saved, we are eternally saved because God has given us part of His Eternal Life. He's the only one Who has it because He has no beginning nor ending. He is alive, all the false gods and idols are not alive. The Hebrews used such ideas in their references to Him, when they called Him “The Living” One” as this separated God from all gods

and was dead; - Here we come to one of the fundamentals of the Christian Faith, and that is that: “Jesus Christ died.” Some today contend that Jesus merely fainted or swooned and looked dead and then was resuscitated instead of resurrected. John destroyed such a notion by his comments (under the inspiration) of the Holy Ghost in John 19:34-35 “But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe.” I included verse 35 for this establishes this as a documented eyewitness account. John's statement about seeing “blood and water” indeed shows the reader that Christ was clinically dead. Most

commentators point to the water, with clots of blood, being accounted for only by the previous rupture of the heart and the flow of blood into the *pericardium*, or outer sack of the heart, where it would separate very rapidly into water and clots of blood. This of course being evidence that the heart had stopped beating and the red blood cells and platelets began to settle and separate from the plasma in the “water of the pericardium.” Thus when punctured, this came out showing the world (and John) that Christ was physically dead. This has led many to state that the immediate physical cause of the death of Christ was rupture of the heart or myocardial rupture which can be caused by trauma. Maybe we could sum it up that Christ died of a broken heart, broken over the sins of mankind?

But some point to this as proof that Jesus Christ was NOT God. Some have stated that since God has Eternal Life and cannot die, Christ died, thus Christ is NOT God. This method of reasoning is called deductive syllogism. However, one must understand that Christ as 100% God came to Earth as 100% Man. The Scripture even indicates in Hebrews 10:5 “Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me:” God could die only in the specially prepared body. That body had 23 Chromosomes from Mary and 23 of the Holy Ghost (see Luke 1:35) for this body did NOT have the Old Sin Nature. If he had been born naturally through the normal reproductive process, this body would have contained the Old Sin Nature for the Scripture again declares in 1 Corinthians 15:22 “For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.” Man did not kill God as Christ stated in John 10:17 “Therefore doth my Father love me, because **I lay down my life**, that I might take it again.” He had the sole authority to do this. Why did God die then?

God died on the Cross to redeem the world to Himself. Christ did not die only for those who are saved as some falsely teach. Notice He died for ALL! Compare the two verses from Romans 5:6 and 8 - 6 “For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.” and 8 “But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” This is further implied in 1 Corinthians 15:3 “For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;” and 2 Corinthians 5:15 “And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.”

The death of Christ upon the Cross, was two fold. First at Noon, He died Spiritually. He was cut off from God the Father and God the Holy Ghost as He became Sin (2 Corinthians 5:21). A little before 3:00PM He was back in Fellowship. The way we can see this is: 1.) He cries out Father in Luke 23:34. 2.) About Noon he quotes Psalm 22:1 calling out “My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me? in Matthew 27:46. 3.) He cries out “Father” in Luke 23:46. This shows that Christ was cut off from God the Father and God the Holy Ghost and is backed up in Daniel 9:26 when shall “Messiah be cut off, but not for himself.” That was what happened! Jesus became our sin and was cut off from His Father and the Holy Ghost. In such a state He could not call Him Father, only God. Note Jesus did not use the Triune praise of repeating it three times. After His Spiritual death was completed on the Cross, He cried out “It is Finished!” in John 19:30. Soon thereafter was when he died Physically.

and, - Note the connector “and” which is showing us that God Who is the TRUE LIVING God, died but is ALIVE again.... look at the next word.

Behold, - The word behold is *IDOO* (G2400) which means to look upon, gaze upon. Isn't this something? John who just took a look at Jesus and then fainted at His feet as if he were dead is now being told what he heard some 66 years ago in the Upper Room on the eve of that glorious day when Christ Rose from the dead in Luke 24:39 “**Behold** my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.” A week later such words would be echoed again to Thomas as John himself recorded in John 20:27 “Then

saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.” Now I want to add something here (no extra charge) two verses down, is one place where YOU and I are IN THE BIBLE! In John 20:29 we observe: “Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.” Unlike John who at that time SAW the Risen Lord and then 66 years later SAW the GLORIFIED Risen Lord, We haven't YET BUT WE BELIEVE!!!!

I am alive – Barna researchers have over the years shown saddening statistics about Americans' beliefs in the Death, Burial and Resurrection of Christ. The following question was asked to Non-Christians: “Jesus was crucified but NOT physically resurrected” 39% answered YES. By 2000 40% percent answered YES. In 1998 “mainline protestant clergy” were asked the same question, the results were shocking! 13% of American Lutheran, 30% of Presbyterian, 33% of American Baptist, 35% of Episcopal and 51% of Methodist CLERGY (you know Pastors, Preachers, etc?) DID NOT BELIEVE IN THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST!! Folks if the Resurrection did NOT happen, then we're STILL in our sins according to 1 Corinthians 15:17 “And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.” Why is this? Because He could only become the High Priest after He had been the Lamb of God “...slain from the foundation of the world.” After His Resurrection He ascended into Heaven the Bible states in Hebrews 9:12 “Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.” Yes we are further assured by angels in Matthew 28:6 “He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.” and in Mark 16:6 “And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him.” and in Luke 24:6 “He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee,”

for evermore, - This means that Christ cannot die again. He died ONCE! We are told this twice in Hebrews. We note (I believe Paul) states such in Hebrews 7:25 “Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing **he ever liveth** to make intercession for them.” and in Hebrews 7:28 “For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated **for evermore**.” No sirree!! Our God Ain't Dead! He Cannot die AGAIN! I think this also proves that there is life only on Earth.

According to Quran commentators, Jesus will return to the Holy Land to kill the Antichrist and rule for 40 years, then be buried next to Muhammad. So the Muslims built a tomb for Mohammed in 1279AD and they have also built a tomb for Jesus whom they call Isa. I tell you the Truth beloved there might be people buried there or a person buried there one day but it ain't gonna be MY Jesus because He cannot die EVER AGAIN!

Amen; - This word states that what has been stated as absolute truth! As stated in the Complete Wordstudy Dictionary we see “Amen” in the New Testament, indicates affirmation, it means “in truth,” at times it is translated as: “verily,” and as “it is so.”

and have – Coming on the heels of this amazing declaration affirming that Jesus Christ is THE LIVING GOD WHO DIED BUT IS NOW ALIVE FOREVER!! We have an interesting statement about some keys!

the keys of hell and of death. - Now we note in Luke 16 that the underworld at the time of Christ contained Hell (and it's still there) and at that time a place known as Abraham's Bosom or Paradise. Paradise according to Genesis 2:9; Revelation 2:7; 22:2 and 14 that Paradise is in the 3rd Heaven. It was there in the time of the Apostle Paul's writing of 2 Corinthians 12:2 and 4 (circa

56AD). Furthermore Paul states in that passage that he was caught up to the 3rd Heaven about 14 years ago or somewhere circa 42AD? This would seem to match with the stoning that occurred at Lystra in Acts 14:19. I think personally that Paul was stoned to death, he went to Heaven and came back (why? God wasn't done with him yet – he had to finish writing much of the New Testament).

Now when was Paradise moved to Heaven? On Easter or Resurrection Sunday.

In John 20:17 “Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.” then in Matthew 28:9 “And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him.”

So in the few moments between seeing Mary Magdelene and the other women coming to the tomb, Jesus had already went up and came back down. Paul declares thus in Ephesians 4:8-10 “Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. 9 (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? 10 He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.)”

He moved captivity captive to Heaven. Who were the captives? Why were they in captivity?

When the Old Testament saints died their souls went down (as Samuel) to await their Saviour. The lost, however, died and went to hell. Christ soon would have the keys of Death and Hell. Keys would fit in gates. Specifically gates with bars.

Matthew 16:18 “And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” This verse is much easier to understand than most people think. Jesus is the Rock and the foundation of the Church. But how many times have I said and you've heard others state that the gates of hell would not prevail against the Church? It's WRONG. It is NOT the CHURCH but the “IT” there is the ROCK!! Hey you want another way to spell rock? It's J-E-S-U-S! (Thanks Daddy!) The gates of Hell would not prevail AGAINST JESUS! The identity of “it” in this verse is crucial. First of all, “it” is in hell. Hell has *locked gates* like any *prison*, but these gates will not prevail over “it.” There has never been a time, and never will be a time where the *Church* is in hell. *But* the “Rock”, the Lord Jesus Christ was there. When one understands that the “gates of hell shall not prevail against ” the *Rock*, it makes perfect sense.

Acts 2:27 states “Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.”

Now Matthew 12:40 states “For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.” Look back at Jonah 2:5-6 “The waters compassed me about, *even to the soul*: the depth closed me round about, the weeds were wrapped *about my head*. I went down to *the bottoms of the mountains*; *the earth with her bars* was about me for ever: yet hast thou brought up my life *from corruption*, O LORD my God.”

The “bottoms of the mountains” would be where the mountain sits on the ocean's floor. The whale could have taken his body there, but the next part is something else. Here Jonah says that the “earth with her bars was about me for ever.” This is a reference to his soul locked within the underworld, *not* his being in a whale.

Isaiah 45:1-2 states “Thus saith the LORD... I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron:” It is mirrored

in Psalm 107:16 For he hath broken the gates of brass, and cut the bars of iron in sunder.

Just as Christ busted Jonah out of "Abraham's Bosom," by His command, at His FIRST ascension Christ took those souls with him. Notice that Leading "captivity captive" is like coming in and liberating prisoners of war. But look at this! Judges 5:11-12 "They that are delivered from the noise of archers in the places of drawing water, there shall they *rehearse the righteous acts of the LORD*, even the righteous acts toward the inhabitants of his villages in Israel: then shall the people of the LORD go down to the gates. Awake, awake, Deborah: awake, awake, utter a song: arise, Barak, and lead thy captivity captive, thou son of Abinoam." The elements in these verses are absolutely amazing. These soldiers are "rehearsing" the righteous acts of the Lord toward the "inhabitants." They went down to the "gates." Remember Christ was given two keys to two gates. And, finally, they liberated the inhabitants. The "led captivity captive."!! Verses 9 and 10 confirm where Christ got those captives. There is no question that the "lower parts of the earth" is the "heart of the earth" and it also confirms that Abraham's bosom and hell are in close proximity. This next verse mentions the "shout" of the righteous in the "lower parts of the earth." They were in Abraham's bosom.

But how did Christ do this? WITH THE KEYS!! When His Spirit went up to the Father, He obtained the Keys (Power) of Death and Hell from the Devil. Notice how keys are symbolic of power or authority.

Isaiah 22:22 And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open.

Matthew 16:19 And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

Now, notice how we know the devil had this authority evidently since death entered the world at the time of the Fall of Man: Hebrews 2:14 "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;"

BUT CHRIST WON THE VICTORY!! Death cannot defeat the Christian because we are IN CHRIST. Death therefore cannot defeat Christ! Hell cannot contain us because we are IN CHRIST! HE WON! HE TORE THE BARS AWAY AND HE HAS THE KEYS!!!

