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## LESSONS ON IMMORTALITY

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"They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches; None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him: (For the redemption of their souls is precious, and it ceaseth forever:) That he should still live forever, and not see corruption. For he seeth that wise men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person perish, and leave their wealth to others." (Psalm 49:6-10) David was not only talking about man's eternal existence, but he affirms this: that when the body of man comes to the experience we call death, he will be reduced, no matter how rich or powerful he may have been in life, to a state of absolute equality with all others. In death there are no distinctions and no degrees. All the wealth he may have had cannot redeem his soul; all the wealth his brethren may have cannot bring him back from death.

There is not the price upon this earth to redeem or buy back one single soul from death. Jesus said, "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Matt. 16:26) The simple truth is that there would be nothing a man could use, even if he had every bit of wealth on this earth, plus all power, and all the rewards and prizes that earth affords, if he had all of this, there still would be nothing he could use for coin with which to buy back his soul. The price of a soul is not measured in money; the only tender with which the soul can be redeemed is the blood of Christ, the lamb of God. God's provision is that that sacrifice may redeem us; nothing else can ever do so.

### The Transfiguration

No one who studies the subject of immortality, or thinks on the implications of that truth can omit a study of the transfiguration of Christ. Moses had been dead for 1500 years: Elijah had not been present on this earth for something like 700 years, yet both of them came to converse with Jesus upon the mount of transfiguration. Here Jesus was transformed, and the three of them talked together concerning Christ's own approaching death. Moses and Elijah, dead in the body for all these centuries, were yet alive and conscious. Not only were they alive and conscious, but they were able to discuss with the Lord a matter of current interest and importance.

The transfiguration abundantly evidences the eternal and immortal nature of man. There is a part of man that never dies. And it is this immortal soul, this eternal spirit which stands in need of salvation. There is a part of man which cannot be fed with food which comes from the table, nor yet sustained by the substance of earthly possessions; there is a part of man that cannot be clothed with material bought in a store, nor yet educated in terms of human experience; it cannot be enshrouded in a casket, nor confined within a tomb. It is eternal; and stands in need of eternal acceptance with God. Salvation, redemption, forgiveness of sin—these are the things that are needed by the soul of man; not food, clothing, and shelter.

From that spirit world Moses and Elijah had returned to this earth. They came back from the realm of departed spirits, back from the place of rest and paradise which God has provided for the spirits of them that love and serve him; back to this earth, evidently to old Mount Hermon, to talk with Christ in his transfigured and glorified form. His approaching death on the cross was of the most intense and vital interest to them as well as to him—and to all mankind; from Adam to the last man who shall ever draw the breath of life on this earth. The visit of these two saints of old but emphasizes the reality and the nearness of that spirit world to the world in which we daily live and move.

### Saul and Endor's Witch

One of the most interesting of all Old Testament stories has to do with that curious phenomenon that had Saul visiting the witch of Endor, and she, in turn, calling forth Samuel from his place in the realm of the dead. The wrath of God had descended upon Saul because of his disobedience; he had been removed from his authority as king, and David had succeeded to the throne. In desperation Saul disguised himself, and went down to the witch of Endor. Knowing not that she was talking with the man who had been king, the witch asked Saul what his desire was, with whom did he wish to talk? He replied, Samuel. And the record says that Samuel came forth, and held converse with Saul. It was not through any power or authority of the witch that Samuel appeared; rather, God for a special purpose and by his own power called forth his aged

(See IMMORTALITY, page 9)

the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect."

Because of the welcome in heaven.

Rev. 2:10 b: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life."

Because angels will be in heaven.

Matt. 22:30: "For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as angels in heaven."

Because beautiful singing will ring in heaven.

Rev. 19:1: "After these things I heard as it were a great voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, Hallelujah; Salvation, and glory, and power, belong unto our God." See Rev. 19:6.

Because we have a house not made with hands eternal in the heavens.

2 Cor. 5:1: "For we know that if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens."

Because we long to be clothed upon with our habitation from heaven.

2 Cor. 5:2: "For verily in this we groan, longing to be clothed upon with our habitation which is from heaven."

Because the faithful in Christ will be caught up, never to return to this earth.

2 Thess. 4:17: "Then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

Because our affection is upon things above, not on things that are upon the earth.

Col. 3:2: "Set your mind on the things that are above, not on the things that are upon the earth."

Because there will be no sin in heaven.

Rev. 21:27: "And there shall in no wise enter into it anything unclean, or he that maketh an abomination and a lie; but only they that are written in the Lamb's book of life."

Because there will be no sinners in heaven. Ibid.

Rev. 22:15: "Without are the dogs, and the sorcerers, and the fornicators, and the murderers, and the idolaters, and everyone that loveth and maketh a lie."

Because there will be no night there.

Rev. 22:5: "And there shall be night no more; and they need no light of lamp, neither light of sun; for the Lord shall give them light; and they shall reign forever and ever."

Because there will be no curse there.

Rev. 22:3-4: "And there shall be no curse any more: and the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be therein: and his servants shall serve him; and they shall see his face; and his name shall be on their foreheads."

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**Immortality . . . . .** (Continued from page 1)

prophet once again to an earthly conference.

This narrative (1 Samuel 28) serves but to emphasize still further how near and how real is the world of the spirits to our own world. It is not the false, ghostly world of modern "spiritualism," nor are we to give credence to the fantastic claims of modern mediums and spiritualistic fakes. These people have no power, and have never had power, to call any person from any realm of the dead.

Harry Houdini, perhaps the greatest magician who has ever lived, offered a reward of \$20,000 to any spiritualist medium on earth who could do anything in any kind of seance that he could not duplicate—and that without the aid of divine power or superhuman phenomena. So the witch was no medium; nor had she any power of her own. But God permitted Samuel to come forth at her incantations and speak with Saul in this final desperate hour.

These two stories, the transfiguration and Saul's visit with Samuel, should cause every thoughtful student to reflect on how narrow the vale that divides this world from that unseen realm across the river of death. As we are alive here and now, so do we live on after the brief struggle we call "death"; as we are conscious, thinking, and active beings now, so does the soul remain conscious and active after the body has been laid aside. The body is lifeless, because the spirit, the real life, has departed. That is all there is to it. There is no dissolution of the spirit. It can never die.

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**Member . . . . .** (Continued from page 2)

you believe that Jesus is the Son of God, and realizing that you are lost, you desire to be saved, then why not call upon him by obeying his will? (Matt. 7:21) No joining the church. If you obey the gospel you will be in the church. You will be born again. No voting on reception. Remission of sins will be yours. Salvation to the obedient. (Mark 16:16) Read the cases in Acts and see what they did. If you wish to be what they were then do what they did.

7. Because it seeks to worship only as inspiration directs.

Jesus said God wanted worshippers to worship Him in spirit and truth. (John 4:24) When we find early disciples meeting on the Lord's Day to sing, pray, read, commune, and contribute (Acts 2:42; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; Acts 20:7) and we do just this, are we worshipping in spirit and truth? In the Old Testament they worshipped God differently. Many Christians try to go back there and follow the Jewish worship. In order to be consistent they would have to burn incense, offer animal sacrifices, and go to Jerusalem every year. They use instrumental music as an aid when the Bible authorizes Christians to sing and it stops there. Erring brethren of the Christian church need to be converted on this. (James 5:19,20) If you use Psalms 150 as proof for instrumental music, why not use Psalms 149 which says: "Let the high praises of God be on their lips and a two edged sword in their hands." Will you do this? You object and say that this was for the Jews. Then, we offer the same for the music. We love music but we desire to be safe and worship God only as He directs. Nowhere did any apostle or inspired man ever authorize the use of any music box. There is no need for a music box as an 'aid' if we will use the vocal organ God has given. Vocal music is the best music in the world when trained voices blend with praise to God Almighty. There is no need for suppers if every Christian gives as commanded. Departures come one by one. "Here a little and there a little."

Will you prayerfully consider these things? If you are not a member of the Lord's church will you read every reference and then act accordingly? Remember, the truth will make you free. (John 8:38) But it must be obeyed first. (Heb. 5:8,9; 2 Thess. 1:7-9; Rom. 6:17,18)

"Think on these things."