

STUDIES IN THEOLOGY

Soul, Death, and Grace:

Considerations of an

Original formulation

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THE STORY BEHIND THIS BOOK

Years ago while reading a dictionary of theology I came across a statement which pointed out that, leaving out denominational variations, there are in fact only two developed systems of thought about the nature of man and the significance of his death—that we are left to choose between the two.

The writer went on to note that both systems leave us with issues to which we cannot find the answers; that the solutions appear to be of such a nature that they would require a third alternative – another developed system of thought about man, God and death, which at present we don't appear to have.

While I was preparing in the 1980s to write a thesis on divergent thinkers in the theological spectrum of human thinking writing during the 19th century, I discovered a large volume of material in which the treatment of the issues of God, man, and sin appeared to contain a perception of the nature of man and the significance of his death, that I felt may, when assembled, contain the pieces for formulating the desirable third alternative.

In the years since that first impression I have read and assembled and evaluated until I became as excited about death – what a thing to be excited about! one of my friends remarked – that I had to write this little book, which I believe the reader will find to be fascinating.

It presents a picture of a very gentle God doing a job nobody else wants, in such a way as to answer the questions about man's nature and significance of his death; about the correlation between the life lived and the death died.

What exactly is God doing, and what is so exciting?!! You will have to read the book!

I hope you will be as blessed as you read as I have been while digging out this material and attempting to present the story of the soul, death, and grace.

Note: Many readers will want to start with chapter 3.

Prolepsis

Some reflections on the problems posed by the existence of death, and an inquisitive thought about where our research might be headed leads us to propose a preliminary outline for our study which will reflect phases of thought like the following:

Step 1 The concept of death in general as seen by a variety of writers, or, the matrix of our thoughts – past legacies to our problems under study.

Step 2 The survivor of death, or, the nature of man in death – two fold? Continuity or disruption from death to life, or, the soul – dead or alive?

Step 3 Grace – the destroyer of death's effectiveness: an atmosphere of the soul, or, daily life as a determiner of death's experience and meaning.

Step 4 A discursus: The sheep and goats judgment: The soul's death confirmed or denied or, the "so what!"

Step 5 The post-death life – from whom, by what?, or, resurrection and reward, or, alive – with a dead soul?

Summary and Conclusions to our search for meaning – or, some will never die? – an original formulation.

Addendum – Theological and scriptural applications of our findings.

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Introduction

Various titles have presented themselves to our thinking as this work started. Formulas like The Meanings and Natures of Death, or, Soul, Death, and Grace Re-visited, or, Soul, Death, and Grace as Interactive Agents, all have an intrinsic value; they reflect the content of the study being undertaken.

It came to my attention, gradually, a few years ago that those who treat the subject of death as an academic study, were dissatisfied with the formulation – meanings coming to them from their ‘fathers’, and that they were dissatisfied with their own treatments of the same topic.

Whereas in my own studies an understanding of death and its meaning was formulating around concepts I was discovering while writing a series of loosely related papers for graduate credits on a variety of topics, a concept of death which was incomplete but satisfying in the parts then formulated, and whereas I later discovered that even the great works cataloguing historical theological positions, such as Heick’s A History of Christian thought, and Gonzales’ work by the same title, and including Text-book of the History of Doctrines by Reinhold Seeberg, 1961, English edition did not present missing parts or additional insights to the often-presented but lacking-in-satisfaction understanding of death’s function and significance I decided to aim my research time directly at concluding or filling in missing parts of the understanding of death and its meaning as it was generally presented.

If I could through some means find an inspiration that would lead to a formulation which could take life’s darkest experience into the light, such research effort would be richly repaid by its intrinsic value; the ability to give peace.

This book is obviously about the results of that quest, a quest which has not only resulted a new understanding which brings great peace, but which also carries to me a fresh revelation of the gentleness of God. Of course, He has always been the same, it is understanding that grows.

My indebtedness I will save to express at the end of this work lest those not finding sufficient stimulation to finish reading this report transfer their lack of satisfaction with my work erroneously to those great sources which have been so rich a base to my thinking.

If this work fails to satisfy, the responsibility is mine – if it is fulfilling to the seeker who reads it the credit must go to that which inspired me; the acknowledgments will be appearing after the conclusion to this work.

If I might be allowed to repeat myself, the question directly put is, “Why this book?” Because the response to, “tell me in ten words or less what you’ve found,” has always failed – sadly.

When a friend of mine was dying from cancer I tried to relate to him summaries of my work – but they brought him no joy. My words portrayed only that which was inconceivable, unintelligible, the pieces needed more defining than a ten minute bedside chat could articulate.

So – let me save the conclusion for the conclusion. Prepare to be comforted. In no other doctrine or teaching does the gentle goodness of God become visible with more surprise.

Here's the story, starting at the beginning.

The Problem

Reinhold Niebuhr writes that “Man is and yet is not, involved in the flux of nature and time. He is creature, subject to nature’s necessities and limitations; but he is also a free spirit who knows of the brevity of his years and by this knowledge transcends the temporal by some capacity within himself. Man ‘brings his years to an end as a tale that is told,’ having an even shorter life span than some dumb creatures. But the sense of melancholy which the anticipation of death induces in the human spirit is not known in the animal world. To brood either anxiously or with studied and learned serenity upon the fact that man is as ‘the grass which flourisheth in the morning and in the evening is cut down and withereth’ is to reveal the whole dimension of existence which distinguishes man from the animal world.” The Nature and Destiny of Man: A Christian Interpretation, vol. 2 (Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1964), p. 1

Milton Mc. Gatch seems to take from man that which Niebuhr sees as distinguishing him from the animal world when he writes that “It is one of the ironies of our century that we have experienced death by violence of sorts and on a scale heretofore unknown but that men in this century have not been able to discuss or consider deeply the meaning of death.” Death: Meaning and Mortality in Christian Thought and Contemporary Culture (Seabury Press, 1969), p. 2.

Dr. Gatch then states that not only does modern man find himself incapable of articulating death’s significance, but that “On the whole, it can be said of the biblical writings that they have no theology of death or of an afterlife.” *Ibid.*, p. 35

Again, Dr. Gatch writes of his own work, “This book began with an exploration of the manifestations of the helplessness and foolishness of modern man in the face of death. That essay was a picture of man without a rationale for death and, therefore, unable to face the fact of death. Perhaps it would be more accurate to say that late modern man’s inability to cope with death is one more piece of evidence for the bankruptcy of ideology and the hard sell. We want an answer which is clear and simple – and which we simply cannot formulate.” *Ibid.*, p. 187

J.R. Zurcher draws a verbal cartouche which gives some direction and hope to Dr. Gatch's search for an answer to the meaning of death which is clear and simple and "which we simply cannot formulate" when he reminds us, in his book The Nature and Destiny of Man, (New York: Philosophical Library 1969) that "ever since man began to ask himself questions about himself, about his nature and his destiny, his reflections have crystallized around the problem of the union of soul and body. This problem, therefore, together with that of being, from which it is inseparable, is the basic philosophical problem. Periodically, it demands attention in the field of philosophy, presenting itself anew as soon as it appears to have been solved, so that throughout all ages man remains for himself a sphinx, of all beings the most enigmatic."

"This being the case, why come back to the problem? Would it not be wiser once and for all to consider the questions which constitute the problem of man as insolvable and simply recognize in their persistence a constant law of the intelligence? The answer must be negative, for to do this would be equivalent to renouncing philosophical reflection...." Ibid., p. xiii.

Moreover, Dr. Zurcher continues, the problem of the union of soul and body has always been one of the fundamental problems of philosophical speculation and "has had absolutely fatal effects on the problem of knowledge. For, as M. Gonzague de Reynold so aptly observes: Louis Lavelle in Le problem de la vie by Dr. M. Vernet (Paris, 1947), preface, p. 7, quoted in Zurcher, Introduction, p. xviii. 'To be mistaken about man, is by the way of inevitable consequences, to be mistaken about all.' Such an error 'and its consequences affirm themselves "in the body of man, then in his spirit...." It has affected contemporary man at the very roots of his personality.' It is not his shadow that he has lost, but his soul." G. de Reynold, in Le double, l'homme à la rencontre of soi-même, by Dr. A. Stocker (Geneva, 1946), preface, quoted in Zurcher, Introduction, p. xviii.

The above formulations are of great interest to us as we conceive of the research about to be undertaken, for on the one hand one has a proposition which presents man as distinguishable from the dumb animals, who often outlive him, only by his ability to conceive of his on-coming death, and, on the other hand, one has the proposition formula that the crisis of/in man is that he has lost his soul.

Perhaps, one could be allowed to conjecture that, given these two alternatives, the cause of the inability of man to find the solution to the meaning of death (the questions regarding the meaning of death appear repeatedly, though at irregular and apparently capricious moments throughout the movement of time), is to be found neither in man's ability to conceive of and ponder about his death, nor in the loss of his soul, but that the cause of the inability of man to find the solution to the meaning of death is to be found in the absence of his recognition that the soul is 'lost and found' by the choices

of man; and, that the philosophical concept of soul is, rather than an original concept, a borrowed one; which borrowing has resulted not in man's loss of soul but in man's loss of the context which makes meaningful man's soul's relationship to the sticky question of death's meaning. To put the question differently – does death in fact have any meaning? On the surface at least, is it not life that has meaning? If it is to be conceded at this point in our thinking that it is life that has meaning, is death to be seen as only having meaning because the occasion of one's death is the marker designating the end of one's perhaps otherwise brilliant functioning in the sphere of human existence? As such, would it not be immediately obvious that the meaning of death is that it makes "an end"? Would not such a conclusion be a promise of hope to contemplate? Would not all who had an existence marked with disappointed hopes have the joy of anticipation that one day death would come – a welcome friend heralding the cessation of the 'others' ability to cause them sorrow? In such an understanding would not one's ability to end one's own life be the great savior? Life would have meaning because death's certainty, if not its proximity, would make each day a treasure to be used according to one's understanding of how he or she wished to be remembered after the visit of the death?

If, in fact, the Hebrew Biblical concept 'Sabbath' has as a central significance the act of stopping, **See ****** (i.e., Ex 20:8-11), in a Hebrew dictionary, or in a word study, a stopping that is associated with rest, then could not Death be the greatest Sabbath to the living – to be anticipated as the Great Rest? Or does one need for rest to have its end for it to be meaningful?

Could it be that the Biblical Rest commandment found its meaning not alone in the prohibition to work but also in the command to work – six days of every week? Is not the significance of the Rest to be seen in the fact that the occurrences of the Rest period are to enable one to better use the post-rest period? The repetition of the Sabbath Rests would seem to indicate that not only did the Rest period give promise of the coming blessing to the tired laborer, but it was contingent in its terminus to the post-rest labor.

If, then, one is to take as a hypothesis that a significance and/or meaning of death is that it is to be seen as a promise of rest, one must wonder if, in fact, any rest is meaningful of promise if, in fact, it is not made, at least in part, contingent to some activity on both sides; a rest without ends would be like a bucket on a long rope at a well to a thirsty, tired man – if the bucket had no bottom in it.

What could one purpose as a labor at the terminus of death that would make Death a meaning rather than an end? If one were to find death's end, would one, in fact, not need to worry as much about what Death's contiguous end or ends was, as one would need to worry about whether or not Death had an end to its Rest?

If one were to seek to investigate the question of Death's function, or the meaning of the passage of time and the relation it has to the non-passage of time, if one were to so describe Death's effect, would one look for the meaning of death in the effects brought about by the absence of that which had undergone death's experience, on the flux of nature, or the physical entities associated directly and/or indirectly with the Rester-in-Death, or would one see any such changes as part of the ongoing force-of-life movement that seems to be everywhere present, and seek for the Death-Rest meaning within the individualized entities known to use as beings or things who were experiencing death as their present state?

It would seem a given to this researcher that the meaning of life must be found within, in the sphere of interaction, for a being is more than the sum total of those things with which it is surrounded or by which it is encountered. I think, therefore I am, is only a meaningful formula, as a proof of existence if we understand the formula to mean that the effects of my thinking are the proofs of my existence; for to suggest that one's existence can be established by the fact one thinks, without insisting on a correlating objective effect somewhere, is to say that it is possible for one to have existence, that one 'is', even when one has no effect on anything of that with which one is surrounded – a very concise definition of death – perhaps.

It is this very threatening lack of interaction that poses the problem here being considered – the meaning of death; the meaning of a state in which one possibly has no perceivable interaction with anything. To say that the meaning of 'no perceivable interaction', or death, is to be found in the termination of death, or in non-thinking somehow being reversed to a state of thinking while maintaining that in the state of post-death thinking one has no interactivity but with one's self – I think therefore I am – is to offer a hope that is not the concern of any gravestone inscription, nor is it the hope of those who mourn the loss of someone – someone with whom they have interacted. The proposal for a concept which would be seen as a philosophical reversal of death must include a post-death interaction with something other than the self.

It seems quite obvious to this researcher that if death is to have a meaning, death must first serve the result of attaching the experiencing of life – prior to death – to an experiencing of live-after death.

One also feels it is necessary to insist that the two experiences of life, separated, or connected, by death, must be experienced by the same being, that is to say there must be continuity of being between the pre-death and post-death experiences of life which are contiguous to the death-rest experience.

The memories and affections must have the cohesiveness that bridges the death-rest or there will be obvious concern regarding the credibility of the post-rest being continuity to the affections given due to pre-rest experiences.

At this point one is tempted to recall all the declarations that one has heard which tell us that after death life naturally goes on – that someone, somewhere, is still functioning – you know – “God took them” and declare that solves our issue; research ended. But the observation presses itself on this researcher as it apparently does on the writers reviewed so far, that such assurances and declarations leave the graveyard full of tombstones and memories, and the homes and families of the “departed” empty of interactivity with the departed.

Therefore, we will continue our quest for an understanding of the meaning, or meanings of death.

If one could take the liberty to set forth a proposal-formula to express hope connected to death, concatenated to death it might be expressed as simply as being, death, being.

In such a formula one might question if one did not in fact have a proposal that postulated continuity of being that bridged the death rest; in such an equation would death have any significance other than as a temporary disruptor? Could one, for example, propose a continuity of interactive being, non-interacting being, interacting being, and **not** of necessity allow that the same potential was available in the two phases of interacting being? Or, could the future life be altered by the present activities?

Would one not need to hypothesize that death’s non-interaction not only separated two experiences of interaction but that it also marked the end of a quality of activity without causing permanent disruption of continuity, for that hypothesis to resolve our problem?

A greeting card on my desk, for example, proclaims, “Every new day opens a bright chapter of hope, and brings another chance for happiness, laughter, faith, and love.” Famous Artists Studios, Valley Forge, PA. © 100E 731-7.

The clear implication of such a proclamation is that there is a continuity of being to experience the bright new chapters presented by a new day, a new friend, or by a ‘new’ investigation of the problem of death’s meaning!

Tomorrow and yesterday must converge in today. If death is to have any meaning other than being a marker of the end, tomorrow must be inherent in it.

Without continuity of 'self' the individualized actions which make up daily life would be nothing but individual acts without synchronization or cohesiveness. They could not reach into death to give it meaning.

Berkley's to-be-is-to-be-perceived is obviously unsound if pressed to extremes, but at the point of struggling to satisfy a quest for significance something must be perceived to be meaningfully existing. Death, if it is to have a meaning, must have an interaction with something.

It is the concept which portrays to us the possibility of the absence of meaningful perception, the portraying of a future without a designated minimum subliminal threshold of continued interactive-exchange with the former state of being or beings, that is the base of the terror of death. Hence, Gatch's 'blessed are the animals above man' formula.

It is my observation that the acceptance of a non-interactive perception formula is an ever-present pre-supposition of the studies on the problem of death, when death's meaning is agelessly pondered and reevaluated only to find no solution.

It appears clear to this researcher, in the light of other people's observations and reflections, that not only to find death's meaning but for death to have a meaning the pre-death life into death, must be not only not an end, but must have a cause and effect relationship to whatever follows death's sting, for death to serve a function and hence have meaning – other than "the end."

If everyone's post-death experience is to be conceived of as being the same, there is genuine grounds for being concerned about the validity of the post-death experience being a continuation of the pre-death life where one's acts brought results which served several functions, one of which being the distinguishing of one being from another.

The concepts this study is proposing to investigate are suggestive of a potential existence which has in itself the potential to resolve the cycles reviewed and questioned above, by means of restudying and reevaluating the content to be borne by those ageless concepts, soul, death, and grace.

The proposed study seeks to examine the communicable traits these concepts bear when viewed as interactive agents.

In light of the quest for a meaningful formula we have postulated and concluded to be a requirement for death's meaning to be decipherable, as a result of the positions reviewed by ourselves and others appearing above, it appears fairly clearly that if soul, death, and grace are found to indeed be interactive agents, then their relation-formula when these terms are properly understood, is the key to answering the question of the meaning of both death and life.

With this idea in mind we turn now to an investigation of what appears to be ideas so developed and interrelated that they are capable of displaying death's role and significance, and defining its function and/or meaning.

SECTION I

Death: Concepts of Life and Resurrection

CHAPTER 1

YESTERDAY: INTERRUPTION TO LIFE

The hypothesis this study has set forth as needing to be examined is that there is a potential for death, soul, and grace to so interact in daily life as to limit permanently the inbreaking future, or, to result in that future.

Such a concept has inherent in it a factor of accountability and reward-result, that, if found to reflect reality, would mean one would be able to determine through study death's meaning when and after it visits.

How would such a concept turned reality actually function? I am getting ahead. Such answers will only formulate themselves at the conclusion of our study. Back to the start!

For a general milieu with which to focus our speculations, notice the following concepts: "Christ became one flesh with us, in order that we might become one spirit with Him. It is by virtue of this union that we are to come forth from the grave, – not merely as a manifestation of the power of Christ, but because, through faith, His life has become ours." DA, p. 388. "Those who see Christ in His true character, and receive Him into the heart, have everlasting life. It is through the Spirit that Christ dwells in us; and the Spirit of God, received into the heart by faith, is the beginning of the life eternal." Ibid.

"The people ... referred Christ to the manna which their fathers ate in the wilderness ..." but "the manna could sustain only this earthly existence; it did not prevent the approach of death, nor insure immortality; but the bread of heaven would nourish the soul unto everlasting life." Ibid.

"Persecution cannot do more than cause death, but the life is preserved to eternal life and glory." 3 SM, p. 421.

"When he suffers death for the sake of Christ, Christ says to him, "They may kill the body, but they cannot hurt the soul." Ibid., p. 420.

What a concept! I keep getting ahead! Back to the beginning.

"In the creation of man before the entrance of sin, every part of nature was in perfection; God had nothing to take down as unnecessary to his plan. He needed to set into operation no power by which to dispossess; he needed to inaugurate no opposing force. But through the calamity of sin, the work of disintegration was begun, and the beautiful temple of God's building was defiled and laid in ruins. God no longer was a dweller in the heart of man. To oppose and bring to naught the work of the enemy, the promise was given, 'I will put enmity between thee and the woman ...'

“In the councils of heaven, hope was furnished for the fallen race. Jesus Christ offered his life as a ransom for the lost, as the price by which he might purchase the right to re-create the sinner, and form again the image of God in the soul... .

“Everyone who should believe in Jesus, should be recreated to walk in newness of life, and from the ruins that Satan had wrought through sin, should arise in purity and holiness the fallen temple of the Lord. Man was to be reconstructed ... 3 ST, p. 259.

The heart of man was to again be the dwelling place of God, partly through the restoration of the image of God in the soul. “The soul is capable of purification and sanctification, capable of attaining, through the offering of Christ, the heavenly treasure, even the gift of life that shall measure with the life of Jehovah.” 3 ST, p. 53. “... yet through submitting themselves to Satan, men have lowered themselves to fulfill the devices and plans of Satan, thus completing the ruin of soul, body, and spirit.” Ibid., p. 51.

If one is to speak classically, here, the phrase total depravity is obviously to be applied in the sense of the entire man being affected, rather than as the evaluation meaning that man can get no worse.

The lowest point of moral degradation is reached not at the time of the fall but just prior to the first appearing of Christ on the earth, when, “The deception of sin had reached its height, all the agencies for depraving the souls of men had been put in operation.” DA, p. 36. The Son of God “saw how men had become victims of Satanic cruelty.... They had chosen a ruler who chained them to his car as captives.” Ibid.

“Satan’s agencies were incorporated with men. The bodies of human beings, made for the dwelling place of God, had become the habitation of demons. The senses, the nerves, the passions, the organs of men, were worked by supernatural agencies in the indulgence of the vilest lust. The very stamp of demons was impressed upon the countenances of men.... Such was the prospect upon which the world’s Redeemer looked. What a spectacle for Infinite Purity to behold.” Ibid., p. 36.

“Sin had become a science, and vice was consecrated as a part of religion.... Rebellion had struck its roots deep into the heart, and the hostility of man was most violent against heaven. It was demonstrated before the universe that, apart from God, humanity could not be uplifted. A new element of life and power must be imparted by Him who made the world.”

“With intense interest the unfallen worlds had watched to see Jehovah arise, and sweep away the inhabitations of the earth.... At the very crisis, when Satan seemed about to triumph, the Son of God came with the embassy of divine grace.... When the fullness of the time had come, the Deity was glorified by pouring upon the world a flood of healing grace that was never to be obstructed or with

drawn till the plan of salvation should be fulfilled.... Then Jesus came to restore in man the image of his Maker." DA, p. 37f.

CHAPTER 2

A CONCEPT OF DEATH: THE MATRIX FOR OUR THOUGHTS

While He was here, Jesus said, “But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living” (Matt 22:31, 32).

In this statement is contained the heart of the problem we are studying. Are the dead only thought to dead, do they really live in death? Is this what Jesus was implying when He named men long dead and said God was the God of those men, and that as such He was the God of the living? Or, is there some other truth contained in Jesus’ statement?

The Body and Death: Some General Observations

One of the earliest records of resurrection from the dead is the account of Moses’ experience. Moses had faithfully led the children of Israel as God had given him directions for forty years, and then on the borders of the Promised Land he sinned a great sin. Because of this God told him he would not be able to go into the Promised Land, but must die. SR, p. 173. Therefore, “Moses passed through death, but Michael came down and gave him life before his body had seen corruption. Satan tried to hold the body claiming it as his; but Michael resurrected Moses and took him to heaven. Satan railed bitterly against God, denouncing Him as unjust in permitting his prey to be taken from him; ...” EW, p. 164.

The first significant element in this account to our study is the obvious importance attached to the possessing of the body of the victim after death. The concern for continual possession seems to imply that Moses would not be given life again by God while the body of Moses was in the prison house – death. This implication is supported by Satan’s railing against God for “permitting his prey to be taken from him” by the resurrection of Moses. To lose his prey in this context obviously refers to more than the loss of the body of Moses; it must refer to the fact Moses was given life again, for Moses didn’t fully become death’s prey until death put an end to his life; hence to his usefulness to God.

Several implications may be drawn from this story, but one point is particularly relevant to our study. When the dead are raised to life before the body has returned to dust, the same body is given life.

This principle is clearly observable in stories of Scripture recounting the resurrection of the dead that are recorded from times after Moses' experience. The following list will illustrate the point.

The Shunamite Woman's Son

Jairus' Daughter

The Son of the Widow of Nain

Lazarus

Dorcas

The young woman who fell out of the window while Paul preached, etc.

In these accounts of resurrection the Lord made the necessary repair to the body of the deceased to give it life again.

We read of a similar encounter regarding the body of Jesus after He had been crucified and laid in the tomb.

"Had it been possible, the prince of darkness with his apostate army would have kept forever sealed the tomb that held the Son of God. But a heavenly host surrounded the sepulcher. Angels that excel in strength were guarding the tomb, and waiting to welcome the prince of life." DA, p. 755.

Here we see implied the same struggle regarding the body of Jesus as was waged over the body of Moses. There are also some additional implications. First, while the value of the body of Moses might have been implied to lie in the fact that it was intact – "before his body had seen corruption" Michael came to give him life – here the desire is to keep forever sealed the tomb that held God's Son. This implies that the value of Jesus' body, and/or its resting place, is not limited to the time the body is intact. It is apparently of value even after that body was turned to dust.

This also means that it is proper to speak of Jesus' tomb as containing a dead person. Notice concepts like the following: "On that Sabbath when Christ lay in the grave, Nicodemus had opportunity for reflection." Ibid. And again, "Physicians were consulted in vain; there was no skill like that of Him who lay in Joseph's tomb." DA, p. 776. Also illuminating is the idea expressed regarding Jesus' state in death, when, comparing His condition then to all that He had suffered in the last hours prior to His death, we read, "At least Jesus was at rest. The long day of shame and torture was ended. As the last rays of the setting sun ushered in the Sabbath, the Son of God lay in quietude in Joseph's tomb. His work completed, His hands folded in peace, He rested through the sacred hours of the Sabbath day." Ibid., p. 769.

We also see that one can speak of the tomb as being sealed – implying that the dead person inside can't get out. That would signify that they can't be resurrected.

We can read, for example, “But a heavenly host surrounded the sepulcher. Angels that excel in strength were guarding the tomb, and waiting to welcome the prince of life.” Hence we conclude that the plan to keep Christ forever in His grace was thwarted by the overmastering power of the heavenly angels who guarded the tomb.

The concepts here being portrayed emphasize that one isn’t safe from the effects of the Evil One even in death, except for the protecting power of God. Something ‘goes on’ after death – at least for some people!

The fact that the angels were not only guarding the tomb but waiting to welcome the Prince of life tells us that while He was presently in the domain of death, the power of death was incomplete and was to be broken by the power of God when Jesus was called back to life by His Father.

Note: “When Jesus was laid in the grave, Satan triumphed. He dared to hope that the Savior would not take up His life again. He claimed the Lord’s body, and set his guard about the tomb, seeking to hold Christ a prisoner.” DA, p. 782.

“When the voice of the mighty angel was heard at Christ’s tomb, saying, Thy Father calls thee, the Savior came forth from the grave by the life that was in Himself.” Ibid, p. 785.

In Summary

1. Though the body of a person returns to dust after his death, it and/or its resting place is of significance to the final end of that person.
2. The tomb is spoken of as containing a dead person.
3. Christ came forth from the tomb by the call of God, and the life that was in Himself – while His body was intact.

Conclusion

The principles stated are perhaps too clear to need to be restated, but for clarity:

1. The model for death followed by resurrection before the body was weeks dead, is that the dead have lived again through the power of God to protect them during death, and bring them back into interactivity with the things and people of the life experience they had before being overtaken by death – with the same body.
2. Christ came forth from the grave, when called, by the life which was in Himself.

CHAPTER 3

THE RIGHTOUS AND DEATH

We have reviewed among other things regarding Jesus during death, that He was in the tomb until the Father called Him forth. We now wish to see if resting in the grave from the time of death until the resurrection is part of death's experience for people other than Christ, if they are not quickly resurrected. If so, does the length of time one stays in the state of death affect the location of the dead 'person'? Is there a shift, for example, from sleeping in the tomb, to sleeping in Jesus? We know that Christ was in the grave from Friday evening to early Sunday morning, and that Lazarus was buried four days, and still in the grave, but what about those people who are dead for centuries, where the body has completely returned to dust?

Notice the following concepts.

Group I Materials describing those who die as going down into the grave.

1. "The bible clearly teaches that the dead do not go immediately to heaven. They are represented as sleeping until the resurrection... They that go down to the grave are in silence." GC, p. 550.
2. "He is suddenly snatched away by death, and he goes down to the grave with the character formed during his lifetime...." COL, p. 270.
3. "In consequence of Adam's sin, death passed upon the whole human race. All alike go down into the grave." GC, p. 544.
4. "Our personal identity is preserved in the resurrection, though not the same particles of matter or material substance as went into the grave." 6 BC, p. 1093.

Group II General descriptive statements about people in death.

1. "God's Word declares that the dead know not anything, their hatred and love have alike perished." Ev, p. 249.
2. "In the grave he has no power to choose anything, be it good or evil; for in the day when a man dies his thoughts perish." COL, p. 270.

3. "Blessed rest for the weary righteous! ... They sleep; they are awakened by the trump of God to a glorious immortality.... As they are called forth from their deep slumber they begin to think just where they ceased." GC, p. 550.
4. In his letter to the people at Thessalonica, "Paul endeavored to instruct them regarding the true state of the dead. He spoke of those who die as being asleep – in a state of unconsciousness...." AA, p. 257.
5. "Christ represents death as a sleep to His believing children. Their life is hid [To be 'hid with Christ in God' can mean to have an intelligent, immovable faith in the Father and in Jesus; in their relationship to one another, and to people (see DA, p. 664). Therefore in this context the phrase can mean to die while thus believing.] with Christ in God, and until the last trump shall sound those who die will sleep in him." DA, p. 527. Their life will be knit by hidden links to the life of Jesus. Cf. COL, p. 149.
6. "The spirit, the character of man, is returned to God, there to be preserved. In the resurrection every man will have his own character." MS 76, 1900, quoted in 6 BC, p. 1093.
7. "The life giver will call up His purchased possession in the first resurrection, and until that triumphant hour ... every sleeping saint will be kept in safety and will be guarded as a precious jewel, who is known to God by name." SD, p. 359.

Group III

The facet of the question we are exploring about the righteous in death that now presents itself is, if one had died and is in a tomb, does Christ have a work to do before the dead can come out of the graves – their prison houses – that is, before they can return from the land of the enemy?

If one were to answer, yes, would this work be conceived of as having been accomplished at the time of the cross, or would the conception be that the victory gained at the cross would only be realized at the later time when Christ should exercise His power in harmony with the authority His victory through suffering and dying gained Him?

Notice the following concepts as a milieu for thought:

1. "As Christ ascends while in the act of blessing His disciples, an army of angels encircle Him as a cloud. Christ takes with Him the multitude of captives. He will Himself bring to the Father the first fruits of them that slept, as an evidence that he is conqueror of death and the grave." 1 SM, p. 306.

2. Paul points his brethren to the future coming of the Lord, when the fetters of the tomb shall be broken, and the 'dead in Christ' shall be raised to eternal life." GC, p. 548.
3. "Thus it will be when the voice of Christ shall be heard from heaven. That voice will penetrate the graves and unbar the tombs, and the dead in Christ shall arise." DA, p. 787.
4. "We are not parted forever but shall meet the loved ones who sleep in Jesus. They shall come again from the land of the enemy. The Life-giver is coming.... He bursts the bands of death, breaks the fetters of the tomb, the precious captives come forth in health and immortal beauty." 2 SM, p. 260.
5. "... the hope of the bereaved is in looking forward to the glorious day when the Life-giver shall break the fetters of the tomb, and the righteous dead shall arise and leave their prison house to be clothed with glorious immortal life." 1 T, p. 40.

In such a concept as the one presented to us in the last three or four sources, the presence of resurrected ones with Christ connotes that He has conquered death and the grave. The connecting together of the two concepts, death and the grave, is of course expected in daily life but what might have not been before so clearly distinguished is that they are not identical.

Death is, in this context, that which puts an end to man's normal interaction with other people, while the grave is where the dead one is held.

This dichotomy presents us with an unusual to formulate, but exciting implication – though we all know we can't raise the dead, we don't often find a formula suggesting a why.

This is a fascinating concept to add to our thinking; Christ bursts the bands of the tomb, the fetters of the tomb will be broken, the dead in Christ will be called to eternal life.

That is to say the dead are in the land of the enemy until they are called back.

Notice the following concepts.

1. "'The hour is coming,' Christ said 'in which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth.' That voice is to resound through all the habitations of the dead; and every saint who sleeps in Jesus will awake to leave his prison-house." SD, p. 359.
2. "Amid the reeling of the earth, the flash of lightning, and the roar of thunder, the voice of the Son of God calls forth the sleeping saints.... Throughout the length and breadth of the earth the dead shall hear that voice, and they that hear shall live.... From the prison house of death they come, clothed with immortal glory...." GC, p. 644.

3. "... the hope of the bereaved is in looking forward to the glorious day when the life-giver shall break the fetters of the tomb, and the righteous dead shall arise and leave their prison-house to be clothed with glorious immortal life." 1T, p. 40.

Group IV

Whether the dead would be considered as coming forth from their graves, and not from some other location, is the concept we wish to investigate next as this facet of our research concludes.

The following materials are illustrative of our findings. This issue was raised in general above but here we are looking at only our righteous-man model.

1. "The precious dead, from Adam down to the last saint who dies, will hear the voice of the Son of God, and will come forth from the grave to immortal life.... There will be a close and tender relationship between God and the risen saints. This condition, which is anticipated in His purpose, He beholds as if it were already existing. The dead live unto Him." DA, p. 606.
2. "By the power of the Savior that dwelt in them while living and because they were partakers of the divine nature, they are brought forth from the dead." SD, p. 359.
3. "All come forth from the tomb the same in stature as when they entered the tomb.... But all arise with the freshness and vigor of eternal youth.... He will change our vile bodies and fashion them like unto His glorious body ... all blemishes and deformities are left in the grave." GC, pp. 644, 645.
4. "The same form will come forth, but it will be free from disease.... It lives again bearing the same individuality of features, so that friend will recognize friend. There is no law of God in nature which shows that God gives back the same identical particles of matter which composed the body before death. God shall give the righteous dead a body that shall please Him.... A much finer material will compose the human body, for it is a new creation, a new birth. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body." (MS 76, 1900) 6 BC, p. 1093.

Summary

In these materials we have seen the righteous dead described with the following concepts:

- those who die go down into the grave
- the dead being in their graves
- unaware of anything that occurs around them
- their thoughts have ceased
- they are asleep, unconscious

- while asleep they are guarded and kept in safety as a precious jewel
- they sleep until awakened by the call of God
- When the sleepers awaken the spirit, or character that returned to God at death, is returned to them. This ensures the awakened one being the same kind of person – having the same character – after the resurrection as their loved ones remember them having had before death.
- when awakened they begin to think just where their thoughts ceased
- They come forth from the tomb. Neither the length of time one is in the tomb nor does the decomposition of the body affect one's state, or place of rest, in death.
- They are brought forth by the power of the Savior that dwelt in them while living and because they were partakers of divinity.

CHAPTER 4

THE WICKED AND DEATH

In the materials just reviewed we have often seen the statements about death qualified as pertaining to the righteous, or to those who emulated Christ's life in their own life. Such make up our designated righteous-man model.

We have noticed that a righteous person can be presented as going into the grave at death, and staying in the grave unconscious and guarded during death until Jesus comes to earth again, unbars the tomb, and calls the sleeping one forth to life. We have also seen the righteous dead respond to the call of the life-giver partly by the power which dwelt in them while alive.

In such concepts there is continuity and not disruption between birth and the time one enters heaven. This means the righteous dead are presented as 'existing' in an unconscious state during death.

But what is one to think about those who never accepted Jesus as the Savior? Would they too have a continuous 'existence,' or is there condition in death to be presented with a different formula? Would one conceive of their life as being ended when they die the first time? If one were to say the wicked one's life ends when they die, is this a contradiction of the Biblical teaching of the resurrection of the wicked prior to their experiencing the second death?

To formulate our thoughts in the direction of finding answers to such issues, we will look at some more materials, of course! From the concepts presented we will be formulating our wicked-man model.

To start, notice the following descriptions. "In consequence of Adam's sin, death passed upon the whole human race. All alike go down into the grave. And through the provisions of the plan of salvation, all are to be brought forth from their graves.... But a distinction is made between the two classes that are brought forth.... They who have been 'accounted worthy' of the resurrection of life, are 'blessed and holy.' 'On such the second death has no power.' But those who have not through repentance and faith, secured pardon, must receive the penalty of transgression." SD, p. 367.

"And every soul that refuses to become a partaker of the atonement provided at such a cost must bear in his own person the guilt and punishment of transgression." GC, p. 540.

"But the wicked, who trample upon His authority, He will cut off and destroy from the earth, and they will be as though they had not been." SR, p. 60.

“Enoch was troubled in regard to the dead. It seemed to him that the righteous and the wicked would go to the dust together and that would be their end.... In prophetic vision he was ... shown the ... world at the time when Christ should appear the second time.... He saw the righteous crowned with glory and honor, while the wicked were separated from the presence of the Lord, and consumed with fire.” 3 SG, pp. 55, 56.

“They suffer punishment varying in duration and intensity, ‘according to their works, ‘but finally ending in the second death.” GC, p. 544.

“Covered with infamy, they sink into hopeless, eternal oblivion.” Ibid., p. 545.

“There will then be no lost souls to blaspheme God as they writhe in never-ending torment; no wretched beings in hell will mingle their shrieks with the songs of the saved.” Ibid.

“Since it is impossible for God, consistently with His justice and mercy, to save the sinner in his sins, He deprives him of the existence which his transgressions have forfeited and of which he has proved himself unworthy.” Ibid., p. 544.

“They have died an everlasting death. They are never to have a resurrection, and God will have a clean universe.”

“Like the waters of the Flood the fires of the great day declare God’s verdict that the wicked are incurable.... Their will has been exercised in revolt; and when life is ended, it is too late to turn the current of their thoughts in the opposite direction, too late to turn from transgression to obedience, from hatred to love... .”

“In mercy to the world, God blotted out its wicked inhabitants in Noah’s time. In mercy He destroyed the corrupt dwellers in Sodom.... It is in mercy to the universe that God will finally destroy the rejecters of His grace.” GC, p. 543.

Summary

In these materials the condition of the wicked dead is presented with a different formula and expected result than that which we found attached to presentations regarding the righteous who have died. Our righteous-man and wicked-man models are dressed quite differently.

We have found the wicked dead and their state in death presented with terms like the following:

incurable

blotted out

destroyed

deprived of existence

separated from the presence of the Lord
consumed with fire
no hope of a resurrection
cut off and destroyed from the earth
as though they had not been
must bear in his own person the guilt and punishment of transgression
and, as a result of the second death experience,
sink into helpless eternal oblivion
died an everlasting death
never to have a resurrection

The most apparent feature of this list is the absence of any of the terms applied to the righteous in death; comforting terms, such as sleep, rest, silence, guarded, and protected. To the righteous death is presented as only a time of quiet unconsciousness during which they are 'alive' unto God, for, as we noted earlier, "God counts the things that are not as though they were. He sees the end from the beginning, and beholds the result of His work as though it were now accomplished.... The dead live unto him." DA, p. 606.

Summary and conclusion to Section I

At death the following chain of events begins:

1. The spirit – character – goes back to God to be preserved by Him.
2. The body is buried; to decompose or be resurrected before it returns to dust.
 - a. If it decomposes, it is resurrected with the same form but different particles.
 - b. If it doesn't decompose, the same body is given life.
3. The body of a righteous dead is protected and guarded during death, implying that to have authority over the body is to have possession of the person.
4. The power of the grave, the territory of the enemy of God, was broken by Christ's death and resurrection, and the grave is itself to be unbarred by Christ when He comes to earth the second time.
5. After being resurrected people have the same character traits as they cherished before death.

6. The righteous dead are brought forth from their graves to eternal life partly by the life that is in them (the gift of God given during their life on earth), and because they are partakers of the divine nature.
7. The wicked dead come from their graves purely as a manifestation of the power of God, to suffer the second death and go into eternal oblivion.

SECTION II

Soul: The Container of Mans' Future?

CHAPTER 5

THE NATURE OF MAN—BODY, SPIRIT, SOUL

Introduction

“When the voice of God awakens the dead, he will come from the grave with the same appetites and passions, the same likes and dislikes, that he cherished when living.” COL, p. 270

The material we have just been reviewing points us toward a question which seems to almost be forcing itself into our consciousness.

If the spirit, the breath, returns to the Lord at death, Cf., p. 38, #6 and the body returns eventually to the dust, what should we conceive of as being that which extends through death, capable of being guarded—hence capable of being harmed, until the resurrection—to come forth from the grave? Or, to ask the question differently, what, during death, is in the prison house? Or, to use terminology appearing earlier in our study, when the bands of the tomb are broken, what is there to be set free? What is the grave?

One thing is immediately obvious, for something, anything to be in tomb man must be composed of more than the two parts referred to above—the spirit which returns to God who gave it at death, and the body which returns to the dust is not resurrected—the resurrection body being of a much finer material than the body is now made from.

To move toward an understanding of how our durable portion of man is, and of what it insulates itself from destruction, we will review some partially observed perspectives looking for their fullness.

“Put your whole being into the Lord’s hands, soul, body, and spirit....” OHC, p. 131.

“Divine grace is needed to sanctify the human being—body, soul, and spirit.” 4RH, p. 323.

“Jesus said to Mary, ‘touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father.’ When He closed His eyes in death upon the cross the soul of Christ did not go at once to heaven, as many believe, or how could His words be true—‘I am not yet ascended to my Father?’” 3SP, p. 203.

Considering concepts formulated in the foregoing thought pattern, man, in addition to being a possessor of breath or spirit and body, is quantitatively to be viewed as possessor of a soul. Therefore we can hypothesize that that which endures through the prison house, the grave, until the band of the tomb are broken, to be called forth, can be summarized under the term soul.

As we are obviously going to need to find definitional material to identify this concept further, let’s also briefly consider some implications which rise with the soul or continuity concept.

To find soul being inserted into our developing anthropological cartouche is an expected but interesting idea because the qualities of this soul designation are not by nature inclusive of eternal life! Notice!

“The Soul that sinneth, it shall die an everlasting death—a death from which there will be no hope of a resurrection....” EW, p, 218.

Issues of Continuity, or, Durable Soul

If the soul definition we are trying to find were found to represent a reality, it would mean that the Lord, in addition to everything else He does, guards the dead! Such a concept would also imply loudly to this researcher that everyone guarded and protected by God goes on to eternal reward. But are we therefore to conclude, by implication, that everyone who dies goes to heaven—the home of God and right doing—regardless of what their life style has been? If one answers yes—certainly a most desirably gracious answer—we have an interesting problem because the resurrected one needs to be the same person who died or we have an act of creation and not an act of resurrection to give meaning, or a start for meaning, to death’s significance and/or function.

The doctrine of resurrection implied, at least thus far, which we are investigating, is of that which attaches to death and thereby enabled death to be the conductor connecting two life interacting experiences, and is a resurrection concept that has the same person coming up out of the grave as went into it -- the same memories, the same likes, the same character, and the same loves.

It appears to this researcher that the concerns so clearly expressed at the beginning of this study point to a formula that requires us to understand that for resurrection to be meaningful it must reconnect that which was disrupted by death’s visit, to the future, however that future is conceived.

The ‘resurrection’ of a different person, or of a similar but altered edition, does not constitute one’s hope for a re-continuation of a previously held association of family or friends.

For resurrection to provide a solution of death’s impact it has to result in continuity, not disruption, or by definition it is not resurrection—which by definition means an awaking or a standing up.

Everyone, it appears obvious to me, given the chance to vote, would desire the resurrection of the good! But what are we to hypothesize about the bad? Or do we find a formula which presses on us the conclusion that resurrection is resurrection and therefore if we allow a resurrection concept, we have to—you know—take the good with the bad!

Or is there the potential for a formula that we have overlooked, can the concept we are weighing, soul, be understood as capable of bearing a revelation of a doctrine of death in which not all who die enter into the same state or condition? Could some, for example, be guarded in death while others weren't as we found above, without a defining difference being identified—because of a quality of the soul?

If one were to suggest the potential for there to be more than one state or condition of those who have died, does that necessitate a parallel hypothesis that presents us with more than one quality of future chained to death's end?

Would our hypothesis need to postulate that there was more than one reward-existence?

If one answered yes, would they both, or as many reward-existences as one conceived be more necessary for all the resurrected ones to be treated according to their life-acts—if there were more than one—would they all be good or desirable? To be rewarded, they would have to be desirable in the view of the receiver?

As we questioned earlier, if we were to decide that not all who die enter into the same condition, would we also be deciding that not all who die enter into the same relationship during death to God?

If a plurality of death's condition were to be our hypothesis what would we understand to be that which determined my position in death's house after death's visit?

If one were to promptly answer, "how one lived," because resulting to life-choices is something all people recognize as chained to one's acts, even when life is only deemed unfair, would one have a cause-and-effect rationale without interference, do and get, or would one be envisioning a cause and effect, act and reward sequel that was modulated through such concepts as forgiveness and/or restoration, or perhaps substitution?

Should the concept of a God who is gentle enough to guard the dead—if such turns out ultimately to be the situation—be conceived of as a God of justice and righteousness, hence do and get, or would one more-better envision that controlling One as exhibiting for primary attributes such qualities as mercy and love? If one were to elect for mercy and friends (love), might one conceive of a scenario where one did not receive the obvious result? If one elected for love, mercy, and forgiveness, would such concepts contain stability? If such concepts were alone attributed to a God, could such a One be trusted? Is there not a need for justice and law to be present in our formula for future stability to be conceivable? Where does law connect to soul?

The issues seem to be never ending. However, we will conclude with one obvious issue—if resurrection is to life eternal but only for the perfect, how do we formulate a forum which produces perfect people? If we don't produce perfect people—sometimes!—what would be the point of a resurrection hypothesis?

This excursus began with questions that led us to a concept—soul. If one were to formulate and express the thoughts about death and God we would have been thinking randomly, so that those concepts gathered themselves together under the soul designation, what would one say? What would be the hues of the picture? How might the developed concept appear on paper? Would one's perception of soul and death, for example, portray God, or would one's understanding reflect life in relation with God—with death's exact individual impact-description being altered to reflect the pre-death man-God relationship as it impacted the soul?

In the next four chapters, without forgetting what we have been thinking and before attempting to answer the issues raised-before drawing precisely a formula—we will examine some of the soul concepts we are questioning here, as they appear on paper in the works we are surveying.

To emphasize a particular facet of a concept of soul, the materials may be presented in numbered groups, comment and evaluation will come later in our study.

CHAPTER 6

THE SOUL—ITS ORIGIN, NATURE, AND POTENTIAL

“Adam was a noble being, with a powerful mind, and will in harmony with the will of God, and affections that centered upon heaven. He possessed a body heir to no disease, and a soul bearing the impress of Deity.” YI, p. 562.

“By sin we have been severed from the life of God. Our souls are palsied. Of ourselves we are no more capable of living a holy life than was the impotent man capable of walking.” DA, p. 203.

“Every individual has a soul to save or to lose.” GC, p. 488.

“You have a soul to save or to lose...” YI, p. 133.

If to save the body from death, the foot or the hand should be cut off, or even the eye plucked out, how much more earnest should the Christian be to put away sin, which brings death to the soul.” AA, p. 313.

“... Satan’s false standard, ... if followed, will lead to ... death for both body and soul.” CW, p. 137.

“It is the Son of God combating the prince of darkness; and the prize for which they contend is the soul of man.” 2 ST, p. 85.

“God gave His only begotten Son for the body as well as the soul, and our entire life belongs to God...” YI, p. 145.

“A soul corrupted by sin is represented by the figure of a dead body in a state of putrefaction. All the washings and sprinklings enjoined in the ceremonial law were lessons in parables, teaching the necessity of a work of regeneration in the inward heart for the purification of the soul dead in trespasses and sins....” 4SDABC, p. 1176.

“Satan cannot hold the dead in his grasp when the Son of God bids him live. He cannot hold in Spiritual death one soul who in faith receives Christ’s word of power. God is saying to all who are dead in sin ‘Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead.’ Eph 5:14. That word is eternal life.... That word, ‘Arise from the dead,’ is life to the soul that receives it.... It is all offered to us in His word. If we receive the word, we have the deliverance.” DA, p. 320.

“... the Word of God is the bread of life, eat of it daily. It will infuse immortal vigor into your soul,” PUR, p. 164.

“Those who eat and digest this word, making it a part of every action and of every attribute of character, grow strong in the strength of God. It gives immortal vigor to the soul, perfecting the experience, and bringing joys that will abide forever.” FLB, p. 22.

“... Christ is able and longs to deliver. He will impart life to the soul that is ‘dead in trespasses.’ Eph 2:1.” DA, p. 203.

“The entire being, body, soul, and spirit, must be brought into subjection to God....” YI, p. 486.

“A healthy soul in a healthy body makes a man or woman more precious than silver or gold....” PUR, p. 1.

“Christ healed the man, both soul and body....” YI p. 369.

“The flesh in which the soul tabernacles belongs to God.” YI, p. 487.

“The soul that God has created and Christ has redeemed is of great value because of the possibilities before it, the spiritual advantages that have been granted it, the capabilities that it may possess if vitalized by the word of God, and the immortality it may gain through the hope presented in the gospel.” AA, p. 370.

“The Spirit of God, received into the soul, quickens all its faculties.” GW, p. 285.

“The Lord Jesus acts through the Holy Spirit; for it is His representative. Through it He infuses spiritual life into the soul, quickening its energies for good, cleansing it from moral defilement, and giving it a fitness for His kingdom.” MYP, p. 55

“When truth becomes an abiding principle in the life, the soul is ‘born again, not of corruptible see, but of incorruptible, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever.’” AA, p. 520.

“When the soul has been cleansed, it is the duty of the Christian to keep it undefiled.” YI, p. 562.

“If you do evil you injure and mar your own soul.” 3RH, p. 115.

“The kingdom comes by the gentleness of the inspiration 3RH, p. 115 of the word, by the operation of His Spirit in the soul.” TDWG. P. 193.

For this first group of materials we can make the following list of information regarding the soul:

The soul’s origin

Created by God

Redeemed by Christ

The soul’s nature and potential

Everyone has a soul

Sin brings death to the soul

Can bear the impress of Deity

Is naturally dead in sin

Can be born again—can live again

Can be reconstructed through work of Holy Spirit

Spirit and body must also be treated for soul to be helped

Christ's work heals both soul and body

Holy Spirit can infuse spiritual life into the soul

Word of God studied gives immortal vigor to the soul—it can gain immortality

The soul must be protected by the person in whom it dwells

Doing evil injures and mars the soul

CHAPTER 7

THE SOUL AND GRACE

We have found the soul described as ‘moving’ from being naturally dead to being so restructured as to be capable of gaining immortality.

The fascinating quest which now confronts us is in answer of the obvious question—how, when, does this transformation come to be realized?

Notice the following concepts and descriptions.

“It is the grace of God that gives life to the soul.” DA, p. 181.

“Faith is the hand by which the soul takes hold upon the divine offers of grace and mercy.” GAG, p. 315.

“When truth becomes an abiding principle in the life, the soul is born again,” AA, p. 520

“His grace alone can quicken the lifeless faculties of the soul, and attract it to God, to holiness....” FLB, p. 96.

“The grace of God comes to the soul through the channel of living faith, and that faith it is in our power to exercise.” MYP, p. 72.

“In the matchless gift of His Son God has encircled the whole world with the atmosphere of grace as real as the air which circulates around the globe. All who choose to breathe this life-giving atmosphere will live and grow up to the stature of men and women in Christ Jesus.” SC, p. 68.

“The fiercer the conflict, the greater the supply of grace to meet the need of the soul; and the very nature of the grace received will enlarge the capacity of the servant of Christ to know God, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent.” 3RH, p. 367.

“Who would dream of the possibilities of beauty in the rough brown bulb of the lily? But when the life of God hidden therein, unfolds at His call in the rain and the sunshine, men marvel at the vision of grace and loveliness. Even so will the life of God unfold in every human soul that will yield itself to the ministry of His grace, which, free as the rain and the sunshine, comes with its benediction to all. It is the word of God that creates the flowers, and the same word will produce in you the graces of his Spirit.” TM, p. 97.

“By His grace we are to be made perfect.” 2RH, p. 593.

“Our growth in grace, our joy, our usefulness—all depend upon our union with Christ. It is by communion with Him, daily, hourly, – by abiding in Him, – that we are to grow in grace. SC, p. 69.

“Through the provision of divine grace we may attain almost to the excellency of the angels.”
1RH, p. 323.

“By his grace he will work upon the soul until it will be like a jewel polished for the heavenly kingdom.” YI, p. 223.

“The nature of the grace that he receives, enlarges his capacity to know God and His Son.” AA, p. 50.

“Man cannot conceive what he may be and what he may become. Through the grace of Christ he is capable of constant mental progress.” GAG, p. 278.

“It is the grace of Christ alone, through faith that can make us holy.” FLB, p. 93.

“By the gentle touch of grace He banished from the soul unrest and doubt, changing enmity to love, and unbelief to confidence.” MH, p. 25.

“As the sunbeam imparts to the flowers their varied and delicate tints, so does God impart to the soul the beauty of His own character. DA, p. 331.

“The Spirit quickens the lifeless faculties of the soul.” PUR, p. 160.

“Christ abides in the soul of the believer.” 2ST, p. 498.

“The Holy Spirit unites with the powers of grace that God has provided to turn souls to Christ.” 5 RH, p. 341.

“By giving his only begotten son to die on the cross, God has shown us the estimate he places on the human soul.” YI, p. 414 (July 20, 1899).

“... Angels of God all ready to impart grace and power to those who feel their need of divine strength.” OHC, p. 129.

CHAPTER 8

THE SOUL'S NEIGHBORS

One of the first stories appearing in our Bibles is that of Cain and Abel. The point of the story is its conclusion, I am my brother's keeper.

In the New Testament one of the best known stories is of course that about the Good Samaritan. The point of the story bearing the message that I am brother to anyone who needs a help I can give. But the New Testament does not stop story telling there, but also teaches that the smallest good deed done for the proper motive will be rewarded.

So what are we to think about the solution to death's bite? Is this the arena where the neighbor does not appear? In working out the problem of death's solution are the formula and its constituent parts individualized? We have so far found no direct reference to the ability to do grace work for someone else's soul.

If one were to assume that the united basic thrust of the gospel is twofold—the salvation of the self, and the neighbors of the self—what would one understand the application of the solution to death's end to be when one tried to apply it to the neighbor?

To put it simply—the question would be, in the terms of our research, I am my brother's keeper, what do I do for his soul?

As this report has progressed, we have presented our findings first and drawn summaries and conclusions afterward because that is the way research is effectively communicated. The reader or hearer of the report is thereby enabled to draw developing opinions for himself.

However the resolution to the issue of the soul's responsibility to its neighbors we found being presented under an unusual vocabulary. A very familiar word and concept bearing a meaning and result that is not expected. Therefore our conclusion—we do do something, very important, for our neighbor's soul, is presented now, so the reader can evaluate our conclusion as the material we have found is presented.

The very familiar word we have found is atmosphere, and a quality of the soul it is probably originally treated in the sources we are surveying. While the vocabulary is familiar, the application and interaction of the parts, as with all the elements appearing in this report of the soul, grace, and death issue, is in the opinion of this researcher, original. Only to be found here. This developed concept of soul, death, grace and eternal life appears in no other author. This is not only a unique formulation but a

very appealing one as well answering our questions about Christian man who works always for others as he works for himself.

“The atmosphere surrounding the souls of Christians is unlike the atmosphere that surrounds the soul of the worlding,...” RH 12/4/1894.

“The influence of every man’s thoughts and actions surrounds him like an invisible atmosphere, which is unconsciously breathed in by all who come in contact with him. This atmosphere is frequently charged with poisonous influences, and when these are inhaled, moral degeneracy is the sure result.” 5T, p. 111.

“When the grace of God reigns within, the soul will be surrounded with an atmosphere of faith and courage and Christlike love, and atmosphere invigorating to the spiritual life of all who inhale it.” PUR, p. 188 (Apr. 13, 1905).

“As you open your door to Christ’s needy and suffering ones, you are welcoming unseen angels. You invite the companionship of heavenly beings. They bring a sacred atmosphere of joy and peace.” DA, p. 639.

“... because the atmosphere of heaven as a living, active agency fills the soul.” 1 MCP, p. 27.

“Those with whom Christ dwells will be surrounded with a divine atmosphere.” MYP, p. 420.

“It is the atmosphere of grace which surrounds the soul of the believer, the Holy Spirit working upon mind and heart, that makes him a savor of life unto life, and enables God to bless his work.” COL, p. 298.

“In fellowship with God, with Christ, and with holy angels they are surrounded with a holy atmosphere, an atmosphere that brings health to the body, vigor to the intellect, and joy to the soul.” 6T, p. 306.

“If we restrain the expression of unbelief, and by hopeful words and prompt movements strengthen our own faith and the faith of others, our vision will grow clearer. The pure atmosphere of heaven will surround our souls.” 6T, p. 462.

“The service rendered in sincerity of heart has great recompense. ‘Thy father, which seeth in secret, Himself shall reward thee openly.’ By the life we live through the grace of Christ, the character is formed. The original loveliness begins to be restored to the soul. The attributes of the character of Christ are imparted, and the image of the Divine begins to shine forth. The faces of men and women who walk and work with God, express the peace of heaven. They are surrounded with the atmosphere of heaven. For these souls the kingdom of God has begun. They have Christ’s joy, the joy of being a blessing to

humanity. They have the honor of being accepted for the Mater's use; they are trusted to do His work in His name." DA, p. 312.

"When the grace of God reigns within, the soul will be surrounded with an atmosphere of faith and courage and Christlike love, an atmosphere invigorating to the spiritual life of all who inhale it. Then we can go to the campmeeting not merely to receive, but to impart." 6T, p. 43.

"Every soul is surrounded by an atmosphere of its own, – an atmosphere, it may be charged with the lifegiving power of faith, courage, and hope, and sweet with the fragrance of love. Or it may be heavy and chill with the gloom of discontent and selfishness, or poisonous with the deadly taint of cherished sin. By the atmosphere surrounding us, every person with whom we come in contact is consciously or unconsciously affected." MYP, p. 417.

"The atmosphere that surrounds the soul is fraught with influence for good or evil according to the character of the thoughts. It may be full of poison and malaria, or be fragrant and pure and health giving." ST, Jan. 23, 1893.

"The man who loves God does not measure his work by the eight-hour system. He works at all hours and is never off duty. As he has opportunity he does good. Everywhere, at all times and in all places, he finds opportunity to work for God. He carries fragrance with him wherever he goes. A wholesome atmosphere surrounds his soul. The beauty of his well-ordered life and godly conversation inspires in others faith and hope and courage." 9T, p. 45.

"Heaven is brought near to earth by that mystic ladder, the base of which is firmly planted on the earth, while the topmost round reaches the throne of the Infinite. Angels are constantly ascending and descending this ladder of shining brightness, bearing the prayers of the needy and distressed to the Father above, and bringing blessing and hope, courage and help, to the children of men. These angels of light create a heavenly atmosphere about the soul, lifting us toward the unseen and the eternal. We cannot behold their forms with our natural sight; only by the spiritual vision can we discern heavenly things. The spiritual ear alone can hear the harmony of heavenly voices." AA, p. 153.

"Let us not love in word,' the apostle writes, 'but in deed and in truth.' The completeness of Christian character is attained when the impulse to help and bless others springs constantly from within. It is the atmosphere of this love surrounding the soul of the believer that makes him a savor of life unto life and enables God to bless his work." AA, p. 551.

"God bids us fill the mind with great thoughts, pure thoughts. He desires us to meditate upon His love and mercy, to study His wonderful work in the great plan of redemption. Then clearer and still clearer will be our perception of truth, higher, holier, our desire for purity of heart and clearness of

thought. The soul dwelling in the pure atmosphere of holy thought will be transformed by communion with God through the study of Scriptures." COL, p. 60.

"He bids us, 'Be still, and know that I am God.' [Ps. 46:10.] Here alone can true rest be found. And this is the effectual preparation for all labor for God. Amid the hurrying throng, and the strain of life's intense activities, the soul that is thus refreshed will be surrounded with an atmosphere of light and peace. The life will breathe out fragrance, and will reveal a divine power that will reach men's hearts." DA, p. 363.

"It is the Spirit that surrounds the soul with a holy atmosphere, and speaks to the impenitent through words of warning, pointing them to Him who takes away the sin of the world." GW, p. 155.

"The soul dwelling in the pure atmosphere of holy thought is transformed by intercourse with God through the study of His word. Truth is so large, so far-reaching, so deep, so broad, that self is lost sight of. The heart is softening and subdued into humility, kindness, and love." MH, p. 465.

"In fellowship with God, with Christ, and with holy angels, they are surrounded with a heavenly atmosphere, an atmosphere that brings health to the body, vigor to the intellect, and joy to the soul." GW, p. 513.

"Faith is essential. It surrounds the soul with the atmosphere that pervades heaven. This is the rest that Christ has promised to all who come to him." HM, Oct. 18, 1898.

"It is the atmosphere of Christlike love surrounding the soul of the believer that makes him a savor of life unto life, and enables God to bless his work." RH, Apr. 3, 1900.

"Physical, mental, and moral strength increase, because the atmosphere of heaven, as a living, active agency, fills the soul. Christ is formed within, the hope of glory." RH, Oct. 15, 1901.

"Although there may be tainted, corrupted atmosphere around us, we need not breathe its miasma, but may live in the pure air of heaven. We may close every door to impure imaginings and unholy thoughts by lifting the soul into the presence of God through sincere prayer. Those whose hearts are open to receive the support and blessings of God will walk in a holier atmosphere than that of earth and will have constant communion with heaven." SC, p. 99.

"Yet the Christian should not place himself needlessly in the way of temptation. Every soul is surrounded by an atmosphere of its own, laden with the fragrance of love and piety, the heavy fogs of unbelief, or the deadly poison of infidelity and crime. When brought in contact with others, we are unconsciously affected by the atmosphere surrounding them. If this be laden with moral poison, the very life-blood of the soul may become tainted, ere we are conscious of danger." ST, Feb. 16, 1882.

“If fathers and mothers love the Bible, and talk of the lessons Christ has given; if they love Jesus, and make him the theme of conversation, a heavenly atmosphere will pervade the home.” St, May 4, 1888.

“The atmosphere of His presence will fill the soul with abhorrence of all that is evil. Our spirit may be so identified with His that in thought and aim we shall be with Him.” MH, p. 511.

“Influence is a power that we exert over others, and it is the result of our thoughts and actions. We cannot be neutral; we cannot live without exerting an influence either for good or for evil. We create an atmosphere about our own souls that sways the souls of others. Even after we are dead we still speak, for our works follow us. What we have done has blended with the thoughts and actions of others, and become an everlasting influence. What we have been and what we have said is the seed sown, and it will bear a harvest after its kind. The time to determine what will be our influence is while we live.” PHO66 10. Emphasis supplied.

“Purity of thought must be cherished as indispensable to the work of influencing others. The soul must be surrounded by the pure, holy atmosphere—an atmosphere that will tend to quicken the spiritual life of all who inhale it.” PH088 08

“Those who are often with God in prayer, have holy angels by their side. The atmosphere that surrounds their souls is pure and holy; for their whole soul is imbued with the sanctifying influence of the Spirit of God.” SPTA07 26.

CHAPTER 9

THE SOUL AND DEATH

We have seen man presented as a vessel containing a soul which is progressively recreated. But we have not seen any indication that the progressive change in the soul, even to the point of its being a partaker of the elements of the eternal life, has the effect on the body which would result in the body not dying – a most desirable solution to the problem of death and its meaning – it would seem.

Whereas the body is, at this stage of our research, still capable of dying, what is the condition of the soul when the body dies, and how do we conceive of that state? Less politely asked, what difference does it make that the soul has partaken of grace, in the quest of our search for the meaning and nature of death and the future?

How is the soul to be understood – as part of the death's result, or as part of the death's solution? More directly, how is the soul to be described, if the body dies?

“When He suffers death for Christ's sake, the Savior says to him, they may kill the body, but they cannot hurt the soul.” AA, p. 85.

“All believers who pass through a natural death, have through eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of God, eternal life in them....” 7 SDABC, p. 926.

“The life giver will call up His purchased possession in the first resurrection, and until that triumphant hour, ... every sleeping saint will be kept in safety and will be guarded as a precious jewel, who is known to God by name.” SD, p. 359.

“Then let us not be satisfied with only a little of this blessing, only that amount which will keep us from the slumber of death, but let us diligently seek for the abundance of the grace of God.” 2 RH, p. 555.

If we do not make the proper preparations, “ye lie down in the grace unsheltered,...” IT, p. 133.

“By the power of the Savior that dwelt in them while living and because they were partakers of the divine nature, they are brought forth from the dead.” 4 SDABC, p. 1143; SD, p. 359.

CHAPTER 10

THE RESURRECTION AND THE SOUL

The last quotation we presented above the reader says:

“By the power of the Savior that dwelt in them while living and because they were partakers of the divine nature, they are brought forth from the dead.”

The fact of the resurrection is presented to use as the happy future attached to the fact our friends go to the grave.

“The living Christian will be filled with cheerfulness and peace, because he lives as seeing Him who is invisible; and those who seek Christ in his true character have within them the elements of everlasting life, because they are partakers of the divine nature, ... “ *

The “elements of everlasting life” within is the key to the soul’s nature in death, and to the meaning of death to a particular individual in the materials we are surveying. They are also the key to the resurrection of the soul.

“Christ became one flesh with us in order that we might become one spirit with Him. It is by virtue of this union that we are to come forth from the grave, – not merely as a manifestation of the power of Christ, but because, through faith, His life has become ours.” DA, p. 388.

“Our personal identity is preserved in the resurrection, though not the same particles of matter or material substance as went into the grave. The wondrous works of God are a mystery to man. The spirit, the character of man, is returned to God, there to be preserved. In the resurrection every man will have his own character. God in His own time will call forth the dead, giving again the breath of life, and bidding the dry bones live. The same form will come forth, but it will be free from disease and every defect. It lives again bearing the same individuality of features, so that friend will recognize friend. There is no law of God in nature which shows that God gives back the same identical particles of matter which composed the body before death. God shall give the righteous dead a body that will please Him.

“Paul illustrates this subject by the kernel of grain sown in the field. The planted kernel decays, but there comes forth a new kernel. The natural substance in the grain that decays is never raised as before, but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased Him. A much finer material will compose the human body, for it is a new creation, a new birth. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body (MS 76, 1900).” 6BC, p. 1093.

Those whose souls are asleep awake with the freshness and vigor of eternal youth. Cf. GC, pp. 644, 645.

The souls without the elements of everlasting life are resurrected purely by the power of God and come up as they went down into the grave. Cf. 3 SG. pp. 84, 85.

CHAPTER 11

SUMMARY TO CHAPTERS 7-10

In our research materials we have found the following formula:

Man is, at the beginning of life, a three-part being; a being composed of a spirit which returns to God at death, a body which will go to the grave at death, never to be resurrected-a much finer material making up the resurrected body, and a soul which is dead in trespasses and sins until it is reformed and prepared for death and the resurrection through the work of grace which is as real as the air, and which was purchased for man by the salvific work of the Christ.

Grace comes to the soul through means of grace such as the study of the Word in quest for truth, the agency of the Holy Spirit, the exercise of faith, and the ministry of the angels. This means that where faith is not exercised grace though present does not function.

Under the work of grace the soul is surrounded with an atmosphere which introversly remakes the soul, guards the avenues to the soul, and infects everyone, to a greater or lesser degree, who encounters the person with the reconstituted soul.

The person possessing the soul being restructured by grace is capable of attaining almost to the excellency of the angels; capable of constant mental progress.

But perhaps most significant to our topic of study, as one participates in grace their soul becomes a partaker of the elements of eternal life, which guarantees it immortality. AA. p. STO.

When such a person dies and goes to the grave, or prison house, the soul is protected during death until the time when the eternal life within enables that one to hear the call of the Life-giver and come forth from the grave partly by the life-within which is the result of personal connection with Christ.

In the resurrection the spirit, or character which went back to God at death, is returned and the resurrected, or standing-up-one, is housed in a body designed for the post resurrection life, an uninterrupted continuation of the pre-death person. That is, there is no disruption between death and resurrection for the soul which was made by grace. There is no change of character by death or by resurrection.

SECTION III

**Judgment and Grace: That for
Which Preparation is Made, or, the
Why of Life**

CHAPTER 12

REWARDS? OR DOES IT MATTER WHAT I DO WITH MY SOUL?

In the materials examined already we observed that the principle expressed under the formula “I am my brother’s keeper” was intrinsically connected to the teaching about the soul and its nature.

We also found that the soul treated by grace has eternal life, which eternal life guarantees it immortality by enabling it to respond to the call to resurrection and continuity of participation in the future happiness, while for the soul not grace-treated there is no such ability.

The question that now presses to the front is, when man is conceived of as having a soul that is dependent for its actual state of functioning on something other than its natural state, life choices for example being part of that determining factor, if no choices are made that result in the acquirement of life by the soul, is that lack without consequences?

Does the soul that has not surrounded itself with a grace-atmosphere to communicate to those around it, at death go to the grave without an attached element of accountability and responsibility?

If the grace-absent soul is to be conceived of as having an accountability, how is that accountability to be pictured or realized?

It is immediately obvious of course, that some acts in life when done bring an almost immediate result, but what of those other acts—the not so obviously-rewarded acts – both good and bad?

To put the question differently, do grace remade souls have an accountability-reward, happy resurrection and re-association with past friends and family, while grace-absent souls have no future accountability to even those whom they influenced in life by their life-acts and un-grace atmosphere to neglect to acquire grace and a future of protection in death and a resurrection happiness?

Are only the grace-remade their brother’s keeper?

It seems obvious that everyone senses a need for accountability to be attached to all, but how would that responsibility be conceived of as breaking into reality? What might it look like?

Again we turn to our research. Our issue—we live, we die, so what?

“When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory: and before Him shall be gathered all nations: and He shall separate them one from another.” Thus Christ on the Mount of Olives pictured to His disciples the scene of the great judgment day. And He represented its decision as turning upon one point. When the nations are

gathered before Him, there will be but two classes, and their eternal destiny will be determined by what they have done or have neglected to do for Him in the person of the poor and the suffering." DA, p. 637.

"Oh, what rays of softness and beauty shown forth in the daily life of our Savior! What sweetness flowed from His very presence! The same spirit will be revealed in His children. Those with whom Christ dwells will be surrounded with a divine atmosphere. Their white robes of purity will be fragrant with perfume from the garden of the Lord. Their faces will reflect light from His, brightening the path for stumbling and weary feet." MB, p. 135.

"Every individual has a soul to save or lose. Each has a case pending at the bar of God. Each must meet the great Judge face to face." GC, p. 488.

"The good tree will produce good fruit. If the fruit is unpalatable and worthless, the tree is evil. So the fruit borne in the life testifies as to the condition of the heart and the excellence of the character. Good works can never purchase salvation, but they are an evidence of the faith that acts by love and purifies the soul. And though the eternal reward is not bestowed because of our merit, yet it will be in proportion to the work that has been done through the grace of Christ." DA, p. 314.

"The hour is coming,' Christ said, 'in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth.' That voice is to resound through all the habitations of the dead; and every saint who sleeps in Jesus will awake and leave his prison-house. Then the virtue of character we have received from Christ's righteousness will ally us to true greatness of the highest order. Every action of ours in befriending God's people will be rewarded as done unto himself."

"In the day of final reckoning, Christ does not present before men the great work he has done for them in giving his life for their redemption. He presents before them the faithful work they have done for him. What surpassing love is this! He even mentions the work of the heathen, who have no intelligent knowledge of the law of the Lord, but who have done the very things the law required, because they have heeded the voice speaking to them in the things of nature. When the Holy Spirit implants Christ's Spirit in the heart of the savage, he befriends God's servants, the quickening of the heart's sympathy is contrary to his nature, contrary to his education. The grace of God working upon the darkened mind, has softened the savage nature untaught by the wisdom of men. And these uneducated heath, in all their cruelty, are regarded in a more favorable light than are those who have had great light and evidence, but who have rejected the mercy and reproof of God.

"Christ implants his grace in the heart of the savage, and ministers to the necessity of the missionary, even before he has heard or comprehended the words of truth and life. Behold that crowd collected about God's servants to harm him! But the Lord is working upon the heart and mind of

perhaps one man to plead in behalf of his servant; and when the war council has determined the destruction of the Christian's life, the intercession of that savage turns the decision, and his life is spared. O, the love that goes forth to the savage for this one act! To such Christ says, in the Judgment: ... 'Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.'" 3 RH, p. 607. Cf. COL, p. 385.

But "those on the left hand of Christ, those who had neglected Him in the person of the poor and the suffering, were unconscious of their guilt.... They had been self-absorbed, and cared not for others' needs...." DA, p. 639.

"If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain; if thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not He that pondereth the heart consider it? And He that keepeth thy soul, doth not He know it? And shall not He render to every man according to his works?" Prov. 24:11, 12. In the great judgment day, those who have not worked for Christ, who have drifted along thinking of themselves, caring for themselves, will be placed by the Judge of the whole earth with those who did evil. They receive the same condemnation." Ibid., p. 641.

CHAPTER 13

MORE ABOUT GRACE: THE MANIFOLD POWER

In addition to the survey of the role of grace as it relates to the soul of man and its consequent affect on the nature of man's death, it seems to this researcher almost a requirement for our study to be complete, for us to take the time to present a survey of statements regarding grace in its wider spectrum, that is in its function as an agency, "as real as the air we breathe," whose purpose is now only partially perceivable, as a part of the general concept of salvation.

Therefore, for those readers who desire a more developed presentation of this concept as it appears in the sources being reviewed we offer the following survey.

Regarding the phrase "Grace of Christ" or "Christ's grace" we find teachings such as the following:

All that God requires may be accomplished through the grace of Christ (COL, p. 301). This grace alone can enable man to resist and subdue the tendencies of his fallen nature (HM, p. 428). Christ's grace alone can make men holy (SC, p. 60), quicken the faculties of the soul (SC, p. 18), and restore man physically, mentally, and spiritually (MH, p. 143).

Ask Christ to keep you by His grace (SC, p. 52), and His grace will be as a wall of fire round about your soul (MM, p. 143). All depravity can be overcome by Christ's assisting grace (4T, p. 349); it can accomplish for men what all their efforts cannot do (CH, p. 424).

Christ's grace is free, it cannot be purchased (GC, p. 129), but is communicated by Christ through the promises of God's word (HM, p. 122).

Church members are to be channels of Christ's grace to the world (Ch. S., p. 21).

God's law and Christ's grace are inseparable because God's law can be obeyed through Christ's grace (5 BC, p. 1097), which, when it is imparted, enables man to overcome sin (1 SM, p. 380f.); implanted in the heart it casts out evil passions (DA, p. 305), implanted in the soul it creates enmity against Satan (GC, p. 506).

Christ's grace gives life to the soul (DA, p. 181), while the church is the depository of that grace (TM, p. 50)

Satan can be successfully repulsed only by Christ's grace (2T, p. 409), therefore we are to publicly acknowledge the work of His grace in our lives (MH, p. 100), which grace is bestowed daily for the days need (MB, p. 101).

Regarding “God’s grace” or the “grace of God” we find the following as illustrative: God’s grace is bestowed on men because they are unworthy (MH, p. 151); therefore angels have never been recipients of God’s grace (ML, p. 100).

The grace of God which was Christ’s favorite theme (COL, p. 40), and which comes to the individual through the channel of living faith (EW, p. 72), enables man to do works which God rewards (5 BC, p. 1122). Here faith is the hand by which the soul takes hold of God’s grace (PP, p. 431).

Grace is as real as the air we breathe and causes all who choose to breathe it to grow up to the stature of men and women in Christ Jesus (SC, p. 68).

Imparting God’s grace increases man’s capacity for receiving it (6T, p. 448). This means that a person imparting grace is refilled with increased grace (6T, p. 44).

There is a limit to God’s grace (DA p. 587). Man cannot be saved without God’s grace (2T, p. 159). Man’s only safety is to be shielded every moments by God’s grace (3T p. 324). Men must be transformed by God’s grace or fall of heaven (4T p. 557).

The ministry of God’s grace unfolds God’s life in man’s soul (MB, p. 97). This grace is needed at every step of advance (TM, p. 508); it corrects defects of character (3T, p. 452), forms character in harmony with God’s law (GC, p. 469), and enables one to know how to co-operate with God to perfect character (3T p. 542), but is never given as a substitute for human effort (MYP, p. 147).

God’s grace is offered freely to every soul (COL, p. 412) during probationary time (COL, p. 260), but a perverse will can frustrate it (MB, p. 76).

However, when personal conduct is regulated daily by God’s grace (3T, p. 332), the power thereby made manifest by the transforming of the character convinces the world (MH, p. 470) and the sinner is made into a new creature (SL, p. 55).

The Bible is the treasure house of God’s grace (MB, p. 25), the store of which is inexhaustible (Ev, p. 567).

A man must act his own part of to make God’s grace his own (4 BC, p. 1167), but that man will be blessed and strengthened by God’s grace when he does his part (2T, p. 156). Growth in grace is proportionate to the degree of faith in Christ which one exercises (5T, p. 48), proportionate to good works for Christ (4T, p. 228).

An atmosphere of grace surrounds the believer’s soul (COL, p. 298), and the world is to be encircled with an atmosphere to grace (Ch. S, p. 250).

God saw man’s need of grace (1 SM, p. 347), so Christ’s gospel is from beginning to end the gospel of grace (Ev, p. 552). In the covenant, grace ordained man’s adoption (COL, p. 250), in the heart it

leads men to work Christ's works, while in the newly converted soul, and grace begins a progressive work (Ev, p. 355).

"With the gentle touch of grace the Savior banishes from the soul unrest and unholy ambition, changing enmity to love and unbelief to confidence." PP, p. 60.

Finally, regarding the Holy Spirit's grace, we read that Christ's love is effectual in purification of soul through the Holy Spirit's grace (5T, p. 648); though that grace is not a substitute for the individual exercise of faith (TM, p. 518) it is supplied to co-operate with the soul's resolve (TM, p. 18). However, in addition to the element of personal desire, or soul resolve, as the determiner of the time for the bestowal of grace, is the objectively set time determined by God (TM, p. 509) in accompaniment to certain announced eschatological events or developments, and in addition to other blessings connected to individual and corporate worship. Notice.

There is a time when the showers of the Spirit's grace will be received (1SM, p. 175), added grace is promised for times of special need (AA, p. 55), and it awaits our demand (5T, p. 410). We are to neglect no means of grace (ML, p. 313).

Finally, the general function of grace, after the restoration of the soul, is to be a blessing given, that the universe may see the perfection of Christ's character in men (CH, p. 593).

SECTION IV

Prospecting

CHAPTER 14

A PERSONAL OBSERVATION, OR TWO!

One of the most interesting facets of any theological research project into sources outside the Bible about a theme carrying vocabulary familiar to use from the fact of the appearance of those concepts directly or indirectly in Scripture is beyond the scope of this report – to examine carefully the question of how the researched concept, when assembled, dove-tails into Scripture. Is it hostile? Does it contradict the stories found in the Bible? And, of course, the most exciting, and potentially fruitful question – does this research information when learned give us an increased insight into some book, some favorite passage or verse, or another theme appearing in Scripture?

However, while a careful examination will have to wait, an observation, or two, I must sneak in.

Recently, while reading again a very familiar passage, Rom 1:17, which includes one of the most famous of Biblical phrases, “The just shall live by faith,” I observed (finally!) that the Greek word translated “shall live” is a Greek future middle voice (reflexive form), which designates actions one does to oneself –

Active voice – The wash the car

Passive voice – the car is being washed

Middle voice – the car is washing itself.

The formula we have found in this research report that presents us with a concept which presents faith expressed as that which brings into activity grace, which active grace changes the soul of the one expressing faith, this formula, if it were to be expressed in Greek, would be a reflexive – middle voice – action. The results of my decision bring about a result on me.

Hence the fascinating question presses itself on us – could it be that the writer of Rom 1:17 intended us to understand a concept like the one we have just briefly reviewed to be the implied concept-reality hiding behind his use of the middle voice in our phrase in Rom 1:17?

This formula does have the necessary ingredients to make it be in harmony not only with the Greek of Rom 1:17 but also with the Hebrew of Hab 2:4 and Ez 33:19.

(It is also of interest to note that translators of Rom 1:17 in a various versions of Scripture have generally failed to treat this verb form as a middle voice, perhaps because the significance of this verb form could not be collated with an understood facet of the theology of saving faith.)

P.S.: A survey of the occurrences of the various forms of this Greek verb as they appear in the Septuagint show it is not a deponent verb. The technical significance may be that it carries a message similar to the middle voice participles appearing in 1 Thess 1:2, a middle of personal involvement according to some linguists. This would also probably be the technical designation of the function for the middle voice in Rom 1:17 which we are responding to.

CHAPTER 15

WE HAVE FOUND ...

Human beings are creatures composed of three parts; a body which after death returns to the dust, but which during life functions as the vehicle through which life is met and responded to; a spirit (breath, character) which returns at death to the God who gave it, and the soul, which has turned out to be the center of our quest.

A soul, which inhabits every body born, is by nature dead in trespasses and sins until it is resurrected to participate in life at a point where truth becomes a controlling principle in the life, being borne about in the body, being resurrected, recreated, and made a partaker of the elements of eternal life in connection with faith decisions made by the one possessing the soul.

The importance of faith decisions is that each time they are made they activate grace, the gift of God, which is as real as the air we breathe, until the cumulative effect of the inter-working of soul, body, faith, grace, and the assisting power of God results in the soul being made capable of needing to be guarded during death, until it comes forth from death's house partly by the life within, at the call of the Life Giver. (Souls not re-made by grace come forth from the grave purely as a manifestation of power.)

At this point the meaning of death is that it brings to an end the soul's acquirement of qualities, which acquirements are to be most clearly and accurately viewed by interested observers after the acquirement stage of the existence of the soul is needed.

This means that death marks the beginning of the revelation of how life was lived – though that revelation is not obvious until the resurrection.

We also have found that the meaning and nature of the death experience is determined by the work grace accomplished on the soul during life's choice making in response to God's providences.

Therefore, the first issue connected to death as a future to be encountered is, will the one entering the death-rest have a life-track that results in the soul being guarded and protected by God while it sleeps and awaits resurrection – the time to stand up – or does it proceed to the grave without the elements of life in it? That is, does it lie down in the grave unprotected? Second, will it have life within to partly bring it forth from the grave? Put differently, does death reveal the soul to need protecting?

The third meaning of the nature of death is the expected – it shows the adequacy of God's response to the effects of evil.

In one sentence the meaning of death is that it marks the close of that series of interactive events, that, connected to choices are designated by God to determine the soul's condition in death, and its destiny after the resurrection.

Every soul receives reward – eternal life in all that is desirable, or destruction with no hope of another resurrection. For all souls there is continuity of being between the pre-death and post-death life – but only grace-treated souls have continuity of life – protected in death as a precious jewel:

“... because the atmosphere of heaven as a living, active agency fills the soul”? 1 MCP, p. 27.

P.S.: I hope you enjoyed this study.

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Of course the inspiration has come from sources that made possible the bigger thinking a research report requires.

In a work copyrights in 1971 by the President and Council of Radcliffe College titled Notable American Women 1607-1950. A Biographical Dictionary, C. C. Goen, in an article titled, "White, Ellen Gould Harmon," writes about the primary author appearing in this research. That article includes the following data:

"Ellen G. White's enormous literary corpus remains, by provision of her will, in the custody of the White Estate, housed at General Conference headquarters in Tacoma Park, MD. There are 54 books currently in print, some of them in as many as 83 languages; ... There are in addition some 30,000 pages of letters, diaries, and other unpublished materials...." Edward T Jones, editor. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1971.

P.S.: A special thanks to all who helped resolve the special problems a work like this encounters.

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