

## The Three Eternal Destinies #88 Know Where You are Going

It is *appointed* for man to die *once* (#606 in the Greek), and then to await judgment. Man is *destined* to die *once*. After that, he will be judged for the way he lived his life. If at the judgment (Rev 20:11-15) he is found to have been *unjust* or *filthy* he will be awarded a second death. If he was a *just* man he will be awarded a second life (Heb 9:27). *Award*, based on a *judicial decision* = second life or second death.

In the natural order of creation (as with animals), man dies once. Rom 5:12 — This death is the *consequence* of sin, for all have sinned (Rom 3:23) but not all have sinned “alike.” Rev 22:11 — Some have made themselves unjust and filthy, and some have *retained* their righteousness — *although* they have *sinned* (Rom 3:23; 6:23).

Since Messiah has died *once* to pay the penalty of *all* sin, for *all* people, (all mankind alike) He therefore takes away the sins of *many* people (Heb 9:26-28). He has the keys of death and Hades (Rev 1:17-18; Heb 2:14-15). “Hades” is the *region* of the departed spirits and souls of mankind. There they wait for the resurrection in order to stand before the great white throne and be judged as to their *eternal destiny* (Rev 20:11-15). *Hades* is mistranslated as “hell” in the KJV and as “the grave” in the NIV. Hades never denotes the *physical grave*, nor is it a *permanent abode* of the dead. It is only the intermediate state between a person's death (the first one) and his resurrection. It is like *pre-trial incarceration*. His permanent abode or eternal destiny must be determined when he is resurrected and judged — then he will be awarded a second life or a second death (Rev 21:8; 20:14; 14:11; Mt 25:41; Rev 19:3).

Rev 1:18 — Death (#2288), as used here, refers to natural or temporal death, as also in Heb 9:27 — the *first* death. Rev 20:14 and 21:8 refer to the *second* death, which is eternal, based upon the judgment (Rev 22:11,15). The unjust and the filthy in Rev 22:11 are judged as *reprobate*. Rom 1:28 (NKJV and NIV) — Since they did not see fit themselves to retain the knowledge of God (of good and evil), He gave them over to a *reprobate* mind.

### Retaining the Knowledge of God

The word *retain* means (#2192 — have, hold, keep, maintain, possess, etc.). Those who *keep* to what they know is right in their conscience (turning away from evil) justify God. Those who were turned over to a reprobate mind *refused* to acknowledge God in their conscience (Rom 2:14-15). “Since *they did not like to retain* God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate (debased, depraved) mind *to do those things which are not fitting*.” The phrase, “*they did not like to retain*,” means that those worthy of the second death deliberately rejected conscience in order to do those things mentioned in Rom 1:18-32 which are not fitting. Not fitting for whom? For the “completely depraved humanity” of Calvinism? No! Not fitting *for the righteous* in Rev 22:11 — and *especially* not for the Holy (Eph 5:3-8) since the Holy are imitators of God Himself (Eph 5:1).

The *Holy* alone have His Spirit dwelling in them. The *Unjust* and the *Filthy*, as well as the *Righteous*, do not have the Spirit of God dwelling in them, but the Righteous retained a knowledge of God (Rom 1:19-20) within their mind. Rom 1:28 (NASB) says, “... *since* they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer.” God gave them over only after that — *not before*. They were not born totally depraved — given over to destruction in some pre-determined, predestined caste system, without any hope. Nothing could be further from the heart of God (Jn 3:16; 1 Tim 2:4-5).

So it is man who did not *approve* of recognizing God any longer. They did not maintain their *own righteous state* with which they were *born* into this world. This is the *natural* righteousness (Rom 2:14) with which Gentiles *by nature* (instinctively) do the things of the Law. This righteousness in Rev 22:11 is of course not Messiah's (perfect) righteousness, but the righteousness innate in man. Even though all have sinned (Rom 3:23) by their own choosing, not all *become* reprobate due to their choices. Many preserve or retain the likeness of their Creator in them. God admires this and gives such human beings a second life. Those, however, who do not *like* to retain God in their *knowledge*,

He must *turn over* to the things they *do like* (Rom 1:24,26,28-31), and they must suffer an *unalterable* eternal destiny called the second death (Rev 21:8). As we see in Rom 1:22, they *became* fools instead (Ps 14:1-3). Rom 3:10-18 are only those *who say in their heart*, "There is no God" — the Unjust and Filthy.

The reason all men are without excuse (Rom 1:20) is that they *knew God*. They had a knowledge of His attributes and nature *within them* (verse 19) which was *evident*. Yet they did not glorify God, even for the sunrise and sunset, the moon and stars, the plants and flowers, the mountains and streams, or the salmon rushing upstream to spawn. Men were not *thankful*, but became futile, bringing upon themselves a self-induced judgment. "*Became* futile" indicates a *transition* from one state to another. Rom 1:21 — Men became *futile* in their thoughts — making themselves empty, vain, foolish, useless, etc. The word *futile* describes the perverted logic and idolatrous presumption of those who do not honor God or show gratitude for His creation (verse 25; Ps 14:1-3).

Rom 1:29 — The phrase "being filled" indicates that they were *not born* in that state. If man was born without hope — born into the second death — what difference would it make how he lived, or what he did with the knowledge of God? That is, why would man even *want* to retain the knowledge of a cruel, merciless God who casts everyone into the Lake of Fire *regardless* of how much knowledge they retained of Him, or how much they preserved his image, or how thankful they were? What difference would it make, whether they became reprobate or not — they would all alike be cast into the second death (which is the Lake of Fire) simply because they were born imperfect and the Christian missionaries didn't manage to translate the "sinner's prayer" into Swahili during their lifetime.

#### **According to a Man's Deeds**

**Rom 2:6** says that God will *render* to each man according to his deeds in judgment (Rev 20:11-15): a second life (verse 7) to those who *continue* to preserve God's likeness (in their mind or knowledge) by doing good, and a second death (verse 8) — indignation and wrath — to those who abandon His likeness and take on that of Satan. This *distinguishes* between the righteous and the reprobate. For the *Holy* in Rev 22:11 (holy citizens of the Holy City in Rev 21:10-11, which has the glory of God) eternal life for the Holy is *not* gained by *works of righteousness* (Rom 3:23). But for the *righteous* in Rev 22:11 it *is* — as Rom 2:7 clearly says. The judgment which Heb 9:27 refers to is determined on the basis of deeds. Rom 2:3 — No one can escape the judgment of God for it is *destined* for all men to be judged (Rev 20:11-15) worthy or unworthy of a second life.

Ps 19:1-6 verifies the message of Rom 1:18 - 2:16 — that God does not offer to the natural man a revelation of Himself that cannot be understood. The everlasting gospel of the everlasting covenant is intended for every natural human being of every age and social standing and type of education, for God has made it clear to them (Rom 1:19,28).

The Bible itself, however, is not meant to be understood by the natural man (1 Cor 2:14) in the same way as the *creation*. If a Gentile finds a copy of the Scriptures in his motel room, he should not expect to understand it. It is for the *spiritual mind only*, not for the *natural man*. The Bible does not command universal acceptance of a straightforward and easily understandable meaning, as does the creation or the natural law of Rom 2:12-16, which is for the natural man. The Bible can only be understood when taught by the *indwelling Holy Spirit* (1 Jn 2:20,27). The Pharisees and Sadducees could not fathom its meaning, nor can Christians today, although they all claim to see (Jn 9:41). This is why Rev 19:2-3 says that Christianity has corrupted the whole world by its false light (2 Cor 11:2-4,13-15).

The Bible is not its own *interpreter*, as Calvin claimed, who misconstrued its meaning to corrupt all men as to the nature of the loving and good God.

Jn 6:44-45 — No one can come to Yahshua unless the Father draws him (Jn 7:17), due to man's fall and the fact that *no one* is spiritual by his own doings. But the righteousness of Rev 22:11 is the *retention* of righteousness in the natural man — a vestige retained, as Rom 1:28; 2:7. God cannot justly demand natural men to have the same caliber of righteousness as the *Holy*, who have been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb (Isa 53:11). Their righteousness supersedes that of the nations. Isa 49:6 — The

tribes of Jacob (not the Bible) are to be the *light* to the nations — their only light whereby they can be saved, which draws all men to Messiah (Jn 17:23; 13:35).

### Holiness

**So God cannot justly demand from the nations more than what they, at any time, can perform. God gave man the right** to choose between *good and evil* — to perform the good and resist the evil and retain the knowledge of God in them. But He does not demand from them *holiness*, which they can at *no time* perform, due to their nature. The Holy in Rev 22:11 are as 2 Pt 1:4 and 1 Cor 6:17 describe (1 Cor 2:15). Holiness is *impossible* for all who are not *redeemed* of YHWH. Holiness means: *being set apart for the holy*. It means God's personal presence is in the holy person — both God and man are set apart for one another (Rev 21:2-3). The *nations* are not His dwelling place. The Holy City is. But His dwelling place is in their midst — *among men* — the “righteous” men of the nations who are worthy of a second life.

All have sinned (Rom 3:23) but not *all* have sinned like the unjust and filthy men of the world. Not all have said Ps 14:1. The righteous have retained the glory of God to various degrees. The Unjust and Filthy have utterly forsaken the glory of God and become *reprobate* (depraved) not retaining the knowledge of God (Rom 1:28). **Fallen man did not lose his original righteousness to the point of depravity.** He could still *choose*. Gen 3:16-19 is proof that he could maintain his original righteousness (as Abel, Seth, Job, and others) recognizable to various degrees in various individuals.

The judgment in Rev 20:12-13, will determine, according to the *deeds characteristic* of each person, what his *moral nature* is, whether *good or evil* (Rom 2:9-10). Those in the *nations* who *persevere* in practicing righteousness will be obvious to God and to His people (Mt 10:42; Gen 12:3; Mt 25:34-35). In Rev 22:11, only the redeemed *Holy* people have the hope of 1 Jn 3:3 and can purify themselves *just as He is pure*. The *Righteous* can only pay for their sins by their *own* death. They cannot purify themselves. The Unjust and the Filthy can never *pay in full* for their sins like the Righteous and their punishment is unending (Gen 4:7,13). The *payment* for the sins of the Righteous ends, according to Heb 9:27. After the judgment, the Righteous are set free and given a second life which is eternal, whereas the Unjust and Filthy are resurrected to face a second, more horrifying, death — one which now lasts *forever and ever in the eternal age, without end, an unalterable second death*.

### Facing Eternity

**Man is not a mere irrational creature of the natural world like other animals. Man is related to God in a way that makes him different** from every other created thing. Man is *unique* for he is made in *God's image* (Gen 1:27). If physical death were merely the *end* of existence, man would have no need to *fear it*. Heb 2:14-15 — The reason he fears it is his *awareness* that when he dies he does not *escape* the *consequences* of his deeds (Rev 20:12), but goes to face them (Heb 9:27). After he is resurrected he must face a judgment which determines the eternal destiny he deserves, which is *awarded* to him (Rom 2:14-16).