

## LESSON 10 - BIBLE TEACHING ABOUT IMMORTALITY (1)

*"The hour is coming in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, & shall come forth: they that have done good to the resurrection of life, & they that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation" - John. 5:28-29*

THE PURPOSE OF THIS LESSON is to go to the pages of the Bible to find out what it teaches about immortality relative to mankind. We already know from the subject matter of Lessons 7, 8 and 9 that nowhere does it indicate that we are now immortal; nor does it give us reason to believe that when we die we are not really dead but simply pass on to another existence. This lesson will further reinforce these conclusions and additionally focus on what the Bible DOES say about immortality in relation to us; when we can expect it, what we have to do to get it.

Traditionally many people speculate that simply because man desires immortality is proof that he has it. Rather it proves the very opposite: that he doesn't have it. Simply because a man is very hungry & craves desperately for food certainly does not prove he has food. Anyone can perceive that fact in this case. It is the same with immortality. Just as without food, man dies in short order, even so with immortality: without it man soon dies and returns to the dust of the ground.

Throughout the Scriptures mankind is constantly referred to as mortal, and of brief, perishing existence: never as immortal and imperishable, or any words with that idea. "Mortality" comes from the Latin word "mors" (death), and signifies "deathfulness." Anything that is "mortal", therefore, is subject to death, limited in power to continue in Life, because of the inherent tendency to decay and dissolution.

The Spirit of God is the life-power that sustains man, and there is no doubt of the fact that it is indestructible - but that fact is no proof that man himself is immortal, or has any "immortal spark" in him. If it were, it would prove the immortality of beasts, for they too are "living creatures": just like man, sustained by this same universal life-power. The Spirit life-power itself belongs to, and is controlled by, God, Who gives it, and takes it away.

Men and animals both being "living creatures" alike, God has stated -

*"That which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts. Even one thing befalleth them. As the one dieth, so dieth the other: yea, THEY HAVE ALL ONE BREATH (ruach, spirit); so that a man hath no pre-eminence (in this respect) above a beast" (Ecclesiastes 3:19).*

**BibleKEY fact:**

“ *"Mortality" comes from the Latin words mors (death), and signifies "deathfulness." "Immortality" signifies the very opposite - "deathlessness" ”*

**BibleKEY fact:**

“ *The Spirit of God is the life-power that sustains man, and there is no doubt of the fact that it is indestructible - but that fact is no proof that man himself is immortal ”*

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Moses also stated the same fundamental truth, speaking of the Flood -

*"All flesh died that moved upon the earth: both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man: ALL in whose nostrils was the breath of life, died" ( Genesis 7:21-22).*

Here again, men and animals are all linked together in a common life-principle. They all breathe the same "breath of lives" (literally translated in this passage it would read, "breath of the spirit of lives": *neshamah ruach chay*). The righteous man Job said -

*"The spirit (ruach\*, breath) of God is in my nostrils" (Job 27:3).*

*"Cease ye from man, whose breath (neshamah\*) is in his nostrils" (Isaiah 2:22).*

*"If God set His heart upon man, if He gather to Himself His spirit (ruach) and His breath (neshamah), ALL flesh shall perish together, and man shall turn again unto dust" (Job 34:14).*

Note that it is God's spirit. Man, like the animals, is the dependent, receiving creature; the possessor for a short time of this animating lifepower from God. As is said here of man, exactly so the Psalmist says of animals (104:29-30) -

*"Thou takest away their breath ('ruach'), they die, and return to their dust. Thou sendest forth Thy Spirit ('ruach': same word), they are created."*

It was sent forth at the creation of all creatures to give life to them; it remains the animals' spirit or breath while they possess it, but it returns to God when they die.

It is vital to the understanding of this subject to be very clear in our minds about the true "origin of species", as recorded in Genesis BY GOD through Moses. We need not be frightened away from this divine account by the impossible "evolution" speculation. It is an unprovable "scientific" guess: ever changing and unstable. The more men delve into and discover the infinitely intricate detail and delicate balance of all Creation - evidence screaming out of wisdom and power and design and purpose - mathematically impossible a million times over to be the random purposeless product of blind chance - the more utterly absurd and inadequate the strange evolution theory appears.

The theory of evolution very conveniently provides mankind with a means to escape the authority of God and obedience to His holy, flesh-crucifying laws. Why else would intelligent, mature men and women believe that which under any other circumstances would be regarded as absolute impossibilities? Mankind has always had his fantasies, and has ever been quick to believe anything that releases him from responsibility to a Divine Being greater than himself. An intelligent person can see a million faces of God everywhere he

**BibleKEY** fact:

“ The theory of evolution very conveniently provides mankind with a means to escape the authority of God and obedience to His holy, flesh-crucifying laws. ”

**BibleKEY** word search:

(from Strongs Hebrew Dictionary)

H7307 **ruwach**, roo'-akh; from 7306; wind; by resemblance breath, i.e. a sensible (or even violent) exhalation; fig. life, anger, unsubstantiality; by extens. a region of the sky; by resemblance spirit, but only of a rational being (includ. its expression and functions): **Translated in the KJV by the following words** - air, anger, blast, breath, X cool, courage, mind, X quarter, X side, spirit ([-ual]), tempest, X vain, ([whirl-]) wind (-y).

**neshamah**, nesh-aw-maw'; fr. 5395; a puff, i.e. wind, angry or vital breath, divine inspiration, intellect. or (concr.) an animal: **Translated in the KJV by the following words**: - blast, (that) breath (-eth), inspiration, soul, spirit.

#2416: **chay**, khah'-ee; from 2421; alive; hence raw (flesh); fresh (plant, water, year), strong; also life (or living thing), whether lit. or fig.: **Translated in the KJV by the following words**: - + age, alive, appetite, (wild) beast, company, congregation, life (-time), live (-ly), living (creature, thing), maintenance, + merry, multitude, + (be) old, quick, raw, running, springing, troop.

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looks in this glorious Creation: from the infinitely large to the infinitely small. What a leap of faith to believe that all this beauty and wisdom and power came witlessly and purposely and spontaneously from nothing! How can such absurdity be called "science"?

If we accept Christ, and that which he spoke as the direct words of God spoken through him (John 14:24), then we must accept Moses' writings, for Christ endorsed Moses, and accepted his statements as true and divinely inspired. Note the words of Jesus:

*"Moses wrote of me: if ye believe not his writings how shall ye believe my words?" (John 5:46-47)*

That is conclusive. And the New Testament Scriptures tie Adam and Christ inseparably together as the two poles in the divine plan. They stand or fall together as historic realities.

So we see Adam and Eve as keepers of the beautiful Garden of Eden, and existing in a condition termed a "very good" state (Genesis 1:31). They were placed under law which required their submission, obedience and affection to divine requirements. And this condition prevailed with the purpose of showing that this way alone would produce eternal happiness for mankind, and the pleasure and glory of God.

Adam was prohibited from eating of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil -

*"But of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die" (Genesis 2:17).*

Here was the simplest and most convenient mode of teaching and training him in regard to his position before God. How long Adam continued obedient we are not told, but we are informed that in process of time he disobeyed (Genesis 3:6) -

*"When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof and did eat; and gave also to her husband, and he did eat."*

The result of this disobedience was exactly as God declared -

*"Because thou hast hearkened to the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it; cursed is the ground for thy sake : in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life.*

*"In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground: for out of it wast thou taken. For dust THOU ART, and unto dust shalt THOU return" (Genesis 3:17-19).*

Adam, who had had opportunity of attaining immortality, was now doomed to return to his original nothingness: a condition which through physical inheritance has been passed on to all his descendants. We all possess the same corrupt, dying natures, on the

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principle that:

*"The clean cannot come of the unclean" (Job 14:4).*

Thus we are all mortal, dying creatures. After the disobedience of Adam and Eve, and their sentencing by God, they were driven outside the Garden of Eden, and excluded from access to the Tree of Life, for this reason -

*"Lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the Tree of Life, and eat, and live for ever: therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the Garden of Eden to till the ground from whence he was taken" (Genesis 3:22-23).*

Thus Adam's descendants, innumerable, sin-stricken and wretched, are mercifully swept away, generation after generation, like grass before the mower.

The message of the Bible, remember, follows a logical pattern. At this point **we need to question the logic and reason for restraining access to the Tree of Life, if they were already immortal - if they were "immortal souls", already destined to "live for ever"**, either in heaven or hell. If such a theory were true, there should have been no question as to whether or not they would live for ever: rather it should have been a simple matter of where and under what conditions they would be living for ever. How could eating - or not eating - of the Tree of Life have anything to do with that?

The Bible does provide us with the true, simple, and only logical account of man's present mortal condition. Likewise it is from this source alone that his future destiny is revealed. Job asked:

*"If a man die, shall he LIVE AGAIN?" (Job 14:14).*

The Bible alone answers this question. A seed placed in the ground "dies", to spring to life again: that power being inherent in the seed. Or a tree cut down may sprout again, as Job says (vs. 7-9). But not so with man, for he makes the contrast (v.10):

*"But man dieth, and wasteth away. Yea, man giveth up the spirit (gava: expires), and where is he?"*

He is nowhere. He has returned to the dust of the ground, to remingle with all other dust. If he is to live again, it will be by a new effort on the part of God.

The hope that people may live again under certain conditions is the good news of the Bible message (1 Corinthians 15:21):

*"Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead"*

Christ declared himself the Resurrection and the Life, adding -

*"He that believeth on me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." (John 11:25)*

**BibleKEY** fact:

“We all possess the same corrupt, dying natures, on the principle that: "The clean cannot come of the unclean" (Job 14:4).”

**BibleKEY** fact:

“The hope that people may live again under certain conditions is the good news of the Bible message”

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Paul said that Christ, at his return to earth, would -

*"Change our vile (low, base: Gr - tapeinos) BODIES, and fashion them like unto his own glorious BODY" (Philippians 3:21).*

And to Timothy he wrote -

*"Jesus Christ . . . hath abolished death (as the ultimate destiny of those who obey God), and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." (2 Timothy 1:10)*

The following verses teach the same thing (note that such statements are logically unnecessary, if man already has immortality inherent within him):

*"I am come that they might have life, and have it more abundantly" (John 10:10).*

*"My sheep hear my voice . . . I give them eternal life" (John 10:28).*

*"The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ" (Romans 6: 23).*

*"God gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).*

"Perishing" is the alternative to receiving the gift of eternal life. As to the meaning of "perishing", Paul uses exactly the same word, saying that if Christ be not risen, those who have fallen asleep (died) in Christ have "perished" (1 Corinthians 15:18) - Certainly not gone to eternal torments, but as the word simply means: "perished" - gone to nothing, ceased to exist. Look up "perish" (Greek: *apollumi*) in Strong's Hebrew Dictionary. The idea of this word meaning "eternal torments" would be an obvious and utter absurdity in practically every occurrence.

If we accept the traditional "immortal soul" theory, this is what we must make ourselves believe: "death" doesn't mean death, but an unpleasant form of existence; "perish" doesn't mean perish; "destroy" doesn't mean destroy.

From the above passages the teaching of the Bible is clear: eternal life is not a present possession of every human being, but a restricted, future gift of God to a selected few who conform to His will and purpose. All these passages, and many more, show that immortality, or everlasting life, is a thing to be diligently sought after, a reward, something to be given to those who by...

*"Patient welldoing, SEEK for . . . immortality " (Romans 2:7).*

**BibleKEY** fact:

““Perishing" is the alternative to receiving the gift of eternal life. ””

**BibleKEY** word search:

*"perish" - definition from Strongs Hebrew dictionary #622 (Old Testament) **apollumi**, ap-ol'-loo-mee; from 575 and the base of 3639; to destroy (reflex. to perish, or lose), lit. or fig.:*

***Translated in the KJV by the following words and/or phrases:-***  
*destroy, die, lose, mar, perish.*

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Name Mr/Mrs/Miss .....

Address ..... Postal Code .....

\* You may need an additional sheet for your answers if there is not enough space below. Your answers to the following questions will help you - and us - to determine how much you have discovered about your Bible. Please return this form in the envelope provided even if you are unable to answer all the questions. On receipt of it we will forward a further study, as well as some

1. Where does the life power come from?
2. What is the similarity in the death of men and of animals?
3. What book of the Bible presents the TRUE 'origin of species'?
4. If we accept Christ, why must we also accept the Bible record of Creation?
5. What words describe the physical condition of Adam before he sinned?
6. What event brought about the mortality of Adam?
7. In what way did the sentencing of Adam affect all mankind? What scripture proves this?
8. How do we know that Adam was not immortal?
9. Does man naturally spring to life again once he has died?
10. Through what man is resurrection made possible?
11. To what class will everlasting life be given?