

Now Concerning Spiritual Things
an historical account of one man's walk with God

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**MAY ONE BE
SAVED THEN LOST ETERNALLY?**

Are there scriptures which seem to support the fact that one may be saved, born again with his name written in the Lamb's Book of Life, and then turn from God in such a way so as to be eternally lost – doomed to hell forever? This seems contrary to a repeated cliché or phrase heard in one large denomination, "Once saved, always saved." I understand the rationale behind that statement, or at least I think I do. Certainly, one walking with God will sin, but confession and repentance bring restitution, not of one's salvation which was never lost, but of "right standing with God" or the "peace" within which characterizes a true walk with God. This paper is not intended to cause any believer to doubt the security of his salvation in Christ, "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."¹ What I wish to do in this letter, however, is to examine several scriptures on this subject and hopefully arrive at a biblical conclusion. Come with me to look at God's word.

The Church at Sardis

The Roman emperor Domitian banished the apostle John to Patmos prison about 95 or 96 A.D. for the crime of preaching the gospel of Christ. While there, John was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day and was given a series of visions and revelations concerning seven churches of that day and certain end-time events yet to occur. To the angel of the church in Sardis, John wrote, "I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead."² "You have a few names even in Sardis who have not defiled their garments, and they shall walk with Me [Jesus] in white, for they are worthy. He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels."³

From this scripture we learn that some in the Sardis

church were "dead" (in a lost condition) and had defiled their garments (their saved condition – their covenant walk with God) and were given a stern warning – an ultimatum: Repent or be condemned by having their names blotted out from the Book of Life. That means to be lost – doomed to hell! Here is a clear case of some who were born again and knew the way of righteousness only to turn back to ways of the world.

Faith at Capernaum

"Now when Jesus entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, pleading with Him, saying, 'Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, dreadfully *tormented*.'⁴ And Jesus said to him, 'I will come and heal him.' The centurion answered and said, 'Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed. For I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to this one, 'Go,' and he goes, and to another, 'Come,' and he comes, and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it. When Jesus heard it, He marveled, and said to those who followed, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel! And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. **But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.**' Then Jesus said to the centurion, 'Go your way, and as you have believed, so let it be done for you.' And his servant was healed that same hour."⁵

Here in the midst of a lesson on faith and healing, Jesus

⁴The verb *tormented* in this scripture verse is translated from the Greek word basanizo (Strong's #228) meaning to torture – pain, toil, torment, toss, vex. It is interesting to note that the *same root word* is used in Matthew 18:34: "And his lord was wroth and delivered him to the tormentors, [a plural noun from the Greek basanistes (Strong's #930)], till he should pay all that was due unto him." Being delivered to the *tormentors* was the penalty pronounced by the master upon his servant because of unforgiveness, as taught by Jesus in the parable (See Matthew 18:21-34). I have concluded that the centurion's servant was tormented or vexed with a demon (or demons) and the "long-distance" healing may have been a long-distance deliverance to heal, based on the faith of the centurion. This is a powerful principle that may be used by a deliverance minister in praying with someone whose minor child, for example, is at a remote area some distance from the place of prayer. This principle is valid for healing, whether or not demons may be involved.

⁵Matthew 8:5-13, bold italics added.

¹Romans 8:37, 38.

²Revelation 3:1 (b).

³Revelation 3:4, 5, brackets added.

inserts a statement about “sons of the kingdom” being cast into outer darkness where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, in contrast to the great faith of the centurion. A brief review of the many passages which refer to the *kingdom of heaven, His kingdom and My kingdom*, for example, cause me to conclude that *sons of the kingdom* referred to in this passage of scripture are those who were at one time born-again believers whose names were written in the Lamb’s Book of Life who sinned in such a way, without repentance, so as to be cast into outer darkness. Weeping (or wailing) and gnashing of teeth represents grief-stricken agony. The scripture to my knowledge speaks of no reprieve for those who are cast out into outer darkness.

There are six New Testament verses of scripture which contain the phrase “**weeping (or wailing) and gnashing of teeth.**” Here are those verses along with a brief contextual statement on each verse, followed by Strong’s Greek definitions:

(1) Matthew 8:12. *Sons of the kingdom* cast into outer darkness where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

(2) Matthew 13:42. The righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father, *but those who offend and practice lawlessness* will be cast into the furnace of fire where there will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

(3) Matthew 13:50. At the end of the age, angels will come forth and cast *the wicked* into the furnace of fire where there will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

(4) Matthew 22:13. The one who attended the wedding *without a wedding garment* was bound hand and foot and cast into outer darkness where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

(5) Matthew 24:51. The unfaithful servant who begins to *beat his fellow servants and to eat and drink with the drunkards* will be surprised by the arrival of the master who will divide his portion in two and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

(6) Matthew 25:30. *The wicked, lazy servant who hid his talent in the ground so as to return it to the master intact* lost it and was cast into outer darkness where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Weeping, klaio, Strong’s #2805, from #2799: to sob, to wail aloud, bewail, weep.

Wailing, klauthmos, Strong’s #2805: lamentation – wailing, weeping, x wept.

Gnashing of teeth, bruchos, Strong’s #1030, from #1031: to grate the teeth (in pain or rage).

Here is a tabulation of the traits common to the six examples:

<u>Descriptive Condition</u>	<u>Times Mentioned</u>
Outer darkness	3
Weeping	4
Wailing	2
Gnashing of teeth	6
Furnace of fire	2

From this review of all New Testament scripture on this subject, it appears to me the conclusive evidence is strong. Even though certain other bible students may hold another view, I have concluded that the “sons of the kingdom” in scripture (1) were saved, then sinned in such a way, without repentance, so as to be cast forever into outer darkness, a compartment of hell.

Eternal Life For All

Here is something that needs to be cleared up. **Everyone** born of woman **has eternal life, period!** There are no exceptions. Scripture even takes it farther than that. **Everyone is formed in the womb by God, not by random chance.** Here is what the Lord said to the Prophet Jeremiah about that subject: “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations.”⁶ According to this scripture, God knows **everyone before he is formed in the womb and He literally forms in the womb each and every human being Himself.** Based on this scriptural fact, I believe that every aborted or miscarried or stillborn child, having been formed by God in the womb, is escorted by angels to heaven⁷ **to begin life there** where they will continue to grow and are taught the word of God. Each will be blessed by his or her mother’s arrival! Mothers hear this: live your life totally devoted to God to be reunited to that infant you thought you lost! If that child was aborted, confess the sin, ask for God’s forgiveness, repent and be restored to God’s favor. And know assuredly that your miscarried, stillborn or aborted child lives today because he was formed by God in your womb! That is why abortion is a crime against God, but not against the state, based on the U.S. Supreme Court decision in the case of *Roe v. Wade*. That decision should be reversed. The state does not supercede God’s law without serious

⁶Jeremiah 1:5. See also Isaiah 43:1.

⁷See Luke 16:22 for proof of the angelic escort to heaven. The beggar, Lazarus, was escorted to Abraham’s bosom, the temporary resting place of the righteous dead prior to the cross at which time Jesus transferred or transported Abraham’s bosom to heaven.

repercussions. “Righteousness (right standing with God) exalts a nation but sin is a reproach to any people.”⁸

Just for the record, there is no such thing as an illegitimate child. The act is illegitimate, but not the child since every child is a precious creation of God.

The bible phrase “eternal life” refers to spending an eternity with God in heaven. Yes, heaven is a definite place prepared and reserved for those who have named Jesus as Savior and Lord of their life and continue faithful to God’s call and election. Hell is just as real as heaven and both are for eternity. Beware of the religions that talk about Jesus and the love of God while denying the necessity of the cross, the efficacy of the saving blood of Jesus and the reality of hell. Run from such teaching which is the enemy’s way of enticing you into his lair. Here is a brief synoptic overview of these biblical facts.

When God formed man (Adam) from the dust of the ground, He then breathed into his nostrils (not his mouth) the breath of life and for the first time ever, man **became** a living soul.⁹ God’s breath in man imparted eternal (unending) life and simultaneously *created* his soul, meaning his mind, will, emotions and intellect which form the basis of his personality. The soul is the only part of man that was created. Although scripture states that man was created,¹⁰ the way he was created was by being formed out of the dust of the ground that was already in existence.¹¹ God’s breath then gave man life and thereafter man’s life, imparted by God’s breath, is **permanently joined to his soul forever**. When man breathes his last breath, his soul departs from his body in a spiritual configuration identical to his physical body. If he is saved, that is, if he accepted Jesus as Savior and Lord of his life, angels escort him to heaven. If he is not saved, his soul goes to the part of the Hadean world reserved for the lost that are tormented in flame¹² awaiting the great white throne judgement after the millennial reign of Christ on the earth. I have no scriptural evidence for this statement, but I believe Satan’s angels (demons) are present at death to escort those who served him to their place of torment, since Satan imitates God.

⁸Proverbs 14:34.

⁹Read Genesis 2:7.

¹⁰See Genesis 1:27.

¹¹A child is created or “formed” in the womb from (two) substances previously created in a similar way that Adam was created or “formed” from substances previously created.

¹²See Luke 16:24.

When Adam was told that he would surely die if he ate of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, that did not mean physical death, it meant spiritual death, that is, separation from God. Adam was created or “formed” to live eternally with God, just as those of us who are now saved, are saved (restored to God’s grace) to live eternally with God. When one is born again, the Holy Spirit enters him and imparts to him Spiritual Life which was lost when Adam sinned. It is then that man can once again have communion (fellowship) with God.

Take Christianity Seriously

A survey taken on August 29, 1999, in the senior adult class of a large growing charismatic Church in Dallas revealed that only 20% of the class (out of 65 members responding to the survey) knew the will of the Lord for their life! I feel very strongly that far too many of us take our commitment to Christ too lightly. Confessing Jesus as Lord portends great blessings to those who then walk in covenant¹³ relationship with God – and curses pronounced upon those who break that covenant. What I believe this may reveal is our lack of understanding (teaching) of the blood covenant cut between God and man instituted at the Passover supper the night before Jesus was crucified. Here is a brief explanation.

That night “as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the [twelve] disciples and said, ‘take, eat; this is My body.’ Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, ‘Drink from it, all of you. **For this is My blood of the new covenant**, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.’”¹⁴ This final blood covenant cut between God and man was portended by the blood covenant cut between God and Abram some 1800 years before the cross (see Genesis chapter 15). **The communion cup symbolically represents the covenant mixture of the blood of man and the blood of God, which is why Jesus came to earth as both the son of man and the Son of God.** When the blood of two individuals who cut a covenant is co-mingled in a cup and both parties drink from that cup, it signifies that **they are one** in all aspects of both life and death. Each pledges to the other everything he owns or possesses according to need as the blessing part of the covenant. In like manner, curses are pronounced by each upon the other

¹³The word “covenant” appears 273 times in the Old Testament. In 266 of these listings, the definition from Strong’s #1285 (Hebrew: bryyth) is: “in the sense of cutting – a compact made by passing between two pieces of flesh – confederacy – covenant – league.”

¹⁴See Matthew 26:26-28, brackets and bold emphasis added.

in the event the covenant is broken.¹⁵ In the case of the covenant cut by Jesus on the cross, God has pronounced curses upon those who enter into the covenant by confessing Jesus as Lord but do not keep the provisions of the covenant. And the covenant is binding even unto death, in the defense of and/or for the protection of the other party. When Jesus cut the blood covenant on the cross, He gave His life and His own blood to conquer Satan, man's enemy, which man could not do. Therein and thereby He kept His part of the covenant and gave His life for our protection. Likewise we must keep our part of the covenant or be subject to the curses of disobedience. When we take the Lord's supper and drink of the covenant of blessing, which is symbolically the blood of the covenant, we testify that we are in covenant relationship with God through the covenant Jesus cut for both God and man at the cross. If we eat the bread and drink of the cup and are not in covenant relationship with God, we invoke the curses of the covenant upon ourselves. That is why some at Corinth were weak and sick and some had died who made a drunken feast of the Lord's supper (1 Cor. 11:30). And that is why Judas, who partook of the first communion with our Lord, indicating allegiance and devotion, while in his heart he knew that was a lie, fell under God's curse and went out and killed himself. As the apostle Paul wrote, "For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgement to himself, not discerning the Lord's body." (1 Cor. 11:29). The communion cup is a cup of blessing (1 Cor. 10:16) or a cup of cursing (1 Cor. 11:30).

We must be willing to literally give our life for Him (even as He willingly gave His life for us) before we can learn to live for Him. That is what covenant means! That is what commitment means. We really have but one choice in serving Him. It's all or nothing at all. Confessing Jesus as Lord is a line drawn in the sand. If we are to serve Him – if we are to be effective in His service, we must be willing to lay our life on the line, if necessary, or we are not in covenant relationship with Him. He has done His part. The rest is left up to us. This kind of commitment to our Lord will, in time, bring to each of us His revelation of what we have been called and elected to do. As this revelation is received from the Holy Spirit, life will begin to have real meaning and we will know God's will for our life.

Three Additional Considerations

¹⁵Deuteronomy 28:1-14 list blessings for those walking in covenant relationship with God. Verses 15-68 list curses pronounced by God on those who were in covenant relationship with Him and then broke that covenant.

(1) "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame."¹⁶

From this scripture, I have concluded that once we are gloriously saved and participate in *everything* God has provided to draw us to Him, and then fall away, God has no additional way to woo us or draw us back to Him.

(2) "For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning. For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them."¹⁷

Two things may be concluded from this scripture: (a) One may be saved through the knowledge of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord and then become so entangled and overcome by the world that he loses his salvation, and (b) one who turns to the Lord and then falls away will receive greater punishment than one who was never saved.

(3) "For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. Of how much worse punishment do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sacrificed a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace? For we know Him who said, 'Vengeance is Mine, I will repay' says the Lord. And again, 'The Lord will judge His people.' It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."¹⁸ Here again the scripture affirms that one can be saved, then turn from God in such a way so as to be lost eternally.

A closing positive note from personal experience: Knowing the Lord Jesus personally and walking in covenant relationship with Him carries greater blessings both now and in the future than anyone can imagine.

¹⁶Hebrews 6:4-6.

¹⁷2 Peter 2:21.

¹⁸Hebrews 10:26-31.