

Confusion says

Phil : "Tell – me – why – I - don't – like – Muuun - daaayz."

Andy : "Mooorn-ning ... you're in a good mood!"

Phil : "Yep ... I wanna shooo – u - u – u – u - ooot – the - whole - day - down."

Andy : "Well, go on ... tell me what happened this weekend?"

Phil : "Nothing really ... except ... oh, never mind!"

Andy : "What ... go on ... tell me?"

Phil : "Okay, you know how you're always telling me to go to church."

Andy : "Yes, all good folk go to church on Sundays."

Phil : "Mmmm ... that's just it!"

Andy : "Mannn! ... Start at the beginning!"

Phil : "Okay, I went out to eat on Saturday. I came back to the flat at about 12:06am, opened a beer and fell asleep in the chair in front of the TV. I woke up around 1:15am and guess what!"

Andy : "What?"

Phil : "The beer was warm and flat."

Andy : "Duuuh, what a waste! Aaannd?"

Phil : "I got up to make a cup of coffee, and after I had settled back in my chair, I noticed that the preachers were on TV. A Father David was talking about Hell, I decided the subject was a little too depressing, so I changed channels. The next preacher was from one of these modern Grace churches. He wore an expensive suit, gold chains and had a flashy watch on his wrist. He was sweating as he yelled about how we must 'Give to Get' the blessings of God. It seems we can all become as wealthy as he is. If only we give offerings and a tenth of all we earn to the church. It seems like a pyramid scheme to me, with him coining it at the top I suppose!"

Andy : "That's not the whole truth of the matter!"

Phil : "Really! Well anyway, what do I know? I don't even go to church!"

Andy : "Go on ... what happened next?"

Phil : "Well, he preached about how God's Law is finished with, and that we're all living under Grace so we can't die from Sin now, because Jesus dealt with it all on the cross."

Andy : "Well, that's the way we New Milleniumists see it!"

Phil : "After he finished with his appeals another preacher came on, but he was from another denomination."

Andy : "Which one?"

Phil : "I can't remember, but they have church on Saturdays."

Andy : "Oh, he must be a Seventh Day Adventist!"

Phil : "That's right, anyway he was also preaching on 'Life after death', and he said that when all men die, they just sleep, like Lazarus did in the grave."

Andy : "Righteous and unrighteous people alike?"

Phil : "Yep, all men rest in the grave until Judgement Day!"

Andy : "That's not quite what we believe!"

Phil : "But ... he was sincere, and he seemed to know his Bible as he quoted many scriptures from memory!"

Andy : "Yeah, but ..."

Phil : "Look man, I checked it out!"

Andy : "Checked what out?"

Phil : "I had a look in my Bible."

Andy : "Youuuu, have a Bible!"

Phil : "Yes, it was my mother's."

Andy : "Okay, so what did you discover?"

Phil : "Well in Genesis, with Adam and Eve, there was no sin right?"

Andy : "That's correct. There was no Sin, until they ate the fruit from the Tree of Knowledge."

Phil : "That's just what I thought. So God told Man to keep the Sabbath Day holy before there was any Sin in the World."

Andy : "That's right. He did bless the Sabbath Day, but that's old Law stuff!"

Phil : "It seems that some Pope, decided to change the day of worship from Saturday to Sunday. Probably Pope-Paul ... get it?"

Andy : "Very funny ... so what has that got to do with anything? That's Law and the Law is finished with!"

Phil : "Not so fast, Jesse! Have you heard of the Prophet Isaiah? He's one of the the main prophetic manne of the pre-Babylon exile period."

Andy : "Yeeeah! Who doesn't know about Isaiah? He's a famous Old Covenant prophet, but we're living under the New Covenant, and that old stuff doesn't count anymore!"

Phil : "Really ... well I checked him out, and in the 66th Chapter of his book he says, that in the 'New Heavens and the New Earth', we will all keep honouring the Sabbath Day. What do you think about that?"

Andy : "As I said ... it's Old Covenant teaching ... its not that relevant is it?"

Phil : "Well, I figure that if God blessed the Sabbath Day in the Beginning, before there was Sin, and they will be keeping it in the 'New Heavens and the New Earth' after Sin, then it must be important to keep it now too!"

Andy : "Well that's only youurrr opinion!"

Phil : "But, that's what the SDA preacher said, and I agree with him."

Andy : "Okay, so what else did you discover?"

Phil : "Well I thought, that if this preacher is right about the Sabbath, he must be right about the other 'after death' stuff too."

Andy : "I don't think you can safely deduce that!"

Phil : "As you say, its only my opinion!"

Andy : "So what now?"

Phil : "Well I've decided to ignore what that Catholic preacher said about Hell, he must be wrong because they don't keep the Sabbath Day holy. The Grace preacher seemed to have a point, but God doesn't need our money only the poor do. I'm going to give my extra cash to the poor, widows and orphans who can't support themselves. I going to enjoy my life from now on, and not worry about death, as death is just a sleep. If I've not been good enough to get into heaven, then I'll be thrown into the lake of fire with all my pals and snap-crackle-pop, it will all be over in an instant!"

Andy : "That's not right, you also haaave to go to church every Sunday!"

Phil : "You mean Saturday."

Andy : "Yes ... No ... I don't know! If Isaiah said so, it might be true!"

Phil : "Well, why don't you adopt my new philosophy: braai meat - which is scriptural, rest and relax on Saturday; look after the poor and destitute; live like there's no tomorrow and leave the consequences for the Day of Judgement! After all 'they' say 'there is no more Law'; I mean, what did Jesus die for, if it wasn't to save us all from the lake of fire?"

Andy : "I think you have a good idea there!"

Phil : "That's why I'm in such a good mood! We can't lose, Grace covers Sin, Charity pleases God, and we are free to live our lives how we want to, because there is no more Law and Commandments to condemn us!"

Andy : "Yeah, you've nailed it down good, let's go and have a beer to celebrate."

Phil : "Man, now your talking!"

Andy : "I'll race you to the pub."

!!

Pontius Pilate asked Jesus, "What is truth?" How does one discover the truth? Where does one hear the truth? How can we recognise the truth?

The answers are all found in the Word of God.

"God is not a man, that He should lie, nor a son of man, that He should repent. Has He said, and will He not do? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?" (Num 23:19)

Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (Joh 8:31-32)

Everything that Jesus and the Holy Spirit, says and does, are the Father's words and the works are done by His Power. Jesus said:-

"Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works." (Joh 14:10)

"However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come." (Joh 16:13)

Didn't Adam, Eve, Abraham and Moses meet and talk with God the Father?

No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him. (Joh 1:18)

"God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." (Joh 4:24)

"And the Father Himself, who sent Me, has testified of Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His form." (Joh 5:37)

"Not that anyone has seen the Father, except He who is from God; He has seen the Father." (Joh 6:46)

So who was it, that met with all these people, and who wrote the ten commandments with His finger on the tables of stone? It was the Word of God.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. (Joh 1:1-3,10)

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. (Joh 1:14)

"Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father! The world has not known You, but I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me." (Joh 17:24-25)

"The Lord possessed Me at the beginning of His way, before His works of old. I have been established from everlasting, from the beginning, before there was ever an earth. When there were no depths I was brought forth, when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills, I was brought forth; while as yet He had not made the earth or the fields,

or the primal dust of the world. When He prepared the heavens, I was there, when He drew a circle on the face of the deep, when He established the clouds above, when He strengthened the fountains of the deep, when He assigned to the sea its limit, so that the waters would not transgress His command, when He marked out the foundations of the earth, then I was beside Him as a master craftsman; and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him, rejoicing in His inhabited world, and My delight was with the sons of men. Now therefore, listen to Me, My children, for blessed are those who keep My ways. Hear instruction and be wise, and do not disdain it. Blessed is the man who listens to Me, watching daily at My gates, waiting at the posts of My doors. For whoever finds Me finds life, and obtains favor from the LORD; but he who sins against Me wrongs his own soul; all those who hate Me love death." (Pro 8:22-36)

"Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel, and His Redeemer, the Lord of hosts: 'I AM the First and I AM the Last; besides Me there is no God. And who can proclaim as I do? Then let him declare it and set it in order for Me, since I appointed the ancient people. And the things that are coming and shall come, let them show these to them. Do not fear, nor be afraid; have I not told you from that time, and declared it? You are My witnesses. Is there a God besides Me? Indeed there is no other Rock; I know not one.'" (Isa 44:6-8)

"Tell and bring forth your case; yes, let them take counsel together. Who has declared this from ancient time? Who has told it from that time? Have not I, the Lord? And there is no other God besides Me, a just God and Savior; there is none besides Me. Look to Me, and be saved, all you ends of the earth! For I AM God, and there is no other." (Isa 45:21-22)

"Come near to Me, hear this: I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that it was, I was there. And now the Lord God and His Spirit have sent ME." Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: "I AM the Lord your God, who teaches you to profit, who leads you by the way you should go." (Isa 48:16-17)

"You came down also on Mount Sinai, and spoke with them from heaven, and gave them just ordinances and true laws, good statutes and commandments. You made known to them Your holy Sabbath, and commanded them precepts, statutes and laws, by the hand of Moses Your servant. You gave them bread from heaven for their hunger, and brought them water out of the rock for their thirst, and told them to go in to possess the land which You had sworn to give them." (Neh 9:13-15)

"You also gave Your good Spirit to instruct them, and did not withhold Your manna from their mouth, and gave them water for their thirst. Forty years You sustained them in the wilderness; they lacked nothing; their clothes did not wear out and their feet did not swell." (Neh 9:20-21)

"Nevertheless they were disobedient and rebelled against You, cast Your law behind their backs and killed Your prophets, who testified against them to turn them to Yourself; and they worked great provocations." (Neh 9:26)

Is the law finished with? Grace preachers say that Jesus brought the end of the Law, quoting: - "For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ." (Joh 1:17) But look at these verses: -

But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. (Gen 6:8)

"You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord." (Lev 19:18)

Did Abraham keep the commandments of God, as the commandments came through Moses, or were they also given to Abraham? God said to Isaac :-

"Do not go down to Egypt; live in the land of which I shall tell you. Dwell in this land, and I will be with you and bless you; for to you and your descendants I give all these lands, and I will perform the oath which I swore to Abraham your father. And I will make your descendants multiply as the stars of heaven; I will give to your descendants all these lands; and in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed; because Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws." (Gen 26:2-5)

But does this mean that Jesus has dispensed with the law, or did Jesus have a part in establishing the law of God? Consider the following verses.

"Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven." (Mat 5:17-20)

"You have heard it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so? Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect." (Mat 5:43-48)

Jesus was the Word of God living in the body of a man. He was born, lived without sin, and died for all the sins of the World. God redeemed man to Himself by doing what man could not do. The law was just and holy and provided the means to restore righteousness from Sin through the practice of offering blood sacrifices, however these could not redeem man from future sin, and if a man dies in his sin he is lost forever. Jesus died for all the sins covered by the animal sacrifices, as well as for our past, present and future sins. All confessed sin is covered by the blood of Jesus. As soon as a person accepts the sacrifice of Jesus blood on their behalf, the sins of that person are exchanged for the righteousness of Christ, and the person is redeemed from an eternal death in the lake of fire. Jesus said :- *"And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."* (Mat 10:28)

Does this mean that a righteous person goes to heaven when they die?

"No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven." (Joh 3:13)

Think of all the righteous people of faith who lived before Jesus, and none of them have ascended into heaven? Paul tells us in the Book of Hebrews :-

And all these (! the people of faith), having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us. (Heb 11:39-40)

Here Paul talks about all the people with great faith, and that they are all still waiting to receive the promise. Note, this was said after the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ, so He is still the only One, who has ascended into heaven.

"The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the Lord has spoken." (Isa 40:5)

So Jesus said to them, "Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last first." (Mat 19:28-30)

For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. (1Th 4:14-17)

So where are the people now who sleep in Jesus, if they are not in heaven? But before we answer that, let's see what Isaiah says about the unrighteous.

"Say to the righteous that it shall be well with them, for they shall eat the fruit of their doings. Woe to the wicked! It shall be ill with him, for the reward of his hands shall be given him." (Isa 3:10-11)

Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! (Isa 5:20)

Therefore, as the fire devours the stubble, and the flame consumes the chaff, so their root will be as rottenness, and their blossom will ascend like dust; because they have rejected the law of the Lord of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel. (Isa 5:24)

"There is no peace," says the Lord, "for the wicked." (Isa 48:22)

"I create the fruit of the lips: Peace, peace to him who is far off and to him who is near," says the Lord, "And I will heal him. But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace," says my God, "for the wicked." (Isa 57:19-21)

The way of peace they have not known, and there is no justice in their ways; they have made themselves crooked paths; whoever takes that way shall not know peace. (Isa 59:8)

Now before Andy says to me, that its Old Covenant teaching; what did Jesus say?

Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit." (Joh 3:5-8)

Jesus came to do what man couldn't do, to save mankind from Sin's curse.

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." (Joh 3:16-17)

"I, even I, am He who blots out your transgressions for My own sake; and I will not remember your sins. Put Me in remembrance; let us contend together; state your case, that you may be acquitted." (Isa 43:25-26)

Now we come back to the unrighteous; what about all those people who reject the offer of redemption from Sin, which was totally paid for by a very high price?

"He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone practising evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God." (Joh 3:18-21)

"He who has received His testimony has certified that God is true. For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God does not give the Spirit by measure. The Father loves the Son, and has given all things into His hand. He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him." (Joh 3:33-36)

Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation. For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him. (1Th 5:6-10)

Yes, you may ask, but isn't there another chance for the unrighteous to be saved after death?

And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment, so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation. (Heb 9:27-18)

Oops! So we have one life – to make a decision for Jesus Christ, or to reject Him. When we die our opportunity for choice is over, and we receive the reward of our choice, eternal life or death. You may ask, if you have been saved once, are you always saved, the answer is no. This is because one has to live the life of a Christian, and not turn back to the worthless obsessions of the world. One can also disqualify oneself from salvation, by disrespecting the Son of God.

For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace? For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. And again, "The Lord will judge His people." It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. (Heb 10:26-31)

Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified. (1Co 9:24-27)

Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you? – unless indeed you are disqualified. But I trust that you will know that we are not disqualified. (2Co 13:5-6)

Okay, you may say, I get it! But what happens when one dies? Isn't it a pity that Jesus didn't tell us? But, wait a minute, He did! And we know that His words are the Words of Father God, therefore it isn't a myth or a story. When Jesus said, there was a certain man, we can know for sure that this man lived and died. And before you demand that Hell does not exist, go and read Isaiah 14:9-21 and Ezekiel 31:14 – 32:32. Also bear in mind, that when the whale swallowed Jonah in the sea; the whale was not singing, "I've - got - youuu - under - my - skin!" Jonah was in the belly of the whale, in the middle of the whale, for three days and three nights, read this in the Book of Jonah 1:17.

Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered, saying, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from You." But He answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." (Mat 12:38-40)

Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment, and who will declare His generation? For He was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgressions of My people He was stricken and they made His grave with the wicked – but with the rich at His death, because He had done no violence, nor was any deceit in His mouth. (Isa 53:4-9)

Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief. When You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand. He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, for He shall bear their iniquities. Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong, because He poured out His soul unto death, and He was numbered with the transgressors, and He bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors. (Isa 53:10-12)

"There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen every day. But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate, desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried." (Luk 16:19-22)

Abraham is a righteous son of God who has great faith, God promised Abraham many sons.

Then Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him, saying: "As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, and you shall be a father of many nations. No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you a father of many nations." (Gen 17:3-5)

Now think of the welcome, the father gave his prodigal son when he eventually came home repentant.

"And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.' But the father said to his servants, 'Bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet. And bring the fatted calf here and kill it, and let us eat and be merry; for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and found.' And they began to be merry." (Luk 15:20-24)

Now imagine Abraham, the father of many nations, embracing the sons of God as they arrive, where he and the other righteous men of faith are. Is there another place in scripture, where robes of righteousness are given to the dead faithful?

When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. And they cried out with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed. (Rev 6:9-11)

It is important to note that these talking souls are dead, and that they are given robes of righteousness. Now back to the account of the rich man and Lazarus.

The rich man also died and was buried. And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. (Luk 16:22-23)

Now we know from Jesus words, that 'men can kill the body, but they cannot kill the soul.' Only the lake of fire can do that, and whilst not understanding the nature of the spirit of a man, which has been separated from his body. We should at least accept that it could be in a state of rest, or in a state of torment; depending on the whether the person accepted or rejected the offer of salvation from God. Remember what Isaiah said, "There is no peace for the wicked." The rich man in his torment looks up and sees Lazarus being embraced by Abraham, on his arrival in the place where the righteous souls rest.

Then he cried and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.' But Abraham said, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented. And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.' Then he said, 'I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father's house, for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment.' Abraham said to him, 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.' And he said, 'No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.' But he said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.' " (Luk 16:24-31)

Remember that Jesus was dead for three days and nights, and that He rose from the dead and appeared to many. You would think that this would be sufficient to convince the doubters! Anyway, that's what the rich man thought. Looking back to Isaiah it says, "for the transgressions of My people He was stricken and they made His grave with the wicked – but with the rich at His death" and also, "and He was numbered with the transgressors, and He bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors". So it seems like Jesus went down to this place of torment, which agrees with the verses of the Book of 1 Peter.

For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit, by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water. There is also an antitype which now saves us – baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him. (1Pe 3:18-22)

They will give an account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. For this reason the gospel was preached also to those who are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit. (1Pe 4:5-6)

For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment; ... then the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment, and especially those who walk according to the flesh in the lust of uncleanness and despise authority. (2Pe 2:4-10)

The mention of a spirit 'asking to have his tongue cooled with water' may seem ridiculous to some people, but take note of the following four groups of verses.

"Behold, God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid; 'For YAH, the Lord, is my strength and song; He also has become my salvation.' " Therefore with joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. (Isa 12:2-3)

O Lord, the hope of Israel, all who forsake You shall be ashamed. "Those who depart from Me shall be written in the earth, because they have forsaken the Lord, the fountain of living waters." (Jer 17:13)

Jesus answered and said to her, "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life." (Joh 4:13-14)

On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified. (Joh 7:37-39)

What is the connection of water with the spirit of a man, again we would have to understand the nature of a person's spirit. Or, we could just accept God's Word as being the whole truth, in the matter of life and death?

Now how long do these souls wait in their prospective places. The righteous souls are waiting for the first resurrection. The unrighteous souls are waiting for the second resurrection. There is one thousand years between the two resurrections.

And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshipped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years. (Rev 20:4-6)

It is important to note that the souls who are waiting for the second resurrection are in hell, and experiencing torment for a thousand years. So if you are wicked and go to hell, you will be there for a guaranteed period of no less than one thousand years. We know what the rich man tells us about that experience!!!

Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea. They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them. The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever. (Rev 20:7-10)

In Rev 19:20 the beast and the false prophet, are captured and thrown into the lake of fire. They are there during the one thousand year period, whilst Satan is bound in the bottomless pit; but after the 2nd resurrection and rebellion, Satan is also thrown into the lake of fire and they will be there forever and ever.

*Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.
(Rev 20:11-15)*

Here we see that Hades and death are cast into the lake of fire. If they do not exist, how could they be thrown into the lake of fire? Anyone whose name is not written in the Book of Life is also thrown into the lake of fire. That includes all those unrighteous people who do not believe in God, or Hell, or the Lake of fire. This agrees with our legal saying, 'Ignorance of the law is no defence'.

Now the question I want to ask all those, who preach that there is no torment of souls and that there is no hell, is this. Which option is more wicked? :-

- 1) To tell people about Hell, and warn them about the one thousand year state of torment before the 2nd resurrection, and the 2nd death in the Lake of fire.
- 2) To tell people that there is no Hell, only the second death in the Lake of fire.

To teach anything other than the Word of God, is not God's truth. (1Co 3:11)

We have only one Father and one Teacher, and they are: Father God, our Creator; His Son who is His Word, our High Priest; and His Holy Spirit our support and comforter. Men can pray for each other, but Man cannot intercede for Man, because each man is responsible for his own sins. See the verses :- Deu 24:16, 2Ki 14:6, 2Ch 25:4, Jer 31:30 and Eze 18:4. 'Each man shall die for his own sin.'

*"But you, do not be called 'Rabbi'; for One is your Teacher, the Christ, and you are all brethren. Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven. And do not be called teachers; for One is your Teacher, the Christ. But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."
(Mat 23:8-12)*

But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God. (1Co 11:3)

I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. (Eph 4:1-6)

For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account. (Heb 4:12-13)

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