

The Three Eternal Destinies of Man #196

The Premise

What is the premise upon which the Three Eternal Destinies of Man is based? A premise is a proposition upon which an argument is based or from which a conclusion is drawn. The Three Eternal Destinies of Man has to have a premise. We haven't totally made it clear yet.

Although the natural man cannot receive the things of the Spirit, as Paul said in 1 Cor 2:14, that inability does not mean that he cannot do good (Mt 25:34,46). Gen 3:22 is for the natural man, pertaining to how he should live (Gen 3:16-19; 9:1-7; Rom 2:6,7,10). Human beings who are not the Holy of Rev 22:11 can do good. But such good deeds, although they are commendable, cannot save natural man from his first death sentence, for all have sinned, as Rom 3:23 says, and Rom 6:23 says death is the wages of any sin. So, no manner of doing the good and not doing the evil in Gen 3:22 and Rom 2:6,7,10, will save a man from the consequences of sin, even the sins that are not so grave as those in Rev 21:8, which merit the second death sentence.

Sin is sin, and the wages of sin is death (Gen 2:17). Jms 4:17 explains what sin is, in direct accord with its original meaning from the Garden. Gen 3:22 — Man knows the evil not to do and the good to do. Man is to live a life in accord with Gen 3:16-19, which is the good he knows to do. All man's good deeds, which are taken into account in Rev 20:12, did not save him from the first death. Why? Because it is given to all men to die once and then face the Judgment (Heb 9:27). The righteousness of man cannot save him from the first death sentence, but *does* grant the worth to pay for his sins in the First Death.

All sin has to be paid for one way or another, so how can a man who has never been given the chance to believe (meaning to entrust himself and all he has to Messiah and be immersed into His Body on earth) pay for his own sins? It is a question of

whether he has enough worth left in him when he dies to pay for his sins in death. Death is the consequence of sin. That is, the first death, not the second. Gen 2:17 is the first death sentence. It is absolutely *not* the second death sentence. The second death, which is forever and ever, is determined by the Judgment, just as the second life is determined by the same judgment. Wrath and indignation will be rendered to the one as his just recompense, and eternal life rendered to the other, the just reward for his lifelong perseverance in doing good deeds (Job 14:14; Rom 2:6-8,11-16; Heb 9:27; Rev 20:11-15). His reward is with him (Rev 22:12) for each — the unjust, the filthy, the righteous, and the holy (Rev 22:11).

There has been no second death sentence for man, but only for Satan and his angels (Mt 25:41). But all mankind was sentenced already to the first death, and only Messiah's death can free a man from that sentence (2 Cor 5:21; Gen 2:17). 2 Cor 5:21 is not our own righteousness, but we become His righteousness. We take on "His" – the righteousness of the God of Abraham, just as Abraham did (Jn 8:39), and as all do who belong to Messiah (Gal 3:26-29; 2 Cor 5:15; Rom 6:1-14).

Only by a natural man's own human worth or natural righteousness can his punishment in the first death pay for his sins (Rom 6:23). That is, a man who has never heard the true gospel from a true disciple (Mt 10:41; Jn 7:18). The person who rejects the gospel from a true disciple is judged already as one of the cowardly of Rev 21:6-8 (Jn 3:18,36, Lk 10:16, Acts 13:45-46). Only if a man has left in him enough human worth can his own death penalty in the first death atone for his sins. A man must have retained enough of his human worth to be able to pay the penalty of his own sin. Messiah had all the fullness of worth to pay for the whole world's sins (1 Tim 2:5; 2 Cor 5:21; 1 Jn 2:2). He paid the wages to pardon us from our sins and from the death sentence they deserved, whether only the first or also the second death. The people described in Rev 21:8 and 22:15 had no human worth left (Rom 1:24-31; 2:8-9).

Only the righteousness of God imputed to a man can save him from the first death sentence. Man's righteousness cannot be compared with God's righteousness, which Abraham received. It was imputed to him by God (Rom 4:3). Isa 64:6 — A man's own righteousness is compared to filthy rags as far as sufficing for God's righteousness, which is imputed to redeem man. A natural man's own righteous deeds, doing the good he knows in his conscience, has no more value than filthy rags as far as pardoning his sins and giving him fellowship with God. No matter how good a person is, his deeds cannot save him from the first death. They cannot pardon sins. Only Messiah's death can pardon sins. Otherwise, God would have just left man to fend for himself, to try and try in vain to save himself from the wages of sin in Gen 2:17, for it is only by his death (and in death) that his sins can be atoned for.

Rev 20:12 is the judgment, the tribunal or judicial court of Jn 5:28-29, that takes place after the first death (Heb 9:27), which determines a man's eternal destiny — either the second life or the second death. There is no naturally righteous person in the world that can escape the first death sentence apart from Messiah, that is, apart from being baptized into Messiah's death (Rom 6:2-5). But if Paul meant Rom 3:9-20 exactly as he wrote it, unqualified by a context, then someone is a liar. In order to understand what he meant, you must realize that he is quoting Psalm 14 and Psalm 53. This is why it says in verse 10, "As it is written," for it is speaking of the *fool* who says in his heart there is no God (Ps 14:1).

The *fool* says in his heart there is no God, but *every* man does not say this. The natural man who can still be taught by nature doesn't say this (Rom 1:18-20). It doesn't mean that fools say the literal words, but they say it by the actions they do (Gen 3:22; Isa 24:5-6), as if God did not see them and as if there were no judgment. Lot was righteous, wasn't he? (2 Pet 2:4-8). Therefore, there was *someone* righteous. And Noah, in his own generation, was righteous. But Rom 3:10 says there is *not one* righteous. So was Paul contradicting the other scriptures, or is there a context to understand? All

mankind does not say there is no God. There were many more listed in the Bible as righteous apart from having the same faith as Abraham (Gen 15:6), which was reckoned to him as righteousness.

The Righteousness of Noah and the Natural Law

Gen 6:9 — Noah was a just man, a naturally righteous person. He had retained very much of his human worth in his obedience to Gen 3:22 and 3:16-19. Gen 7:1 speaks of his own personal righteousness, the righteousness that he was born with as a descendent of Adam through Seth, who was also righteous. This is not to say that all of Seth's descendents were righteous, for by the time of the flood, only eight were heirs of righteousness — Noah and his family. So, in Heb 11:7, Noah, as one of those of the line from Seth, was one who “walked with God.” That is, he walked according to Gen 3:16-22. He was as Enoch (Gen 5:22,24), blameless or “perfect” in not allowing himself to sin as the rest of the world at that time did, who went across the boundaries of conscience, which is God's vice-regent. Therefore, they were not “walking with God.” They were fools according to Ps 14:1, as Gen 6:5 says about their hearts.

But Enoch and Noah walked with God, which indicated a continual and consistent pattern of life in a marked contrast with the pattern of life of the rest of the peoples of the world at that time. This is just as Rom 1:18 - 2:16 teaches us about the righteous and the unrighteous of the nations (or Gentiles), who are righteous or unrighteous according to the standards of the natural law. The natural law is the law of conscience, the knowledge of good and evil inherently known in all men (Gen 3:22; 6:5; Rom 2:14).

But Noah and his family were not participating in their evil deeds, but were keeping a good conscience by doing the good they knew and not doing the evil. They did not do this perfectly, but enough to maintain a good, functioning conscience. Thereby they maintained their created likeness of their Creator (Gen 3:22). They stayed within the boundaries where their conscience could speak to them and keep them in His

likeness and image, which is what Gen 6:9 and 7:1 meant, as they walked or lived within the boundaries of God's vice-regent within them. This is the natural, internal law of conscience, which is the law of the nations.

The common law (both universal and necessary) of the nations (or Gentiles) is binding on each individual and obligatory with respect to conscience. That is why Paul can say, in Rom 2:14, that the Gentiles, who do not have the Law (the Law of Moses, which they are not the "hearers of" in verse 13), but do by nature the things of the law, are a law unto themselves. For that which they instinctively obey arises from the general consent of mankind as to what is good and evil, which God has placed in all of their hearts (Gen 3:22). For every human being is descended from Adam and Eve, and she is called the "mother of all living." All humans come from her, so men after them are made in God's image as they were.

Law in Rom 2:14 is #3551, meaning "anything established, anything received by usage, custom, law, or command, the observance of which is approved by God." So Gen 3:22 forms the basis of the conventional law of the nations as well (Acts 17:26-27; 10:35; Rom 1:20), which arises from the express consent which men of the nations give to just laws enacted by themselves or entered into by them by treaty. The customary laws of the nations are those tacitly agreed on by a people. That is, they naturally agree on such matters without them being written out. Such customs and laws are binding only upon that people, and not universal in nature. But Gen 9:1-7 is universal, applicable, and binding upon all mankind, by which God judges rulers and politicians and all the people of any nation or people or tribe.

Noah Held on to His God-given Righteousness

Heb 11:7 — An heir is an heir if he does not sell his inheritance. All mankind was an heir to his or her own righteousness – if they kept the everlasting covenant inherent in them (Isa 24:5-6). To violate the Everlasting Covenant is to give it up for indulgence

in a certain kind of sin, even to accumulate sins at the expense of foregoing their conscience – their knowledge of good and evil – hurting others by going into the realm of sins described in Rev 21:8 and Rom 1:18 - 2:16, especially the kinds of sins in Rom 1:27-31. Such men and women do not hold onto their God-given inheritance of righteousness as Noah did. Noah was persuaded by his own conscience. He was made an heir of the righteousness which was by faith.

Became (#1096) – made.

Heir (#2818) means to hold on, to keep in one's own possession or power.

Faith (#4102, from #3982) means persuaded. Noah was persuaded of Gen 3:22.

To abide by conscience, or God's vice-regent, is to live by faith, which for the natural man is his own persuasion from his conscience (Rom 2:14). Noah was no fool as the rest of the world in his day. And #4102 means that according to a person's fidelity to his conscience he retains his own righteousness, as Noah did. There is a correlation between the nations and Israel, and between the Edah and the nations. They "co-relate" to one another, correspond, as in the first and second deaths and the books of life.

Christians think in Heb 11:4 that Abel was a "Christian" or "born again" and so went to heaven when he died. They think this because of the use of the word "faith" in that verse. However, the offering he offered proved that he was already righteous. And Enoch by faith (Heb 11:5) was taken, not dying a normal death – but he did die, as we see in Heb 11:13 and Jn 3:13. "By faith" meant, in both cases, by their fidelity (faithfulness) to their own conscience. #4102 is from #3982, meaning persuasion to do the good, for "God is good." In doing the good one retains his likeness of God, which pleases Him.

Before Enoch was taken, he proved by his life that he was righteous, which is to say that he pleased God by his life lived by "faith" or conscience (Gen 3:22; 3:16-19). He lived then, by the persuasion of the knowledge of good and evil he had in common with

God. There are different kinds of faith (#4102), persuading (#3982) each man to good or evil – or to trust in the saving power of Messiah.

Conscience is “co-knowledge” or to be “mutually aware.” All who lived by this kind of faith pleased God and would not go to the second death as do all who do not please God by their deeds (Rev 20:12; Acts 10:35; Heb 11:6; Acts 17:26). For without faith it is impossible to please God. This relates to us as the holy, as well as to the righteous of the nations.

In Heb 11:10 Abraham was in search of a city different from the city of the nations, with a different foundation. Abraham went into a different dimension (an extra-dimensional reality) than the natural realm, a different faith with a different reward (Rev 21:24; 22:5).

So, the natural man can have faith, and he can have righteousness, since he can be persuaded by his conscience and so be counted among the righteous. Our Master said of a Roman centurion, “I have never seen such faith in Israel...” They can have their own faith and their own righteousness. We, the holy, are saved not by our *own* faith and our *own* righteousness, but by *His* faith that comes to us, which imparts *His* righteousness (Rom 10:17). There is a natural faith in the world that has its own persuasion — to do good and to keep a good conscience. They can maintain their righteousness by receiving the “faith” into their soul to do good, just as Noah maintained his righteousness to do good, as his conscience persuaded him.

Rom 6:23 is a premise in itself. It is unalterable that the wages of sin is death. There is nothing you can do about it. You reap what you sow.

“I have never seen such faith in Israel,” our Master Yahshua said of the centurion in Mt 8:10. See also Mt 15:28; 9:22; 8:10; Lk 7:9 — these verses talk about faith, but it is a person’s own faith – “your faith” our Master said – coming from his (or her) own conscience that “has made him well.” But on the Day of Pentecost they were there, hearing the many other words, and they all received faith from God in order to receive

the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:37-38,40). Jn 7:37-39 — For faith from God comes by hearing, in order to save man from the first death. One persuasion comes from the conscience and one from a sent one (Rom 10:17).

The persuasion that comes from the sent one is analogous to what comes from a magnet attracting a nail. Then that same power is infused into the nail and attracts other nails. “No one can come to Me unless the Father draws him,” our Master Yahshua said, which He does through the other nails, as in Jn 13:20. It’s called *conductivity*. I guess you could say you have to have a direct pipeline to God, which goes to every person who is connected to Him (Mt 10:40-41; Lk 10:16). We are used as priests of the Father to draw men to Yahshua, “for no one can come to Me unless the Father draws him” (Jn 6:44). Then as 1 Tim 2:4-5 says, He, Yahshua, reconciles the ones we bring to Him to His Father (Jn 14:6).

We have to have a premise. Unless we establish this premise, people will say we are just preaching works salvation and that people don’t need Jesus. We just want to explain that a man cannot work his way “to heaven” apart from Messiah.

The most asked questions are:

- How can I know the will of God for my life?
- What happens to the heathen – those who have never heard the gospel?

We can tell people what to do, just as the apostles and evangelists did (Acts 2:39-41; 8:30-31,37-39) for the only way they will ever know the will of God for their lives is to be baptized into the Body of Messiah where they can know and do His will, according to Eph 2:8-10; 4:11-16; and Isa 53:10-11. The answer to the second question is found in the Three Eternal Destinies of Man.

Premises

So the premise of the Three Eternal Destinies of Man is this: All men sin and all sin must be paid for, either by the death of the sinner or by Messiah’s death on his behalf

(2 Cor 5:14-15). It is possible for a man of the world, who has never heard the gospel, to live in such a way as to retain enough worth to pay for his own sins in the first death and to be saved from the second death. This makes him a member of the “nations of those who are saved” in Rev 21:24 (NKJV). However, it is not possible for a man to escape the first death by his own goodness, deeds, or righteousness, but only by the righteousness of God imputed to him on the basis of faith in Messiah. This faith is imparted to him through a true disciple of Messiah who is seeking not his own glory, but Messiah’s (Jn 7:17-18; Rom 10:17).

Rom 2:14-15 is a premise, that all men have a natural law at work within themselves, and to which they are continually accountable. The judgment verse 16 speaks of will determine their faithfulness as to what they knew to be the truth. Thus, Rom 2:12-15 tells of the man without the Law of Moses and the New Testament Scriptures (or gospel, which is in any case written only for the believers in order to know God’s commands and His will for their lives, what they will do for His sake and the gospel’s sake, Mk 10:29-30).

The judgment of the sheep and goats in Mt 25:31-46 contains a premise, that men will inherit a kingdom prepared for them (verses 34 and 40) or go away into everlasting punishment (verse 46), on the basis of their treatment of these “brothers of Mine” — that is, whether they did or did not give food, drink, clothing, shelter, and visit His brothers in prison. His Father will bless the ones who helped “His brothers.” These brothers are the ones He will not be ashamed to call “His brothers” (Heb 2:11). The ones who didn’t help His brothers will be cursed (verse 41).

1 Cor 6:9-11 Paul states a premise, “*Do you not know* that the unrighteous [of the nations] will not inherit the kingdom of God?” They wouldn’t, but the *righteous* (of the nations) would inherit it (Mt 25:34), and those found righteous in the judgment of Rev 20:12-13. They will be righteous still, meaning forever and ever, as Rev 22:11 says.

Paul was not saying these evils in 1 Cor 6:9-11 were necessarily people who were presently in the community of the redeemed, for “such *were* some of you” (verse 11). Rather, it was the fornicators, adulterers, drunkards, thieves, etc., of the world who will not inherit the same kingdom of Mt 25:34. They were not found worthy of a second life, so their names were taken out of the book of life (Rev 20:12-15) by doing the evil deeds of Rev 21:8. But *that* kingdom had been prepared for those who do what is right in their lives, not perfectly, of course, but avoiding the gregarious evils of 1 Cor 6:9-10 that ruin the lives of others.

For the holy ones, the saints to whom Paul is writing in Corinth, are “justified in the name of the Sovereign Yahshua and by the Spirit of God” (1 Cor 6:11). The righteous ones of the world, who will inherit the Kingdom, are those who, “not having the law” (of Moses), but still “by nature do the things of the law.” Not only are they “a law unto themselves,” they are actually, “doers of the law” who “will be justified” (Rom 2:13-14) by their own death and by the judge (Rom 2:16) in the last judgment of Rev 20:12-15. They will be justified by their deeds, being found to be the righteous of Rev 22:11, who will be “righteous still.” Rom 2:9-11 is for all mankind, for all men will be judged according to what they do and not who they are.

Jn 5:28-29 is a premise, stating that those who do good in the world will go to the resurrection of life (Mt 25:34,40,46), and those who do evil, to a resurrection of condemnation (Mt 25:41,46). He told them not to be surprised at this. In the Greek this word conveys, “Don’t wonder at this; don’t marvel at this,”¹ for there’s something going on you don’t know about. But you should know, He was saying, if you knew the God of Abraham (Gen 18:23-25) as you claim to. Don’t wonder at the fact that both Jews and Gentiles who did not hear the gospel are going to be judged by their deeds, and that judgment will lead to either eternal reward or punishment (Rom 2:10).

¹ #2296, meaning to wonder, wonder at, marvel, and 2) to be wondered at, or to be held in admiration.

Jn 5:28-29 — “All who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth” – after the first death (Heb 9:27) and go to the Judgment. They will go to the same judgment for their deeds as Rev 20:11-15 describes (and the one Mt 25:31-46 typifies), where each will receive his due recompense — eternal life or eternal death — on the basis of their good or evil deeds. A man is no better or worse than his deeds indicate. All men since the Garden have known good from evil, being like God (Gen 3:22). And they are able to hold onto that inborn, inherent godlikeness (or cast it off) through the choices they make (Jms 4:17; Rom 1:24,26,28; 2:6-7). Those who do are like Noah, an heir to the righteousness that he was born with, and which he held on to. Acts 10:35 — There are men like Cornelius in every nation, including today as well, who fear God and “work righteousness” and so “are acceptable to Him.” Some are saved by His grace but others never hear the gospel, but will inherit the kingdom especially prepared for such as them.

This is in contrast to the premise of Jn 5:24-25, which states that those who now, presently, hear the voice of the Son of God, though they be spiritually dead, pass *by faith* from death to life. They know this by the love they have for their brothers (1 Jn 3:14) and they know by the Spirit dwelling in them (1 Jn 3:24). When the Son of God spoke, and His apostles after Him, and those who received these righteous sent ones after them (Jn 13:20), it was the hour that “now is” —

“Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live.” (Jn 5:25)

This will include those spoken of in 1 Ths 4:16, who will hear His voice when He comes back. Those spiritually dead who rose to life in Messiah Yahshua made up the First Church, which began as vibrant communities full of life. As the Greek word for *now*² says, from that time henceforth, as long as men could hear the voice of the Savior

² #3568, *noon*, is primary particle of present time; “now” (as adverb of date, a transition or emphasis); also as noun or adjective present or immediate; henceforth; hereafter, of late, soon, present, this (time).

(Jn 10:14,27), the day of salvation in the ancient Roman world continued. Eventually, another one took *His* place (2 Cor 11:4) and the disciples lost their first love (Rev 2:4-5). Revelation from heaven was closed off to them by their disobedience to His word (Jn 14:21), and the hour in Jn 5:25 that “was” ended. The gates of hell prevailed against them for they were no longer built upon the rock of revelation from the Father (Mt 16:16-18). They ceased to be His people.

But if the same original message is proclaimed upon the earth, forming the same fruit, the Commonwealth of Israel (Eph 2:12), gathered in Twelve Tribes just as they were then (Acts 26:6-7), it would mean the hour that “is coming” *now* is once more! And henceforth, and hereafter, those who hear “the voice of the Son of God will live” (Jn 10:27-29).

Jn 5:25, then, is the dead in Messiah, whose life is now hidden in Him (Col 3:3). They heard His voice as the Good Shepherd in this life (Jn 10:15,17), but those in the grave in Jn 5:28 are the dead of this world who are in the first death sentence, who rise to a resurrection of a second life or a resurrection of a second death. Those who rise to a second life are the “sheep” of this world, the nations that heeded the voice of God’s vice-regent, their conscience, which was their only way of hearing from Him.

Rev 20:11 says all will stand before the judgment bar of God to be judged based on the deeds they have done, either good or evil (Gen 3:22). Rev 20:12-13 says men will be judged according to their works or deeds, even as Rom 2:6-10,12-16 says. All of this is based on Gen 3:22, the basis for the natural law, which is the instinctive knowledge of good and evil.

You can see the difference between the resurrection of the nations in Jn 5:21 and the resurrection of the holy in Jn 5:24. The Father raises up the people of the world (Jn 5:28), as the Son raises up the saints who make up His Body. The Father raises up the people of the nations and brings them back to life (Jn 5:21), to go to the resurrection of life or condemnation they deserve according to their good or evil deeds (Jn 5:29).

Rom 2:16 — No one can be justified by himself on the basis of his own personal righteousness. However, the universal presence of moral standards, although in various degrees of clarity, and the common sense obligation to such standards, indicates a universal moral constitution and sense of accountability to one's Creator. This is why Paul, speaking of the people of the nations, or the heathen, writes in Rom 2:15, "their conscience also bearing witness."

The work of the law also resides in the heart of man because he was created in the image of God (Gen 1:26-27) and God only judges man in accordance with the standards and the knowledge shown to him (Gen 3:22). So a defense based on ignorance of the (natural) law is futile (Rom 1:19). For not all have the Law of Moses, but all have the natural law, which is the law common to all. For God shows no partiality in the Day of Judgment (Rom 2:16), as Rom 1:20-21 says.

The ground of judgment in Rom 2:16 is very plain. The secrets of men will be judged by Yahshua and His wife (1 Cor 6:2). So, the judgment is based on what the people of the nations have done. This judgment will bring out every aspect of their relationships with other people who are also made in God's image. And, how much did they seek the good, as Rom 2:6-10 says, seeking glory, honor, and immortality, and how little (or how much) were they self-seeking and not God honoring (which is to say, not conscience honoring)?

How will the holy ones judge people who do not obey the truth they know, but obey unrighteousness instead? (1 Cor 6:2). Their eternal destiny will be subject to indignation and wrath. It is tribulation and anguish that every soul of man will experience who did evil, but glory, honor, and peace to everyone who works what is good (Rom 2:6-10). This is what they will receive as restored human beings in the special kingdom prepared for them eternally (Mt 25:34; Rev 21:24; 22:2; etc.).