

THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS OR THE INTERMEDIATE STATE

(Luke 16:19-31)

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(When quoting scriptures, from the Rotherham Emphasized Bible New Testament or E. W. Bullinger, I will substitute the Hebrew word Yahshua for Jesus, Yahweh and Elohim for God and the Lord, when referring to the Creator, and Anointed for Christ.)

In dealing with this Scripture, and the subject of the so-called "intermediate state", it is important that we should confirm ourselves to the Word of Yahweh, and not go to Tradition. Yet, when nine out of ten believe what they have learned from Tradition, we have a thankless task, so far as pleasing man is concerned. We might give our own ideas as to the employment's, etc., of the "departed", and man would deal leniently with us. But let us only put Yahweh's Revelation against man's imagination, and then we shall be made to feel his wrath, and experience his opposition.

Claiming, however, to have as great a love and jealousy for the Word of Yahweh as any of our brethren; and as sincere a desire to find out what Yahweh says, and what Yahweh means: we claim also the sympathy of all our fellow members of the Body of the Christ. There are several matters to be considered before we can reach the Scripture concerning the rich man and Lazarus; or arrive at a satisfactory conclusion as to the State after death. It will be well for us to remember that all such expressions as "Intermediate State", "Church Triumphant", and others similar to them are unknown to Scripture. They have been inherited by us from Tradition, and have been accepted without thought or examination.

Recognizing Inherent flaws in our Bible Translations regarding Soul and Spirit

There are inherent flaws in our Bible translations. The Hebrew word, 'nephesh,' which is the word translated soul, is used 753 times in the Old Covenant but is translated soul only 10% to 30% of the time. The majority of the translations change the meaning of the word nephesh, as used by Yahweh, into their theological and metaphysical philosophical meaning. If we want to understand the word soul we must first understand the meaning of nephesh, as used by Yahweh. Nephesh is used 171 times in the NIV Bible before it is translated soul in Deuteronomy 4:29. This illustrates the deception perpetrated by the NIV translators. The footnote below lists the first ten usages of nephesh.¹

¹ Ge 1:20 ¶ And Elohim said—Let the waters swarm *with* an abundance of living soul, and, birds, shall fly over the earth, over the face of the expanse of the heavens.

Ge 1:21 And Elohim created the great sea—monsters,—and every living soul that moveth—*with* which the waters swarmed after their kind, and every winged bird—after its kind. And Elohim saw that it was, good.

Ge 1:24 ¶ And Elohim said—Let the land, bring forth, living soul, after its kind, tame—beast and creeping thing and wild—beast of the land, after its kind. And it was so.

Ge 1:30 and to every living thing of the land—and to every bird of the heavens, and to every thing that moveth on the land, wherein is a living soul, every green herb for food. And it was so.

Ge 2:7 So then Yahweh Elohim formed man, *of the* dust of the ground, and breathed in his nostrils the breath of life—and man became a living soul.

The ultimate consequence of Adam and Eve’s disobedience was that they would return to the dust from which they came; “Thou hidest thy face, they are dismayed, Thou withdrawest their ruah, They cease to breathe, And, unto their own dust, do they return” (Ps. 104:29). Death is ceasing to breath, which is equivalent to giving up the ruah of life. Returning to dust is the promise that Yahweh spoke to Adam and Eve “...For, dust, thou art, And, unto dust, shalt thou return” (Gen. 3:19). David spoke, “What profit in my blood? in my going down into the pit? Can dust praise thee? Can it declare thy faithfulness” (Ps. 30:9). Ecclesiastes says, “all, go unto one place,—all, came from the dust, and all, return to the dust” (Ecc. 3:20). Our returning to dust is a truth from which we build the foundation of our existence. The Psalmist wrote, “For, he, knoweth how we are formed, He is mindful that, dust, we are. As for man, like grass, are his days, Like the blossom of the field, so, doth he blossom; For, a ruah, hath passed over it, and it is gone, And its own place is acquainted with it no more” (Ps. 103:14-16). James wrote about man, “...for ye are, a vapor—for a little, appearing, then, just disappearing” (Ja. 4:14)! Yahweh did not say to Adam and Eve that their bodies would return to dust but rather “For, dust, thou art, And, unto dust, shalt thou return.”

An additional error made by the majority of Christian Churches is that they have changed Yahweh’s meaning of ruah, which they translate as Spirit, from ‘breath or wind’ to meanings that have nothing to do with the breath of Yahweh or wind. We err if we hear the word spirit, a translation of ruah and do not immediately associate it with ‘the breath of Yahweh or air in motion.’ The meaning of the word, ‘spirit,’ is ‘to breath.’² The Hebrew word, ‘ruah,’ also spelled as ruwach, means wind, breath and mind. Ruah is related to the vowel root ‘ruh,’ which means, ‘to breathe.’ The basic idea of ruah is ‘air in motion,’ which denotes ‘power,’ that signifies ‘activity and life;’ “He sendeth forth His Word and melteth them, He causeth His wind [ruah] to blow, the waters, stream along” (Ps. 147:18). The breath of Yahweh brought life to man; “By the Word of Yahweh, the heavens were made, and, by the breath [ruah] of his mouth, all their host” (Ps. 33:6). In Genesis 1:2, “the earth, had become waste and wild, and, darkness, was on the face of the roaring deep,—but, the ruah or breath of Elohim, was brooding on the face of the waters.” In Genesis 1:3, Yahweh’s spoke, “Light, be. And light was.” Speaking requires ruah or breath. The phrase, “Elohim said,” is used ten times in the first chapter of Genesis. The Word of Yahweh is the ruah or breath from the mouth of Yahweh as given to the prophets; “and, their heart, turned they into adamant, that they might not hear the Law, nor the Words which Yahweh of hosts sent by his ruah or breath, through the former prophets,—and so there came great wrath from Yahweh of hosts” (Zec. 7:12); “The ruah or breath of Yahweh, it is, that giveth life,—the flesh, profiteth, nothing: The declarations which, I, have spoken unto you, are, ruah or breath of Yahweh, and, are, life” (Jn. 6:63). Illustrations of the breath or life of Yahweh being breathed into man and leaving man are in the footnote.³

Ge 2:19 Now Yahweh Elohim had formed from the ground every living thing of the field, and every bird of the heavens, which he brought in unto the man, that he might see what he should call it,—and, whatsoever the man should call it—any living soul, that, should be the name thereof.

Ge 9:4 Yet, flesh with the soul thereof, the blood thereof, shall ye not eat;

Ge 9:5 And surely, your blood, of your lives, will I require, From the hand of every living creature, will I require it,—and from the hand of man, From the hand of each one’s brother, will I require the soul of man:

Ge 9:10 and with every living soul that is with you, of birds, of tame—beasts, and of all wild—beasts of the earth, that are with you,—of all coming forth out of the ark, even to all wild—beasts of the earth;

Ge 9:12 ¶ And Elohim said, This, is the sign of the covenant, which I am granting betwixt me and you, and every living soul that is with you,—to age—abiding generations:—

² spirit, *n.* (It. *spirito*, Pg. *espírito*, Sp. *espíritu*) breathing, breath, air, etc., related to *spirare* to breathe.

The earlier English uses of the word are mainly derived from passages in the Vulgate, in which *spiritus* is employed to render Gr. *pneuma* and Heb. *ruah*. The translation of these words by *spirit* (or one of its variant forms) is common to all versions of the Bible from Wyclif onwards.] OED

³ “So then Yahweh Elohim formed man, *of the* dust of the ground, and breathed in his nostrils the breath [neshamah] of life—and man became a living soul [nephesh]” (Gen. 2:7). “And, I, behold me! bringing in the flood—even waters, upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the ruah or breath of life, from under the heavens,—everything that is in the earth, shall cease to

Putting aside, therefore, all that we have thus been taught, let us see what Yahweh actually does reveal to us in Scripture concerning man, in life, and in death; and concerning the state and condition of the dead.

Psalm 146:4 declares of man,

“His spirit (ruwach), goeth forth, he returneth to his ground, In that very day, his thoughts perish.”

or

“His breath (ruwach), goeth forth, He returneth to his earth; In that very day his thoughts perish.”

(KJV)

Yahweh is here speaking of "Man"; not of some part of man, but of "princes", any "man" or any "son of man" (v. 3), i.e. any and every human being begotten or born of human parents.

There is not a word about "disembodied man". No such expression is to be found in the Scriptures! The phrase is man's own invention in order to make this and other scriptures agree with his tradition. This Scripture speaks of "man" as man. "His breath"; "he returneth"; "his thoughts". It is an unwarrantable liberty to put "body" when Yahweh has put "man". The passage says nothing about the "body". It is whatever has done the thinking. The "body" does not think. The "body" apart from the spirit has no "thoughts". Whatever has had the "thoughts" has them no more; and this is "man". If this were the only statement in Scripture on the subject it would be sufficient. But there are many others.

There is Ecc. 9:5, which declares that "The dead, knew not, anything". This also is so clear that there could be no second meaning. "The dead" are the dead; they are those who have ceased to live; and if the

breathe" (Gen. 6:17). "So they entered in unto Noah, into the ark,—two and two of all flesh, wherein was the ruah or breath of life" (Gen. 7:15). "All in whose nostrils was the breath [neshamah] of the ruah or breath of life, of all that were on the dry ground, died" (Gen. 7:22). "Thou hidest thy face, they are dismayed, Thou withdrawest their ruah or breath, They cease to breathe. And, unto their own dust, do they return: Thou sendest forth thy ruah or breath, they are created, And thou renewest the face of the ground" (Ps. 104:29-30). "Do not ye trust in nobles, in a son of man who hath no deliverance: His ruah or breath, goeth forth, he returneth to his ground, In that very day, his thoughts perish" (Ps. 146:3-4). For, as regardeth the destiny of the sons of men and the destiny of beasts, one fate, have they, as dieth the one, so, dieth the other, and, one ruah or breath, have they all,—and, the pre-eminence of man over beast, is nothing, for, all, were vanity. All, go unto one place,—all, came from the dust, and all, return to the dust. Who knoweth the ruah or breath of the sons of men, whether it, ascendeth, above,—or the ruah or breath of the beast, whether it, descendeth, below, to the earth" (Ecc. 3:19-21)? "And the dust return to the earth, as it was,—and, the ruah or breath, return unto Elohim, who gave it" (Ecc. 12:7). "Oh, remember that my life *is* a ruah or breath! My eye will never again see good" (Job 7:7). "And Job again took up his measure, and said: As El liveth who hath taken away my right, even the Almighty, who hath embittered my soul; All the while my inspiration is in me, and the ruah or breath of El is in my nostrils" (Job 27:1-3). "The grass, hath withered, The flower, hath faded, Because, the ruah or breath of Yahweh, hath blown upon it! Surely the people, is grass" (Is. 40:7)! "...At thy rebuke O Yahweh, at the blast of the breath [ruah] of thy nostrils" (Ps. 18:15). "The ruah or breath of our nostrils, The Anointed of Yahweh, hath been captured in their pits,—of whom we had said—In his shade, shall we live among the nations" (Lam. 4:20). "Thus, saith My Lord, Yahweh, Unto these bones,—Lo! I am about to bring into you—ruah or breath, and ye shall live; Yea I will lay upon you—sinews, And bring up over you—flesh, And cover over you—skin, And put in you—ruah or breath, And ye shall live, Then shall ye know, that, I, am Yahweh...And, when I looked, then lo! upon them were sinews, and, flesh, had come up, and there had spread, over them skin, above,—but, ruah or breath, was there none, within them...Then said he unto me, Prophecy unto the ruah or breath,—Prophecy, Son of man, and thou shalt say unto the ruah or breath, Thus, saith My Lord, Yahweh—From the four winds, come thou, O ruah or breath, And breathe into these slain, That they may live...And, when I prophesied, as he commanded me, then came into them the ruah or breath, and they lived, and stood upon their feet, an exceeding, great army...And I will put my ruah or breath within you, and ye shall live, And I will settle you upon your own soil, So shall ye know, that, I, Yahweh, have spoken and have performed, Declareth Yahweh" (Ez. 37:5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 14). "And, calling out with a loud voice, Yahshua said—Father! into thy hands, I commend my ruah or breath. And, this, saying, he ceased to breathe" (Lk. 23:46).

dead do or can know anything, then words are useless for the purpose of revelation. The word "dead" here is used in the immediate context as the opposite of "the living", e.g.:

"For, the living, knew that they should die,—but, the dead, knew not, anything".

It does not say dead bodies know not anything, but "the dead", i.e. dead people, who are set in contrast with "the living". As one of these "living" David says, by Yahweh (Psalm 146:2):

**" I will praise Yahweh while I live!
I will make melody to my Elohim while I continue!**

There would be no praising Yahweh after he had ceased to "live". Nor would there be any singing of praises after he had ceased to "have any being". Why? because "princes" and "the son of man" are helpless (Psalm 146:3,4). They return to their earth; and when they die, their "thoughts perish": and they "know not anything".

This is what Yahweh says about death. He explains it to us Himself. We need not therefore ask any man what it is. And if we did, his answer would be valueless, inasmuch as it is absolutely impossible for him to know anything of death, i.e. the death-state, beyond what Yahweh has told us in the Scriptures. We are obliged to use the word "death" for the state of death, as we have no noun in English to express the act of dying (as German has in the word "sterbend"). This is unfortunate, and has been the cause of much error and confusion.

We find the answer is just as clear and decisive in Psalm 104:29,30:

**"Thou takest away their breath [ruwach], they die, And return to their dust:
Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created: And thou renewest the face of the earth ". (KJV)
Or
Thou withdrawest their spirit [ruwach], They cease to breathe, And, unto their own dust, do they
return: Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created, And thou renewest the face of the
ground.**

With this agrees Ecc. 12:7, in which we have a categorical statement as to what takes place at death:

**"And the dust return to the earth, as it was,
and, the spirit [ruwach] [or breath of life], return unto Elohim, who gave it."**

*So then Yahweh Elohim formed man, of the dust of the ground, and breathed in his nostrils
the breath [neshamah] of life—and man became a living soul[nephesh]. (Gen 2:7)*

The "dust" was, and will again be "dust": but nothing is said in Scripture as to the spirit or breath of life apart from the body, either before their union, which made man "a living soul", or after that union is broken, when man becomes what Scripture calls "a dead soul".

Where Scripture is silent, we may well be silent too: and, therefore, as to the spirit or breath of life and its possibilities between dying and resurrection we have not said, and do not say, anything. Scripture says it will "return to Elohim". We do not go beyond this; nor dare we contradict it by saying, with Tradition, that it goes to Purgatory or to Paradise; or with Spiritualism, that it goes elsewhere.

The prayer in I Thess. 5:23 is that these three (spirit soul and body) may be found and "preserved ENTIRE. . . at the coming of our Lord Yahshua Christ" (R. V.): i.e. preserved alive as a "living soul" till (or "at") that coming; and not to die and be separated before it. Hence the importance of Resurrection as the great doctrine peculiar to Christianity; and known only by revelation. All man's religions end at death, and his only hope is "after death". Christianity goes beyond this, and gives a hope after the grave. Scripture shuts us up to the blessed hope of being reunited in resurrection. This is why the death of believers is so often called "sleep"; and dying is called "falling asleep"; because of the assured hope of awaking in resurrection. It is not called "the sleep of the body" as many express it; or "the sleep of the soul." Scripture knows nothing of either expression. Its language is, "David fell asleep" (Acts 13:36). not David's body or David's soul. "Stephen... fell asleep" (Acts 7:60). "Lazarus hath fallen asleep" (John 11 :11), which is explained. when the Lord afterward speaks "plainly". as meaning "Lazarus died" (v. 14).

Now. when Yahweh uses one thing to describe or explain another, He does not choose the opposite word or expression. If He speaks of night, He does not use the word light. If He speaks of daylight, He does not use the word night. He does not put "sweet for bitter and bitter for sweet" (Isaiah 5:20). He uses adultery to illustrate Idolatry; He does not use virtue. And so, if He uses the word "sleep" of death, it is because sleep illustrates to us what the condition of death is like. If Tradition be the truth. He ought to have used the word awake or wakefulness. But Yahshua first uses a Figure and says "Lazarus hath fallen asleep"; and afterwards. when he speaks "plainly" He says "Lazarus died". Why? Because sleep expresses and describes the condition of the "unclothed" state. In normal sleep there is no consciousness. For Yahshua, therefore, to have used this word "sleep" to represent the very opposite condition of conscious wakefulness would have been indeed to mislead us. But all His words are perfect; and are used for the purpose of teaching us and not for leading us astray.

Traditionalists. however who say that death means life, do not hesitate to say also that to "fall asleep" means to wake up! A friend vouches for a case personally known to him of one who (though a firm believer in tradition) was, through a fall, utterly unconscious for two weeks. Had he died during that period, Traditionalists would, we presume, say that the man woke up and returned to consciousness when he died! But if this be so, what does it mean when it says.

"I, in righteousness, shall behold thy face, Shall be satisfied when awakened by a vision of thee."

If death is a waking up, what is the awaking in this verse (Psalm 17:15)? Surely it is resurrection, which is the very opposite of falling asleep in death. Indeed, this is why sleep is used of Yahweh's people. To them it is like going to sleep; for when they are raised from the dead they will surely wake again according to the promise of Yahweh; and they shall awake in His own likeness.

And if we ask what life is, the answer from Yahweh is given in Gen. 2:7.

**"So then Yahweh Elohim formed man, of the dust of the ground,
and breathed in his nostrils the breath [neshamah] of life
and man became a living soul [nephesh]."**

So that the body apart from the spirit or breath of life cannot be the man; and the spirit or breath of life apart from the body is not the man; but it is the union of the two that makes "a living soul". When two separate things having different names, are united, they often receive and are known by a third name, different from both. Not that they are three separate things, but two united in one, which makes a third and receives another or third name. For example, there is the barrel, and there is the stock; but, together they form and are called a Rifle. Neither is the Rifle separately. Oxygen and Hydrogen are two separate and

distinct elements; but when they are united, we call them Water. So also we have the case, and the works; but together they form what we call a Watch; neither is the Watch separately.

The Hebrew is (NEPHESH CHAIYAH) soul of life, or living soul. What it really means can be known only by observing how Yahweh Himself uses it. In this very chapter (Gen. 2:19) it is used of the whole animate creation generally; and is rendered "living soul."

Four times nephesh⁴ is used in the previous chapter (Gen. I.):

In verse 20 it is used of "fishes."

In verse 21 it is used of the great sea monsters.

In verse 24 it is used of "cattle and beasts of the earth."

In verse 30 it is used of every beast of the earth, and every fowl of the air and every thing that creepeth upon the earth wherein there is (i.e. "to" which there is) life.

Four times in chapter 9 it is also rendered "living soul", and is used of "all flesh". See verses 10, 12, 15, 16. Twice in Leviticus 11 it is used:

In verse 10 of all fishes,

In verse 46 of all beasts,

Only once (Gen. 2:7 in the KJV) when it is used of man, has it been translated "living soul" - as though it there meant something quite different altogether. The Translators could accurately have used one rendering for all these passages, and thus enable Word of Yahweh students to learn what Yahweh teaches on this important subject.

This then is Yahweh's answer to our question, what is life? The teaching of Scripture is (as we have seen) that man consists of two parts: body and spirit or breath (neshamah) of life; and that the union of these

⁴ 753 usages of nephesh: Gen 1:20f, 24, 30; 2:7, 19; 9:4f, 10, 12, 15f; 12:5; 14:21; 17:14; 19:17, 19f; 23:8; 27:4; 32:30; 34:8; 35:18; 37:21; 42:21; 44:30; 46:18, 22, 25ff; 49:6; Exod 1:5; 4:19; 12:4, 15f, 19; 15:9; 16:16; 21:23, 30; 23:9; 30:12, 15f; 31:14; Lev 2:1; 4:2, 27; 5:1f, 4, 15, 17; 6:2; 7:18, 20f, 25, 27; 11:10, 43f; 16:29, 31; 17:10ff, 14f; 18:29; 19:8, 28; 20:6, 25; 21:1, 11; 22:3f, 6, 11; 23:27, 29f, 32; 24:17f; 26:11, 15f, 30, 43; 27:2; Num 5:2, 6; 6:6, 11; 9:6f, 10, 13; 11:6; 15:27f, 30f; 16:38; 19:11, 13, 18, 20, 22; 21:4; 29:7; 30:2, 4ff; 31:19, 35, 40, 46, 50; 35:11, 15, 30f; Deut 4:9, 15, 29; 6:5; 10:12, 22; 11:13, 18; 12:23; 13:3, 6; 14:26; 19:6, 21; 21:14; 24:6f, 15; 26:16; 27:25; 28:65; 30:2, 6, 10; Josh 2:13f; 9:24; 10:28, 30, 32, 35, 37, 39; 11:11; 20:3, 9; 22:5; 23:11, 14; Judg 5:18, 21; 9:17; 12:3; 16:16; 18:25; Ruth 4:15; 1 Sam 1:15, 26; 2:33, 35; 17:55; 18:1, 3; 19:5, 11; 20:1, 3, 17; 22:2, 22f; 23:15, 20; 24:11; 25:26, 29; 26:21, 24; 28:9, 21; 2 Sam 1:9; 3:21; 4:8f; 5:8; 11:11; 14:7, 14, 19; 16:11; 17:8; 18:13; 19:5; 23:17; 1 Kgs 1:12, 29; 2:4, 23; 3:11; 8:48; 17:21f; 19:2ff, 10, 14; 20:31, 39, 42; 2 Kgs 1:13f; 2:2, 4, 6; 4:27, 30; 7:7; 9:15; 10:24; 23:3, 25; 1 Chr 5:21; 11:19; 22:19; 28:9; 2 Chr 1:11; 6:38; 15:12; 34:31; Esth 7:3, 7; 8:11; 9:16, 31; Job 2:4, 6; 3:20; 6:7, 11; 7:11, 15; 9:21; 10:1; 12:10; 13:14; 14:22; 18:4; 21:25; 23:13; 24:12; 27:2, 8; 30:16, 25; 31:30, 39; 32:2; 33:18, 20, 22, 28, 30; 41:21; Ps 3:2; 6:3f; 7:2, 5; 10:3; 11:1, 5; 13:2; 16:10; 17:9, 13; 19:7; 22:20, 29; 23:3; 24:4; 25:1, 13, 20; 26:9; 27:12; 30:3; 31:7, 9, 13; 33:19f; 34:2, 22; 35:3f, 7, 9, 12f, 17, 25; 38:12; 40:14; 41:2, 4; 42:1f, 4ff, 11; 43:5; 44:25; 49:8, 15, 18; 54:3f; 55:18; 56:6, 13; 57:1, 4, 6; 59:3; 62:1, 5; 63:1, 5, 8f; 66:16; 69:1, 10, 18; 70:2; 71:10, 13, 23; 72:13f; 74:19; 77:2; 78:18, 50; 84:2; 86:2, 4, 13f; 88:3, 14; 89:48; 94:17, 19, 21; 97:10; 103:1f, 22; 104:1, 35; 105:18, 22; 107:5, 9, 18, 26; 109:20, 31; 116:4, 7f; 119:20, 25, 28, 81, 109, 129, 167, 175; 120:2, 6; 121:7; 123:4; 124:4f, 7; 130:5f; 131:2; 138:3; 139:14; 141:8; 142:4, 7; 143:3, 6, 8, 11f; 146:1; Prov 1:18f; 2:10; 3:22; 6:26, 30, 32; 7:23; 8:36; 11:17, 25, 30; 12:10; 13:2ff, 8, 19, 25; 14:10, 25; 15:32; 16:17, 24, 26; 18:7; 19:2, 8, 15f, 18; 20:2; 21:10, 23; 22:5, 23, 25; 23:2, 7, 14; 24:12, 14; 25:13, 25; 27:7, 9; 28:17; 29:10, 17, 24; 31:6; Eccl 2:24; 4:8; 6:2f, 7, 9; Song 1:7; 3:1ff; 5:6; 6:12; Isa 3:20; 5:14; 10:18; 15:4; 19:10; 26:8f; 29:8; 32:6; 38:15, 17; 42:1; 43:4; 44:20; 46:2; 47:14; 53:10ff; 55:2; 56:11; 58:3, 5, 10f; 61:10; 66:3; Jer 2:24, 34; 3:11; 4:10, 19, 30; 5:9, 29; 6:16; 9:9; 11:21; 12:7; 13:17; 15:1; 17:21; 19:7, 9; 20:13; 21:7, 9; 22:25, 27; 26:19; 31:12, 14, 25; 32:41; 34:16, 20f; 37:9; 38:2, 16; 39:18; 40:14f; 42:20; 43:6; 44:7, 14, 30; 45:5; 46:26; 48:6; 49:37; 50:19; 51:6, 14, 45; 52:29f; Lam 1:11, 16, 19; 2:12, 19; 3:17, 20, 24f, 51, 58; 5:9; Ezek 3:19, 21; 7:19; 13:18ff; 14:14, 20; 16:27; 17:17; 18:4, 20, 27; 22:25, 27; 24:21, 25; 25:6, 15; 27:13, 31; 32:10; 33:5f, 9; 36:5; 47:9; Hos 4:8; 9:4; Amos 2:14f; 6:8; Jonah 1:14; 2:5; 4:3, 8; Mic 6:7; 7:3; Hab 2:4f, 10; Hag 2:13; Zech 11:8

two makes a third thing, which is called "soul" or "living soul". Hence the word "soul" is used of the whole personality; the living 'organism' e.g. Gen. 12:5, "Abram took Sarai his wife. . . and the souls (i.e. the persons) whom they had gotten in Haran". Gen. 36:6, "And Esau took his wives. . . and all the souls of his house". So 46:15, and 26, "All the souls (i.e. persons) which came with Jacob into Egypt". As persons, souls have "blood" Jer. 2:34, "In thy skirts is found the blood of the souls of the poor innocents". The Hebrew word NEPHESH (soul) is actually translated "person" in the KJV in Gen. 14:21; 36:6. Ex. 16:16. Lev. 27:2. Num. 5:6; 31:19; 35:11,15,30 (twice). Deut. 10:22; 27:25. Josh. 20:3, 9. I Sam. 22:22. 2 Sam. 14:14. Prov. 28:17. Jer. 43:6; 52:29, 30. Ezek. 16:5; 17:17; 27:13; 33:6.

Hence, the Lord Yahshua says, " And be not in fear, by reason of them that are killing the body,—and, the soul (i.e. the 'personality), are not able to kill. But fear, rather, him who is able, both soul and body, to destroy in gehenna! (i.e. the whole personality in gehenna) (Matt. 10:28).

Hence, souls (as persons) are said to be destroyed: Lev. 5:1,2,4, 15, 17; 6:2; 17:11, 12; 33:30. Num. 15:30. See also Joshua 10:20,30,32,35,37,39. The soul, being the person, is said to be bought and sold. See Lev. 22:11, and Rev. 18:13, where the word "soul" is used of slaves.

Hence, also, when the body returns to dust and the spirit or breath (neshamah or ruwach) of life returns to Yahweh, the person is called a "dead soul", i.e. a dead person. That is why it says in Ezek. 18:4, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die"; and Psalm 78:50, "He spared not their soul from death". What "the breath (neshamah) of life" is in Gen. 2:7, is explained for us in Gen. 7:22, where we read that every thing died, "all in whose nostrils was the breath (neshamah) of life". Margin, "Heb. the breath of the spirit of life", which is a still stronger expression, and is used of the whole animate creation that died in the Flood.

But such are the exigencies of Traditionalists, that in thirteen passages where the Hebrew word "NEPHESH" (soul) refers to a dead soul, such reference is hidden from the English reader in the KJV by the Translators. Nephesh is actually rendered in the KJV "Body" in Lev. 21:11. Num. 6:6; 19:11, 13. Haggai 2:13. "Dead Body" in Num. 9:6, 7, 10. And "The Dead" in Lev. 19:28; 21:1; 22:4. Num. 5:2; 6:11. In none of these passages is there a word in the margin of either the A. V. or R. V. to indicate that the translators are thus rendering the Hebrew word NEPHESH (soul). The Rotherham Bible translates nephesh, 'soul,' the majority of the time.

Again, SHEOL is the Hebrew word used in the Old Testament for the grave, or death-state, and Hades is the corresponding Greek word for it in the New Testament. It is the word Hades used in Luke xvi. 23; and not Gehenna.

The Scriptures are also positive and 'numerous which declare that "Hades", where the Rich Man is said to be "buried" is always represented as a place of silence. "There is no work nor calculation nor knowledge nor wisdom, in sheol, whither, thou, art going" (Ecc. 9:10). But the rich man, here, was making devices, based on his knowledge. Of those who are there it is written, "Both their love and their hatred and their envy, already had perished,—and, portion, had they none any longer, unto times age-abiding, in aught that was done under the sun." (Ecc. 9:6). But the rich man is represented as having "love" for his brethren; and as having a "portion" in what is being done on the earth.

Psalms 6:5 declares that

**For, in death, is no remembrance of thee,
In sheol, who shall give thanks unto thee?**

Psalm 31:17,

Go down in silence to sheol!

Psalm 115:17,

The dead, cannot praise Yah, nor any that go down into silence;

The Scriptures everywhere speak of the dead as destitute of knowledge or speech;

Psalms 30:9,

**What profit in my blood? in my going down into the pit?
Can dust praise thee? Can it declare thy faithfulness?**

Psalms 88:11,

**Shall Thy lovingkindness be recounted in the grave?
Thy faithfulness, in destruction?**

Isaiah 38:18,

**For, sheol, cannot praise thee, Nor, death, celebrate thee,
They who go down to the pit cannot wait for thy faithfulness.**

Isaiah 38:19,

**The living, the living, he, can praise thee, As I, do this day,
A father, to his children, can make known thy faithfulness.**

If these Scriptures are to be believed (as they most surely are), then it is clear that the teaching of Tradition is not true, which says that death is not death, but only life in some other form.

Hades means the 'grave' (Heb. SHEOL): not in Heathen mythology, but in the Word of Yahweh. It was in Hades (sheol) the Lord Yahshua was put: for "He was buried". As to His spirit, He said, "Father! into thy hands, I commend my spirit. And, this, saying, he ceased to breathe" (Luke 23:46). And as to His body, it was "laid in a sepulcher". Of this burial He says (Psalm 16:10):

**For thou wilt not abandon my soul to sheol,
neither wilt thou suffer thy man of lovingkindness, to see corruption.**

These two lines are strictly parallel; and the second expands and explains the first. Hence, SHEOL (Greek, Hades) is the place where "corruption" is seen. And resurrection is the only way of exit from it. This is made perfectly clear by the Divine commentary on the passage in the New Testament. We read in Acts 2:31: "With foresight, spake he [David] concerning the resurrection of the Christ—that neither was he abandoned unto hades, nor did his flesh see corruption." To make it still more clear, it is immediately added, and expressly stated, that "David is not yet ascended into the heavens" (v. 34), and therefore had not been raised from among the dead. Note, it does not say David's body, but David. This is another proof that resurrection is the only way of entrance into heaven.

But this passage (Psalm 16:10) is again referred to in Acts 13:34-37, and here we have the same important lesson re-stated: "And, in that he raised him from among the dead, no more destined to return unto corruption, on this wise hath he spoken...Thou wilt not give thy man of lovingkindness to see corruption. For, David...fell asleep, and was added unto fathers, and saw corruption; But, he whom Yahweh hath raised, did not see corruption." He saw it not, because He was raised from among the dead, and thus brought out of the Sepulcher, where He had been "buried". This is the teaching of the Word of Yahweh. It knows nothing whatever of a "descent into hell" as separate, and distinct, from His burial. That is tradition pure and simple. Not one of the Ancient Creeds of the Church knew anything of it. Up to the seventh century they all said "And was buried" and nothing more. But the Creed used in the Church of Aquileia (A.D. 400), instead of saying "buried" had the words "he descended into hell", but only as an equivalent for "he was buried". This was of course quite correct.

These are the words of Bishop Pearson (Exposition of the Creed. Fourth Ed. 1857, pp. 402-3): "I observe that in the Aquileian Creed, where this article was first expressed, there was no mention of Christ's burial; but the words of their Confession ran thus, crucified tinder Pontius Pilate, he descended in inferna. From whence there is no question but the observation of Ruffinus (fl. 397), who first expounded it, was most true, that though the Roman and Oriental Creeds had not these words, yet they had the sense of them in the word buried. It appears, therefore, that the first intention of putting these words in the Creed was only to express the burial of our Savior, or the descent of his body into the grave. In a note he adds that "the same may be observed in the Athanasian Creed, which has the descent, but not the Sepulcher (i.e. the burial) Nor is this observable only in these two, but also in the Creed made at Sirmium, and produced at Ariminum" (A.D. 359).

By the incorporation of the words "he descended into hell" in the "Apostles' Creed" and the retention of the word "buried", Tradition obtained an additional "article of faith" quite distinct from the fact of the Lord's burial. This is not a matter of opinion, but a matter of history. Not only are these historical facts vouched for by Bishop Pearson, but by Archbishop Ussher, and in more recent times by the late Bishop Harold-Browne in his standard work on the Thirty nine Articles.

Those who have been brought up on "The Apostles' Creed" naturally read this spurious additional article "he descended into hell", into Luke 23:43 and I Peter 3: 19, and of course find it difficult to believe that those passages have nothing whatever to do with that "descent". They are thus led into the serious error of substituting man's tradition for Yahweh's revelation. This tradition about "the descent into hell" led directly to a misunderstanding of 1 Peter 3:17-22. But note:

(1) There is not a word about "hell", or Hades, in the passage.

(2) The word "spirit", by itself, is never used, without qualification, of man in any state or condition, But it is constantly used of messengers, of whom it is said, "He maketh his messengers spirits"; i.e. they are spiritual beings, while a man is a human being.

(3) In spite of these being "in-prison spirits", they are taken to refer to men; notwithstanding that in the next Epistle (2 Pet. 2:4) we read of "the messengers that sinned", and of their being "cast down to Tartarus (not Hades or Gehenna), and delivered into chains of darkness to be reserved unto judgment". These messengers are again mentioned in connection with Noah, and are thus identified with the spirits (or angels) in I Pet. 3:19, who were also disobedient "in the days of Noah". We read further what their sin was in Jude 6, 7, which can be understood only by reference to Gen. 6. Here again we read of these messenger beings "reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day". It is surprising that, in the face of these two passages (2 Pet. 2:4 and Jude 6, 7), which speak of messengers (or

spirits) being "in chains", anyone should ever have interpreted the "in-prison spirits" of 1 Pet. 3: 19 as referring to human beings!

(4) Moreover, the word "preached," in the KJV, does not, by itself, refer to the preaching of the glad message. It is not "evangelize", which would be ευαγγελίζω (euangelizo). But it is κηρυσσω (kenlssso) to proclaim as a herald, to make proclamation, and the context shows that this paragraph about Christ is intended as an encouragement. It begins with verse 17: "For it is, better, as well-doers, if it should please the pleasure of Yahweh, to be suffering, than, as evil-doers: Because, Christ also, once for all, concerning sins, died,—Just in behalf of unjust,—in order that he might introduce us unto Yahweh;" Then it goes on to explain that as Christ suffered for well-doing, and not for evil-doing, they were to do the same; and if they did they would have, like Him, a glorious triumph. For though He was put to death in the flesh, yet He was made alive again (1 Cor. 15.) in spirit (i.e. in a spiritual body, I Cor. 15:44): and in this He made such proclamation of His triumph that it reached even to Tartarus, and was heard there by the messengers reserved in chains unto judgment. Never mind, therefore, if you are called to suffer. You will have a like glorious triumph."

No other explanation of this passage takes in the argument of the context; or complies with the strict requirements of the original text. Thus the support for the tradition about Christ's "descent into hell" as distinct from His being buried, vanishes from the Scriptures. Eph. 4:9 also speaks of the Lord's descent "into the lower parts of the earth" before His ascension "on high". But this word "of" here is what is called the genitive of apposition, by which "of the earth" explains what is meant by, "the lower parts" and should be rendered "the lower parts", that is to say "the earth". For example: "the temple of his body" means "the temple", that is to say "his body" (John 2:21). "A sign of circumcision" means "a sign", that is to say "circumcision" (Romans 4:11). "The firstfruits of the Spirit" means "the firstfruits", that is to say "the Spirit" (Romans 8:23). "The earnest of the Spirit" means "the earnest", that is to say "the Spirit" (2 Cor. 5: 5). "The bond of peace": means "the bond", which is "peace" (Eph. 4:3). "The breastplate of righteousness" means "the breastplate", which is "righteousness" (Eph. 4:14). So here it should be rendered "He descended into the lower parts (that is to say) the earth". If it means more than this it is not true, for He was "laid in a Sepulcher" and not in a grave in, or below, the Earth: His spirit or breath of life being commended into the Father's hands.

But Tradition is only the handing down of the Old Serpent's lie, which deceived our first parents. Yahweh Elohim said, "dying thou dost die" (Gen. 2:17, Young's). The serpent said "Dying, ye do not die" (Gen. 3:4, Young's). And all Traditionalists and Spiritists agree with the Deceiver in saying, "There is no such thing as death: it is only life in some other form."⁵

⁵ You have a body with eyes and ears and hands and feet, but your body is temporary. It will go to the grave. But your personality, your intelligence, your conscience, your memory -- these live on forever. This is your spirit, and according to the Bible, our spirit will never die. **What Happens When You Die?** A Message by Billy Graham; <http://www.billygraham.org/topic.asp?s=60>. **Different View of Death** The Lord told Kenneth E. Hagin one time, "I don't look at death the way people do. In fact, I never see My Children dying, because they don't die." "Well, what do they do, Gloria?" They leave! They just go home. To God, what we call dying is just our spirits changing addresses -- moving from earth to heaven. Death is separation. 'You can only Die once,' by Gloria Copeland, BVOV April 2003, pg. 29

Death

Yahweh speaks of death as an enemy (I Cor. 15:26);
Yahweh speaks of it as a terminus;
Yahweh speaks of it as a calamity;
Yahweh speaks of delivering from it as showing mercy

Man speaks of it as a friend.
Man speaks of it as a gate.
Man speaks of it as a blessing.
Man, strange to say, says the same! And loses
no opportunity of seeking such deliverance by
using every means in his power.

In Phil. 2:27 we read that Epaphroditus "was sick nigh unto death; but Yahweh had mercy on him". So that it was mercy to preserve Epaphroditus from death. This could hardly be called "mercy" if death were the "gate of glory", according to popular tradition.

In 2 Cor. 1:10, 11, it was deliverance of no ordinary kind when Paul himself also was "delivered from so great a death" which called for corresponding greatness of thanksgiving for Yahweh's answer to their prayers on his behalf. Moreover, he trusted that Yahweh would still deliver him. It is clear from II Cor. 5:4 that Paul did not wish for death: for he distinctly says "not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon (i.e. in resurrection and "change") that mortality might be swallowed up of life"; not of death. This is what he was so "earnestly desiring" (v. 2). True, in Phil. 1:21 some think Paul spoke of death as "gain", but we may ask, Whose gain? The answer is clear, for the whole context from verses 12-24 shows that Christ and His cause are the subjects to which he is referring; not himself. Paul's imprisonment had turned out to be for "the furtherance of the glad message" (v. 12). His death might further it still more, and thus prove a "gain" for it. Verse 2 I begins with "for" and is given in explanation of verse 20.

Hezekiah also. had reason to praise Yahweh for delivering him from "the king of terrors". It was "mercy" shown to Epaphroditus; it was "a gift" to Paul; it was "love" to Hezekiah. He says (Isa. 38:17-19):

**" Lo! for well-being, I had bitterness—bitterness,
But, thou, cleaving unto my soul, hast raised me from the pit of corruption,
For thou hast cast, behind thy back, all my sins.**

**For, sheol, cannot praise thee, Nor, death, celebrate thee,
They who go down to the pit cannot wait for thy faithfulness.**

So effectually has satan's lie succeeded, and accomplished its purpose that, though the Lord Yahshua said "I will come again and receive you unto myself", Christendom says, with one voice, "No! Lord. Thou needest not to come for me: I will die and come to Thee". Thus the blessed hope of resurrection and the coming of the Lord have been well nigh blotted out from the belief of the Churches~ and the promise of the Lord been made of none effect by the ravages of Tradition. Men may write their books, and a Spiritist may entitle one "There is no death", etc. They may sing words and expressions which are foreign to the Scriptures, about "the Church triumphant". They may speak of having "being absent from the body is to be present with the Lord;" and "passed on"; and about the "home going"; and "the great beyond"; and the "border-land"; and "beyond the veil" but against all this we set a special revelation from Yahweh, introduced by the prophetic formula, "the Word of the Lord".

**" For, this, unto you, do we say, by a word of the Lord,
that, we, the living who are left unto the Presence of the Lord,
shall in nowise get before them who have fallen asleep." (1 Thess. 4:15).**

To agree with Tradition this ought to have been written, "shall not get before them which are already with the Lord". But this would have made nonsense~ and there is nothing of that in the Word of Yahweh. There are many things in Scripture difficult; and hard to be understood; there are many Figures of Speech also~ but there are no self contradictory statements such as that would have been.

Moreover, we ought to note that this special Divine revelation was given for the express purpose that we might not be ignorant on this subject, as the heathen and Traditionalists were. This revelation of Yahweh's truth as to the state of the dead is introduced by the noteworthy words in verse 13: ' But we do not wish you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them who are falling asleep.' Unless, therefore, we know what the Lord has revealed, we must all alike remain "ignorant". What is revealed here "by the Word of the Lord", is:

(a) That as the Lord Yahshua was "led up from among the dead" (Heb. 13:20), so will His people be." For, if we believe that, Yahshua, died, and rose again, so, also will, Yahweh, bring forth with him, them who have fallen asleep through Yahshua (i.e. bring again from among the dead), even as the Lord Yahshua "died and rose again" (v. 14).

(b) The living who are left unto the Presence of the Lord, shall in nowise get before them who have fallen asleep.

(c) And therefore they cannot be with the Lord before us (v. 15).

(d) The first thing to happen will be their resurrection. They are called "the dead in Christ". Not the living, but "the dead", for resurrection concerns only "the dead" (v. 16).

(e) The next thing is "we, the living who are left, together with them, shall be caught away, in clouds, to meet the Lord in the air" (v. 17). Not (as many people put it) to meet our friends, who are supposed to be already there; but to meet "the Lord Himself" (v. 17).

(f) Finally, it is revealed that this is the manner in which we shall be "with the Lord". The word is $\sigma\upsilon\nu$ (sun) thus, so, in this manner, and in no other way.

Those who do not know the truths here given by special Divine revelation have invented other ways of getting there. They say that "death is the gate of glory". Yahweh says that resurrection and ascension is the gate. It is the tradition that those who have fallen asleep are already in heaven that has given rise to the idea of "the Church Triumphant". But no such expression can be found in Scripture. Eph. 3:15 is supposed to teach or support it, when it speaks of "The whole family in heaven and earth". But. it is by no means necessary to translate the words in this way. The R. V. and the American R. V. render them "every family in heaven and earth" so does the A. V. also in Eph. 1 :21, where we have the same subject, viz. the giving of names (as $\omicron\nu\omicron\mu\alpha\zeta\omega$ onomazoovo, in both places, means. See Luke 6:13 etc..) to some of these heavenly families, e.g. "principality and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named not only in this world, but in that which is to come". It is not "the whole family" that is named; but every family has its own name given to it. A few verses before Eph. 3:15 we have two more of these families, "principalities and powers" (v. 10). Why then create a new thing altogether by forcing verse 17 apart from its context? These families in heaven are clearly set in contrast with the family of Yahweh upon earth. In verse 10 the earthly family is used as an object lesson to the heavenly family.

Now, these being the positive and clear statements of revelation as to man in life and in death, there are certain passages in the New Testament which seem to speak with a different voice, and to bear a different testimony. We say advisedly "seem"; for when properly understood, and accurately translated, not only is there no difference or opposition to the teaching of the Old Testament, but there is perfect harmony and

unity in their testimony. The one corroborates and supports the other. If not, and these New Testament passages do uphold the teachings of Tradition, then quite a different meaning must be given to those passages which we have quoted above from the Old Testament: and Traditionalists must show us how they understand them; and support their interpretations by proofs from the Word of Yahweh.

There are five passages which are generally relied on and referred to by Traditionalists, viz.:

(1) Matthew 22:32

" I, am the Elohim of Abraham, and the Elohim of Isaac, and the Elohim of Jacob?—He is not Elohim, of the dead, but, of the living."

(2) Luke 23:43

" And he said unto him—Verily, I say unto thee this day: With me, shalt thou be in Paradise."

(3) II Corinthians 5:6,8

**" Having good courage, therefore, at all times, and knowing that—remaining at home in the body, we are away from home from the Lord:
We have good courage, however, and are well pleased—rather to be away from home, out of the body, and to come home, unto the Lord."**

(4) Philippians 1:23

" I am held in constraint, however, by reason of the two,—having, the coveting, to be released, and to be with, Christ, for it were far better!"

(5) Luke 16: 19-31

" Now, a certain man, was rich, and he used to clothe himself with purple and fine linen, making merry day by day, brilliantly.

And, a certain beggar, by name Lazarus, used to be cast near his gate, full of sores, and to long to be fed from the crumbs that fell from the table of the rich man: nay! even, the dogs, used to come and lick his sores. And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried away by the messengers, into the bosom of Abraham.

And, the rich man also, died, and was buried. And, in hades [sheol], lifting up his eyes, being in torments, he seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

And, he, calling out, said—Father Abraham! have mercy upon me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue, because I am in anguish in this flame.

But Abraham said—Child! remember—That thou didst duly received thy good things in thy life, and, Lazarus, in like manner, the evil things;

but, now, here, he is comforted, and, thou, art in anguish.

And, besides all these things, betwixt us and you, a great chasm, hath been fixed, so that, they who might wish to cross over from hence unto you, should not be able, nor any, from thence unto us, be crossing over.

But he said—I request thee then, father, that thou wouldst send him unto my father's house, for I have five brethren; —that he may solemnly testify unto them, lest, they also, come into this place of torment. But Abraham saith

They have Moses and the Prophets: Let them hearken unto them. But, he, said Nay! father Abraham, but, if one, from the dead, should go unto them, they would repent.”

We will deal with them in this order. The first is "The Elohim of the Living" (Matt. 22:32. Mark 12:27. Luke 20:38). In these scriptures it is stated that "Yahweh is not the Elohim of the dead, but of the living". But Traditionalists, believing that the "dead" are "the living", make Yahweh the "Elohim of the dead", which He distinctly says He is not. Interpreting the words in this way, they utterly ignore the whole context, which shows that the words refer to the RESURRECTION, and not to the dead at all. Notice how this is emphasized in each Gospel:

(1) "Then come unto Him the Sadducees, which say there is no RESURRECTION" (Matt. 22:23. Mark 12:18. Luke 20:27).

(2) The one issue raised by the Sadducees was the question, "Whose wife shall she be in the RESURRECTION?" (Matt. 22:28. Mark 12:23. Luke 20:33).

(3) The answer of our Lord deals solely with this one issue, which was RESURRECTION. Hence He says:

Matt. 22, "as touching the RESURRECTION of the dead" (v. 31).

Mark 12, "as touching the dead that they RISE" (v. 26).

Luke 20, "now that the dead are RAISED, even Moses showed at the bush, when he called Yahweh, the Elohim of Abraham, and the Elohim of Isaac, and the Elohim of Jacob, for he is not a Elohim of the dead, but of the living, for all live unto him" (v. 38).

These words were spoken by the Lord Yahshua in order to prove "that the dead are RAISED". Traditionalists use them to prove that the dead are "living" without being RAISED! The Sadducees may have denied many other things, but the one and the only thing in question here is RESURRECTION. Christ's argument was:

1. Yahweh's words at the bush prove a life for the dead patriarchs.
2. But there is no life for the dead without a resurrection.
3. Therefore they must be RAISED FROM THE DEAD; or "live again" by Him.

This argument held good, for it silenced the Sadducees. For if they are "living" now, and not dead, how does that prove a resurrection? and, moreover, what is the difference between them and those who are in "the land of the living"? For this is the expression constantly used of the present condition of life in contrast with the state of death:

Psalms 27:13

I believe that I shall see—The goodness of Yahweh in the land of the living,

Psalms 56:13

**For thou hast rescued my soul from death, Wilt thou not *rescue* my feet from stumbling?
That I may walk to and fro, before Elohim, In the light of life.**

Psalms 116:9

I will walk to and fro before Yahweh, in the lands of life

Psalms 142:5

**I have made outcry unto thee, O Yahweh,
I have said, Thou, art my refuge, my portion, in the land of the living**

Jeremiah 11: 19

**But, I, was as a gentle lamb that is to be led to the slaughter,
and I knew not that, against me, they had devised devices, *saying*—
Let us destroy the tree with its fruit, Yea let us cut him off out of the land of the living,
And, his name, shall be remembered no more!**

Ezekiel 26:20

**Then will I bring thee down with them that go down into the pit,
Unto the people of age—past times, And cause thee to dwell in the earth below,
Among the desolations from age—past times, With them that go down into the pit,
That thou mayest not be dwelt in,—Nor yet present thyself in the land of the living**

The argument as to resurrection was so conclusive to the Scribes who heard Him, that they said, "Master, thou hast well said. And after that they durst not ask him any question at all" (Luke 20:39,40).

(2) Luke 23:43: "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise (KJV)." This can mean only "Verily I say unto thee this day, thou shalt be with me in Paradise". (The Rotherham Emphasized Bible states "And he said unto him—Verily, I say unto thee this day: With me, shalt thou be in Paradise.")

In the first place we must remember that the punctuation is not inspired. It is only of human authority. There is none whatever in the Greek manuscripts. We have, therefore, perfect liberty to criticize and alter man's use of it, and to substitute our own. The verb "say" when used with "to-day", is sometimes separated from it by the word $\sigma\tau\iota$ (hoti) that; and sometimes it is joined with it by the absence of hoti. Yahweh uses these words with perfect exactness, and it behooves us to learn what He would thus teach us.

When He puts the word hoti (that) between "say" and "to-day", it throws "to-day" into what is said, and cuts it off from the verb "say", e.g. Luke 19:9, "Yahshua said.., that (Gr. $\sigma\tau\iota$, hoti) this day is salvation come to this house". Here "to-day" is joined with the verb "come", and separated from the verb "I say". So also in Luke 4: 21: "And he began to say unto them that ($\sigma\tau\iota$, hoti) this day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears". Here again the presence of $\sigma\tau\iota$ (hoti) cuts off "to-day" from "say" and joins it with "fulfilled".

But this is not the case in Luke 23:43. Here Yahweh has carefully excluded the word hoti (that). How then dare anyone to read the verse as though He had not excluded it, and read it as though it said "I say unto thee, that this day", etc. It is surely adding to the Word of Yahweh to insert, or imply the insertion of, the word "that" when Yahweh has not used it; as He has in two other places in this same Gospel (Luke 4:21, and 19:9).

We are now prepared to see that we must translate Luke 23:43 in this manner, "Verily I say to thee this day, thou shalt be with me in Paradise". The prayer was answered. It referred to the future, and so did the promise; for, when the Lord shall have come in His Kingdom, the only Paradise the Scripture knows of will be restored. As a matter of fact, the Greek word Paradise occurs in the Septuagint twenty eight times. Nine times it represents the Hebrew word "Eden", and nineteen times the Hebrew word (gan) "Garden". In English it is rendered "Eden", "Garden", "Forest", "Orchard". The Hebrew word for "Eden" occurs sixteen times. The Hebrew word for "Garden" is used of Eden thirteen times in Genesis alone; and six times in other passages, of "the garden of Yahweh", etc. See Gen. 2. Neh. 2:8. Ecc. 2:5. Song 4:13.

From these facts we learn and notice others:

- (1) We see that the three words, Paradise, Eden and Garden are used interchangeably; and always, either of the Eden of Gen. 2. or of some glorious park like beauty which may be compared with it.
- (2) It is never used in any other sense than that of an earthly place of beauty and delight.
- (3) The "tree of life" and the river of "the water of life" are its great conspicuous characteristics.
- (4) We see it:

Described in Gen. 2.

Lost in Gen. 3.

Restoration promised in Rev. 2:7.

Regained in Rev. 22:1-5,14,17.

Further we must note that the formula "I say unto thee this day", was a well known Hebrew idiom used to emphasize the solemnity of the occasion and the importance of the words. See Deut. 4:26, 29,40; 5:6; 6:6; 7:11; 8:1, 11, 19; 9:3; 10:13; 11: 2, 8,13,18,27,28,32; 13:18; 15:5; 19:9; 26:3, 17, 18; 27:1, 4, 10; 28:1, 13, 14, 15; 24:12; 30:2, 8, 11, 15, 16, 18, 19; 32:46. The expression, therefore, "I say unto thee this day", marks the wonderful character of the man's faith; which, under such circumstances, could still believe in, and look forward to the coming kingdom; and acknowledge that Christ was the King, though on that very day He was hanging on the Cross.

(3) The third passage, 2 Cor. 5:6, 8, "to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord (KJV)," was the inspired desire of the Apostle, which could be realized only in resurrection. Resurrection (and not death) is the subject of the whole context. These words are generally misquoted "Absent from the body, present with the Lord", as though it said that when we are absent from the body we are present with the Lord. But no such sentence can be found. No less than nine words are deliberately omitted from the context when the quotation is thus popularly made. The omission of these words creates quite a new sense, and puts the verse out of all harmony with the context; the object of which is to show that we cannot be "present with the Lord" except by being clothed upon with our Resurrection body our "house which is from heaven". Rotherham translation II Cor. 5:1-8 as:

“For we know that—if, our earthly tent—dwelling, should be taken down,
we have, a building of Yahweh, a dwelling not made by hand, age—abiding in the heavens.
And verily, in this, we sigh, earnestly desiring to clothe ourselves over,
with our habitation which is of heaven,—
Although, indeed, even clothing ourselves, **we shall not be found, naked;**
And verily, we who are in the tent, do sigh, being weighed down,
while yet **we are not wishing to unclothe ourselves,** but to clothe ourselves over,
in order that, what is mortal, may be swallowed up, by life.
Now, he that hath wrought us for this very thing, is, Yahweh,
who hath given unto us the earnest of the spirit,
Having good courage, therefore, at all times,
and knowing that—remaining at home in the body,
we are away from home from the Lord,
By faith, are we walking, not by sight;
We have good courage, however, and are well pleased rather to be
away from home, out of the body, and to come home, unto the Lord.

We might with equal justice quote the words "hang all the law and the prophets", and leave out "on these two commandments" (Matt. 22:40); or say "there is no Elohim" and leave out "The fool hath said in his heart" (Psalm 53:1), or say "Ye shall not drink wine", and leave out "Ye have planted pleasant vineyards, but (ye shall not drink wine) of them" (Amos. 5:11); or talk about "the restitution of all things" and leave out "which Yahweh hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets" (Acts 3 :21).

All these partial quotations are correct so far as the Text is concerned, but what about the Context? The context is, "We have good courage, however, and are well pleased—rather to be away from home, out of the body, and to come home, unto the Lord." (v. 8). Being "at home in the body" in both verses is explained, in verse 3 as being in "this tent", which, in v. 1, is called "our earthly tent, dwelling"; and being "and to come home, unto the Lord" is explained in verse 2 as being "clothe ourselves over, with our habitation which is of heaven". The Apostle distinctly says, on the one hand, that he did not wish to die (v. 4, "not that we would be unclothed"); and on the other hand, he was not merely "willing rather" but "earnestly desiring to be clothed upon" (v. 2). It is true that some years later he did say "to die is gain"; but as we have seen above, the circumstances were very different, for he was then in prison.

(4) This brings us to the expression of Paul's desire in Phil. 1:23. The desire of the Apostle was not "to depart" (KJV) himself, by dying; but his desire was for the return of Christ; the verb rendered "depart" being used elsewhere in the New Testament only in Luke 12:36, where it is rendered "return": "when he shall RETURN from the wedding". May we not fairly ask, Why are we not to translate it in the same way in Phil. 1 :23?

For I am in a strait betwixt [ek] two, having a desire to depart [analuō], and to be with Christ; which is far better" (Phil. 1:23, KJV).

"And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return [analuō] from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately" (Lk. 12:36, KJV).

The preposition ἀνα (ana) again, when compounded with the verb λύω (luo) to loosen, means to loosen back again to the place from whence the original departure was made, not to set out to a new place; hence, ἀναλυσίς (analuō) means to loosen back again or to return, and it is so rendered in the only other place where it occurs in the New Testament, Luke 12:36: "when he shall RETURN from the wedding" (KJV). It does NOT mean to depart, in the sense of setting off from the place where one is, but to return to the place that one has left. The noun ἀναλυσίς; (analysis) occurs in 2 Tim. 4:6, and has the same meaning, returning or dissolution, i.e. the body returning to dust as it was, and the spirit or breath of life returning to Yahweh Who gave it. The verb does not occur in the Greek translation of the Canonical books of the Old Testament, but it does occur in the Apocryphal books which, though of no authority in the establishment of doctrine, are invaluable, as to the use and meaning of words. In these books this word always means to return, and is generally so translated.

But there is another fact with regard to Phil. 1:23. The English verb depart occurs 130 times in the New Testament; and is used as the rendering of 22 different Greek words. But this one verb ἀναλυσίς (analuō) occurs only twice, and is rendered depart only once; the other occurrence being rendered return, and used by the Lord Himself of His own return from heaven. We must also further note that it is not the simple infinitive of the verb to return. It is a combination of three words: the preposition εἰς (eis) unto, and the definite article τοῦ (to) the, with the aorist inference (analuō), to return; so that the verb must be translated as a noun -- "having a strong desire unto THE RETURN"; i.e. of Christ, as in Luke 12:36. These words must be interpreted by the context, and from this it is clear that the Apostle's whole argument is that the Gospel might be furthered (v. 12); and that Christ might be magnified (v. 20). To this end he

cared not whether he lived or died; for, he says, "to me, living (is) Christ, and dying (would be) gain. But if living in the flesh (would be Christ), this (dying) for me, (would be) the fruit of (my) labor. Yet, what I shall choose I wot not, for I am being PRESSED OUT OF these two [i.e. living or dying (vv. 20, 21), by a third thing (v. 23), viz.], having a strong desire unto The RETURN (i.e. of Christ), and to be with Christ, which is a far, far better thing". (The word εκ (ek) occurs 857 times, and is never once translated "betwixt" except in this place. It is translated "out of" 165 times).

Paul's imprisonment had made many brethren "more abundantly bold" (v. 12 R. V.) to preach the gospel. His death might produce still more abundant fruit of his labor; for these brethren were the fruit of his labor (v. 11; 4:17. Romans 1:13). Christ would thus be magnified in his body whether Paul lived or died. That was why he did not know what to choose of these three things: Living would be good; for he could himself preach Christ. Dying might be even better, and further the preaching of Christ more abundantly, judging by the result of his imprisonment. But there was a third thing, which was far, far better than either; and that was the return of Christ, which he so earnestly desired.

It is for the Traditionalists to show how they deal with these facts. It is not sufficient to say they do not believe in this our understanding of these passages: they must show how they dispose of our evidence, and must produce their own in support of their own conclusions. Here we have four passages which seem to be opposed to those we have quoted from the Old Testament. Both cannot be true. We must either explain away the Old Testament passages, or we must see whether these four passages admit of other renderings, which remove their apparent opposition. We have suggested these other renderings, based on ample evidence; which, not only deprive them of such opposition, but show that their teaching is in exact accordance with those other passages.

(5) There remains the fifth passage, Luke 16:19-31, commonly called "the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus", or of "Dives and Lazarus". (If we speak of it sometimes as a Parable, it is not because we hold it to be one of Christ's Parables, specially so called, but because it partakes of the nature of parabolic teaching.)

It is absolutely impossible that the Traditional interpretation of this can be correct: because if it were, it would be directly opposed to all the other teaching of Scripture. And' the Lord's words cannot and must not be so interpreted. If it be truth (as it is) that "the dead know not anything", how could the Lord have taught, and how can we believe that they do know a very great deal? If it be the fact that when a man's "breath goeth forth, in that very day his thoughts perish", how can we believe that he goes on thinking? and not only thinking without a brain, but putting his "thoughts" into words, and speaking them without a tongue?

When the great subject of Resurrection is in question, one of the most solemn arguments employed is that, if there be no such thing as resurrection, then not only all the dead, but "they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished" (I Cor. 15:18). This is also the argument which immediately follows in verse 29 (after the parenthesis in verses 20-28), and is based upon verse 18. "Else, what are they doing who are being baptized? It is for dead (corpses) if the dead rise not at all. Why are they then being baptized for corpses?" Which is, of course, the case, if they are not going to rise again. We render this as Romans 8:33, 34 is rendered, by supplying the ellipsis of the verb "to be", as in both the A.V. and R.V. The word νεκρος (nekros) with the article (as in I Cor. 15:29) means dead bodies, or corpses. See Gen. 23:3,4,6,8, 13, 15. Deut. 28:26. Jer. 12:3. Ezek. 37:9. Matt. 22:31. Luke 24:5. 1 Cor. 15:29 (1st and 3rd words), 35, 42,52.

On the other hand, νεκρος (nekros) without the article (as in I Pet. 4:6) means dead people, i.e. people who have died. See Deut. 14:1. Matt. 22:32. Mark 9:10. Luke 16:30,31; 24:46. Acts 23:6; 24:15; 26:8.

Romans 6:13; 10:7; 11:15. Heb. 11:19; 13:20. 1 Cor. 15:12,13,15,16,20,21,29 (2nd word), 32. This throws light upon 1 Pet. 4:6 (where it is without the article), which shows that "the dead", there, are those who had the gospel preached to them while they were alive, and though, according to the will of Yahweh, man might put them to death, they would "live again" in resurrection. The word ζαω (zao), to live again, has for one of its principal meanings, to live in resurrection life. See Matt. 9:18. Acts 9:41. Mark 16:11. Luke 24:5, 23. John 11:25,26. Acts 1:3; 25:19. Romans 6: 10: 14:9.2 Cor. 13:4. Rev. 1:18; 2:8; 13:14; 20:4, 5.

We are expressly enjoined by the Lord Himself: "Do not be marveling at this: because there come an hour, in which, all they in the tombs, shall hearken unto his voice," (John 5:28). These are the Lord's own words, and they tell us where His Voice will be heard; and, that is not in heaven, not in Paradise, or in any so-called "intermediate state", but "in the TOMBS". With this agrees Dan. 12:2, which tells us that "many of the sleepers in the dusty ground, shall awake,—these, *shall be* to age—abiding life, but, those, to reproach, and age—abiding abhorrence;" It does not say, in "Abraham's bosom", or any other place, state, or condition, but "IN THE DUSTY GROUND"; from which man was "taken" (Gen. 2:7; 3:23), and to which he must "re-turn" (Gen. 3:19. Ecc. 12:7).

It is of course, most blessedly true that there is a vast difference between the saved and the unsaved in this "falling asleep". The former have received the gift of "life age—abiding" (Romans 6:23): not yet in actual fruition; but "in Christ", who is responsible to raise them from among the dead (John 6:39), that they may enter upon the enjoyment of it. The unsaved do not possess "life age—abiding", for it is declared to be "the gift of Yahweh" (Romans 6:23). Very different, therefore, are these two cases. The Atonement, and Resurrection, and Ascension of Christ has made all the difference for His people. They die like others; but for them it is only falling asleep; Why? Because they are to awake again. Though dead, they are now called "the dead in Christ", but it remains perfectly true that "we, the living who are left unto the Presence of the Lord, shall in nowise get before them who have fallen asleep." And, therefore, it follows, of necessity, that they cannot precede us.

But it is sometimes urged that "the Lord led forth a multitude of captives from Hades to Paradise when He wrested from satan his dominion over death (Eph. 4:8). But the fact is that Eph. 4:8 says nothing about Hades or Paradise! Nothing about "multitudes of captives", and nothing about the state between the moment of His dying and rising. It was "when He ascended up on high" that there was this great triumph for the Lord Yahshua Christ. We are not told what were all the immediate effects of Christ's death, resurrection and ascension, in satan's realm of evil messengers. Col. 2: 15 tells us the great fact that He "spoiled principalities and powers". Hence - forth He held the keys of death ~~ and sheol:

Revelation 1: 18

"And the Living One,—and I became dead; —and lo! living, am I, unto the ages of ages, and have the keys of death and of hades [sheol]."

There was a mighty conflict and a glorious victory when Christ rose from the dead and conquered him that had the dominion of death. In proof and token of His triumph "many" (not a few) rose from the dead (Matt. 27:52,53): but as others that have been raised from the dead again sleep in Christ awaiting the return and final Resurrection.

We now come to the so-called Parable itself. It is evident that this Scripture (Luke 16:19-31) must be interpreted and understood in a manner that shall not only not contradict the plain and direct teaching of all these passages; but on the contrary, in a manner which must be in perfect and complete harmony with them: and in such a way that it shall be necessary for the better understanding of the whole context in which it stands. That is to say, we must not explain the Parable apologetically, as though we wished it

were not there; but as though we could not do without it. We must treat it as being indispensable, when taken with the context.

Let us look first at some of the inconsistencies of the Traditional Interpreters. Some of them call it a "Parable": but the Lord does not so designate it. It does not even begin by saying "He said". It commences abruptly - "There was"; without any further guide as to the reason or meaning of what is said. Then they follow their own arbitrary will, picking out one word or expression, which they say is literal; and another, which they say is parabolic. For example "Abraham's bosom" is, according to them, parabolic; and denotes Paradise. They are bound so to take it, because if literal, "Abraham's bosom" would hold only one person! It refers to the act of reclining at meals, where anyone person, if he leaned back, would be "in the bosom" of the other. John was so placed with regard to the Lord Yahshua (John 13:23; 21:20), and it was a token of favor and love (John 19:26; 20:2; 21:7). Then they take the "fire" and the "water", the "tongue" and the "flame", etc., as being literal; but when the Lord elsewhere speaks of "the worm that dieth not" they take that as parabolic, and say it does not mean "a worm" but conscience. In all this they draw only on their imagination, and interpret according to their own arbitrary will.

If we follow out this illogical principle, then according to them Lazarus was never buried at all; while the rich man was. For "the rich man also died and was buried" (v. 22); while Lazarus, instead of being buried, was "carried by the messengers into Abraham's bosom". There is the further difficulty as to how a man who has been actually buried, could think without a brain, or speak without a tongue. How can the dead speak, or act apart from the physical organs of the body? This is a difficulty our friends cannot get over: and so they have to invent some theory (which outdoes the Spiritists' invention of an "Astral body") which has no foundation whatever in fact: and is absolutely destitute of anything worthy of the name "evidence" of any kind whatsoever. Then again, Hades or Sheol is never elsewhere mentioned as a place of fire. On the contrary, it is itself to be "cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. 20:14).

Moreover, there is this further moral difficulty; in this parable, which is supposed to treat of the most solemn realities as to the eternal destiny of the righteous and the wicked, there is a man who receives all blessing, and his only merit is poverty. That, for ought that is said, is the only title Lazarus has for his reward. It is useless to assume that he might have been righteous as well as poor. The answer is that the parable does not say a word about it; and it is perfectly arbitrary for anyone to insert either the words or the thought. On the other hand, the only sin for which the rich man was punished with those torments was his previous enjoyment of "good things" and his neglect of Lazarus. But for this neglect, and his style of living, he might have been as good and moral a man as Lazarus.

Again, if "Abraham's bosom" is the same as Paradise, then we ask, Is that where Christ and the thief went according to the popular interpretation of Luke 23:43? Did they go to "Abraham's bosom"? The fact is, the more closely we look at Tradition. the more glaring are the inconsistencies which it creates.

The teaching of the Pharisees had much in common with the teaching of Romanists and Spiritists in the present day. We have only to refer to the Lord's words to see what He thought of the Pharisees and their teachings, He reserved for them His severest denunciations and woes; and administered to them His most scathing judgments. It was the teaching of the Pharisees, which had made the Word of Yahweh of none effect, that was the very essence of their sin and its condemnation. Everywhere the Lord refers to this as bringing down His wrath: and calling forth His "woes". The Word of Yahweh said one thing, and the Pharisees said another; they thus contracted themselves out of the Law of Yahweh by their traditions. The context shows that the Lord's controversy with the Pharisees was now approaching a crisis. It begins, in chapter 14:35, with the solemn formula, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear". We are immediately shown who had these opened ears; for we read (15:1), "But all the tax-collectors and the sinners were, unto him, drawing near, to be hearkening unto him; and both the Pharisees and the Scribes were

murmuring, saying, This man, unto sinners, giveth welcome, and eateth with them." They professed to have the key of knowledge, but they entered not in themselves; and those who were entering in they hindered (Matt. 23:13-33). They had the Scriptures, but they overlaid them with their traditions, and thus made them of none effect (Matt. 15:19). They were like "the Unjust Steward" (Luke 16:1-12) in the parable which immediately follows Luke 15. For He would explain to His immediate believing followers the iniquity of these murmuring Pharisees. They dealt unjustly with the oracles of Yahweh which were committed unto them (Romans 3:2). They allowed His commandments to be disobeyed by others that they might make gain. In Mark 7:9 the Lord said, "Well, do ye set aside the commandment of Yahweh, that, your own tradition, ye may observe". This was said in solemn irony; for they did not "well" in the strict meaning of the word, though they did well, i.e. consistently with their own teaching when they practically did away with the fifth and seventh Commandments for their own profit and gain, just as Rome in later days did away with the doctrine of "justification through faith" by the sale of "indulgences". (Read carefully Matt. 15:3-6 and Mark 7:7-13.) They were "unjust stewards"; and contrary to their teaching, the Lord declared there was no such thing as "little" or "much" when it came to honesty, especially in dealing with the Word of Yahweh; and that, if they were unfaithful in the least, they would be in much also, and could not be trusted. The time was at hand when the sentence would go forth, "thou mayest be no longer steward".

Then in Luke 16:14 we read: "Now the Pharisees, who were, lovers of money, were hearing all these things, and were openly sneering at him." (v. 14): lit., they turned up their noses at Him! Compare chapter 23:35, "But the rulers were sneering". The same word as in Psalm 22:7, "All that see me, laugh at me". The supreme moment had come. We may thus paraphrase His words which follow and lead up to the Parable: "You deride and scoff at Me, as if I were mistaken, and you were innocent. You seek to justify yourselves before men, but Yahweh knoweth your hearts. You highly esteem your traditions, but they are abomination in the sight of Yahweh (v. 15). The law and the prophets were until John, but you deal unjustly with them, changing them and wresting them at your pleasure, by your tradition, and by the false glosses ye have put upon them. And when John preached the Kingdom of Yahweh, every one used violence and hostility against it by contradictions, persecution, and derision (v. 16). And yet, though by your vain traditions you would make the law void and of none effect, it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away, than for one tittle of the law to fail (v. 17). Take one instance out of many. It is true that Yahweh permitted, and legislated for, divorce. But ye, by your traditions and arbitrary system of divorces, have degraded it for gain. Nevertheless, that law still remains, and will stand for ever, and he who accepts your teaching on the subject, and receives your divorces, and marrieth another, committeth adultery" (v. 18).

Then the Lord immediately passes on to the culminating point of His lesson (v. 19): "Now, a certain man, was rich", etc. He makes no break. He does not call it, or give it as one of His own Parables: but He at once goes on to give another example from the traditions of the Pharisees, in order to judge them out of their own mouth. A parable of this kind need not be true in itself, or in fact: though it must be believed to be true by the hearers, if not by the speaker. No more than Jotham's parable of the Trees speaking (Judges 9:7-15). No more than when the Pharisees, on another occasion, said "This one, doth not cast out the demons, save in Beelzebul ruler of the demons"; and He, judging them out of their own mouth, did not contradict them, nor did He admit the truth of their words when he replied, "And, if, I, in Beelzebul, am casting out the demons, In whom are, your sons, casting them out?" (Matt. 12:24,27). No! the Lord did not bandy words in argument with these arch- Traditionists, but turned the tables upon them. It was the same here, in Luke 16. He neither denied nor admitted the truth of their tradition when He used their own teachings against themselves. These are the "offences" of chapter 17.

It was the same in the case of the parable of the "pounds" a little later on" when He said, "Out of thy mouth, do I judge thee, O wicked servant! Thou knewest that, I, a harsh man, am,—taking up, what I laid

not down, and reaping, what I did not sow" (Luke 19:21, 22). The Lord was not, of course, an austere and unjust man; but He uses the words, which those to whom He was speaking believed to be true; and condemned them out of their own mouth.

We believe that the Lord is doing the very same thing here. The framework of the illustration is exactly what the Pharisees believed and taught. It is a powerful and telling example of one of their distinctive traditions, by which they made the teaching of Yahweh's Word of none effect. It is, of course, adapted by the Lord so as to convey His condemnation of the Pharisees. He represents the dead as speaking, but the words put into Abraham's mouth contain the sting of what was His own teaching. In verse 18 He had given an example of their PRACTICE in making void the Law of Yahweh as to marriage and divorce; and in the very next verse (19) He proceeds to give an example of their Doctrine to show how their traditions made void the truth of Yahweh; using their very words as an argument against themselves: and showing, by His own words, which He puts into Abraham's mouth (verses 20 and 31), that all these traditions were contrary to Yahweh's truth.

They taught that the dead could go to and communicate with the living; the Lord declares that this is impossible; and that none can go "from the dead" but by resurrection: "neither, if one, from among the dead, should arise, would they be persuaded" (v 31). Note, these latter are His own words; He knew that their traditions were false" and in this very parable He corrects them. He distinctly declares that no dead person could go to the living except by resurrection: and that if one did go it would be useless: for, there was one of the same name – Lazarus, who was raised from the dead shortly afterward, but their reply was to call a Council, in which "they determined to put Lazarus also to death", as well as Himself (John 12:10). And when the Lord rose from the dead they again took counsel, and would not believe (Matt. 28: 11-15). Thus the parable is made by the Lord to give positive teaching as well as negative, and to teach the truth as well as to correct error.

In the Talmud we have those very traditions gathered up which the Lord refers to in His condemnation. Many are there preserved which were current in our Lord's day. We can thus find out exactly what these popular traditions were.

"Paradise", "The carrying away by angels", "Abraham's bosom", etc., were the popular expressions constantly used. Christ was not the first who used these phrases, but He used the language of the Pharisees, turning it against them.

Take a few examples from the Talmud:

(1) In Kiddushin (Treatise on Betrothal), fol. 72, there is quoted from Juchasin, fol. 75, 2, a long story about what Levi said of Rabbi Judah: "This day he sits in Abraham's bosom", i.e. the day he died. There is a difference here between the Jerusalem and the Babylonian Talmuds - the former says Rabbi Judah was "carried by angels"; the latter says that he was "placed in Abraham's bosom". Here we have again the Pharisees' tradition as used against them by our Lord.

(2) There was a story of a woman who had seen six of her sons slain (we have it also in 2 Macc. vii.). She heard the command given to kill the youngest (two-and-a-half years old), and running into the embraces of her little son, kissed him and said, "Go thou, my son, to Abraham my father, and tell him' Thus saith thy mother. Do not thou boast, saying, I built an altar, and offered my son Isaac. For thy mother hath built seven altars, and offered seven sons in one day", etc. (Midrash Echah, fol. 68. 1).

(3) Another example may be given out of a host of others (Midrash on Ruth, fol. 44, 2; and Midrash on Coheleth (Ecclesiastes) Col. 86, 4) "There are wicked men, that are coupled together in this world. But one of them repents before death, the other doth not, so me one is found standing in the assembly of the just, the other in the assembly of the wicked.

The one seeth the other and saith, 'Woe! and Alas! there is accepting of persons in this thing' he and I robbed together, committed murder together; and now he stands in the congregation of the just, and I, in the congregation of the wicked'. They answered him: 'O thou most foolish among mortals that are in the world! Thou weft abominable and cast forth for three days after thy death, and they did not lay thee in the grave; the worm was under thee, and the worm covered thee; which, when this companion of thine came to understand, he became a penitent. It was in thy power also to have repented, but thou didst not'. He saith to them, 'let me go now, and become a penitent'. But they say, 'O thou foolishest of men, dost thou not know, that this world in which thou art, is like the Sabbath, and the world out of which thou comest is like the evening of the Sabbath? If thou dost not provide something on the evening of the Sabbath, what wilt thou eat on the Sabbath day? Dost thou not know that the world out of which thou camest is like the land; and the world, in which thou now art, is like the sea? If a man make no provision on land for what he should eat at sea, what will he have to eat?' He gnashed his teeth, and gnawed his own flesh".

(4) We have examples also of the dead discoursing with one another; and also with those who are still alive (Berachoth, fol. 18, 2 - Treatise on Blessings). "R. Samuel Bar Nachman saith, R. Jonathan saith, How doth it appear that the dead have any discourse among themselves? It appears from what is said (Deut. xxxiv. 4), 'And the Lord said unto him, This is the land, concerning which I swear unto. Abraham, to Isaac and Jacob, saying' What is the meaning of the word saying? The Holy Blessed God saith unto Moses, 'Go thou and say to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the oath which I swear unto It; you, I have performed unto your children'." 'Note that' 'Go thou and say to Abraham', etc.

Then follows a story of a certain pious man that went and lodged in a burying place, and heard two souls discoursing among themselves. "The one said unto the other, 'Come, my companion, and let us wander about the world, and listen behind the veil, what kind of plagues are coming upon the world'. To which the other replied, 'O my companion, I cannot; for I am buried in a cane mat; but do thou go and whatsoever thou hearest, do thou come and tell me'," etc. The story goes on to tell of the wandering of the soul and what he heard, etc.

(5) There was a good man and a wicked man that died; as for the good man, "he had no funeral rites solemnized"; but the wicked man had. Afterward, there was one who saw in his dream, the good man walking in gardens, and hard by pleasant springs; but the wicked man "with his tongue trickling drop by drop, at the bank of a river, endeavoring to touch the water, but he could not". (Chagigah, fol. 77. Treatise on Exodus 23: 17.)

(6) As to "the great gulf", we read (Midrash [or Commentary] on Coheleth [Ecclesiastes], 103.2), "God hath set the one against the other (Ecc. vii. 14) that is Gehenna and Paradise. How far are they distant? A hand-breadth". Jochanan saith, "A wall is between" But the Rabbis say "They are so even with one another, that they may see out of one into the other".

The traditions set forth above were widely spread in many early Christian writings, showing how soon the corruption spread which led on to the Dark Ages and to all the worst errors of Romanism. The Apocryphal books (written in Greek, not in Hebrew, Cents. i. and ii. B.C.) contained the gem of this teaching. That is why the Apocrypha is valued by Traditionalists, and is incorporated by the Church of Rome as an integral part of her Bible.

The Apocrypha contains prayers for the dead; also "the song of the three Children" (known in the Prayer Book as the Benedicite), in which "the spirits and souls of the righteous" are called on to bless the Lord. The Te Deum, also, which does not date further back than the fifth century, likewise speaks of the Apostles and Prophets and Martyrs as praising God now.

From all this it seems to us perfectly clear that the Lord was not delivering this as a Parable, or as His own direct teaching; but that He was taking the current, traditional teachings of the Pharisees, which He was condemning; and using them against themselves, thus convicting them out of their own mouths. We are quite aware of the objection which will occur to some of our readers. But it is an objection based wholly on human reasoning, and on what appears to them to be probable. It will be asked, is it possible that our Lord would give utterance in such words without giving some warning to us as to the way in which He used them? Well, the answer to such is that, warning has been given in the uniform and unanimous teaching of Scripture. His own words: "they have Moses and the Prophets, let them hear them ", addressed to the Pharisees through "the Rich Man" may be taken as addressed to us also. We have (as they had) the evidence of the Old Testament (in "Moses and the Prophets"), and we have also the evidence of the New Testament, which accords with the Old. If we "hear them ", it would be impossible for us to suppose, for a moment, that Christ could be teaching here, that which is the very opposite to that of the whole Word of Yahweh.

We have the Scriptures of truth: and they reveal to us, in plain, direct, categorical, unmistakable words, that "the dead know not anything"; and that when man's breath goeth forth, "in that very day his thoughts perish". It is taken for granted, therefore, that we shall believe what Yahweh says in these and many other passages of His Word; and had we not absorbed tradition from our earliest years we should have at once seen that the popular interpretation of this passage is quite contrary to the whole analogy of Scripture. We ought to discern, at the very first glance at it, that it is unique, and stands out so isolated, by itself, that we should never for one moment dream of accepting as truth that which, if we know anything of His Word, we should instantly and instinctively detect as human tradition used for a special purpose. But, unfortunately, we have been brought up for the most part on man's books, instead of the Word of Yahweh. People draw their theology from hymns written by men who were saturated with tradition; who, when they did write a good hymn generally spoiled it in the last verse, by setting "death" as the church's hope, instead of Christ's coming. Hence, hymns are solemnly sung which contain such absurd, paradoxical teaching as the singing of Yahweh's praises while our tongues are seeing corruption, and "lie silent in the grave".

Persons saturated with such false traditions come to this Scripture with minds filled with the inventions, fabrications and imaginations of man; and can, of course, see nothing but their own traditions apparently sanctioned by our Lord. They do not notice the fact that in the very parable itself the Lord corrected the false doctrine by introducing the truth of resurrection. But when we read the passage in the light of the whole Word of Yahweh, and especially in the light of the context, we see in it the traditions of the Pharisees, which were "highly esteemed among men", but were "abomination in the sight of Yahweh" (verse 15).

All these traditions passed into Romanism. This is why we read in the note of the English Romish Version (the Douay) on Luke 16: "The bosom of Abraham is the resting place of all them that died in perfect state of grace before Christ's time - heaven, before, being shut from men. It is called in Zachary a lake without water, and sometimes a prison, but most commonly, of the Divines, 'Limbus Patrum', for that it is thought to have been the higher part, or brim, of hell", etc. Our Protestant friends do not recognize this fact; and hence they have not wholly purged themselves from Romish error. The Jews corrupted their religion by taking over the Pagan teachings of Greek Mythology. Romanism adopted these Jewish traditions of

prayers for the dead and added others of her own; and the Reformed Churches took over Romish traditions connected with the so-called "Intermediate State", which they should have purged out.

Instead of completing the Reformation in respect to such heathen traditions, they are still clinging to them to-day: and so tenaciously, that they are giving Romanists and Spiritists all they want as the foundation for their false teachings: while they reserve their wrath for those who, like ourselves, prefer to believe Yahweh's truth in opposition to the first great lie of the old serpent. But once see the truth of Yahweh's word, that "death" means death; and cease to read the word as meaning life - and away goes the only ground for the worship of the Virgin Mary, the invocation of saints, prayers to or for the dead; and all the vapourings and falsehoods of "lying spirits" and "teachings of demons" (I Tim. 4: 1,2), who would deceive, by personating deceased persons of whom Yahweh declares their thoughts have perished.

But there is one further argument which we may draw from the internal evidence of the passage itself, taken with other statements in the Gospel narrative. The Jews laid great stress on the fact that they were "Abraham's seed" (John 8:33). They said, "Abraham is our Father", whereupon the Lord answers that, though they might be Abraham's seed according to the flesh, yet they were not Abraham's true seed, inasmuch as they did not the works of Abraham (vv. 39,40).

Early in the Gospels this fallacy was dealt with judicially, when John said by Yahweh: "Think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father" (Matt. 3:9). This was when He saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to His baptism; and called them "a generation of vipers", and not the sons of Abraham. They thought and believed that inasmuch as they were the sons of Abraham by natural generation, they were entitled to all the blessings and privileges which were given to Abraham and his seed. So here, one of them is represented as saying, "Father Abraham". Three times he calls him "father", as though to lay claim to these blessings and privileges (vv. 24, 27,30). And the point of the Lord's teaching is this, that the first time Abraham speaks, he is made to acknowledge the natural relationship - "Son", he says (v. 25). But he repudiates the Pharisee's title to any spiritual favor on that account. He does not use the word "Son" again. Abraham is represented as repudiating the Pharisee's claim to anything beyond natural relationship. He may be related to him according to the flesh, but there is no closer relationship, though the Pharisee continues to claim it. So the Lord does not make Abraham repeat the word "Son" again; though the rich man twice more calls Abraham "Father". This understanding of the passage is, therefore, in strictest harmony with the whole of the immediate context, and with all the other Scriptures which bear upon this subject. It was quite unnecessary for the Lord to stop to explain for us the sense in which He used this tradition, because it was so contrary to all the other direct statements of Scripture, that no one ought for a moment to be in doubt as to what is the scope of the Lord's teaching here. No previous knowledge of Pharisaic traditions is necessary for the gathering of this scope. But as this is the conflict between Tradition and Scripture, the evidence from the Talmud comes in, and may well be used to strengthen our interpretation.

No! the Lord was at the crisis of His condemnation of the Pharisees for their false traditions which made the Word of Yahweh of none effect, and He makes use of those very teachings, adapting them to the great end of condemning them out of their own mouth.

May we all prayerfully consider the testimony of Yahweh's Word in regard to death and when the dead will live again. Thanks be to Yahweh in that we have the victory through Yahshua Christ our Lord and that victory is in Him for truly He is the Resurrection and The Life.