



What happens  
when you die?

Ellen Gould White

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*A compilation from the pen of an American author,  
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# The Divine Life-Giver

## Source of All Life

*For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light.  
Psalm 36:9.*

All created beings live by the will and power of God. They are dependent recipients of the life of God. From the highest seraph to the humblest animate being, all are replenished from the Source of life.

The youth need to understand the deep truth underlying the Bible statement that with God “is the fountain of life.” Not only is He the originator of all, but He is the life of everything that lives. It is His life that we receive in the sunshine, in the pure, sweet air, in the food which builds up our bodies and sustains our strength. It is by His life that we exist, hour by hour, moment by moment. Except as perverted by sin, all His gifts tend to life, to health and joy.

A mysterious life pervades all nature—a life that sustains the world throughout immensity, that lives in the insect atom which floats in the summer breeze, that wings the flight of the swallow and feeds the young ravens which cry, that brings the bud to blossom and the flower to fruit.

The same power that upholds nature, is working also in man. The laws that govern the heart’s action, regulating the flow of the current of life to the body, are the laws of the mighty Intelligence that has the jurisdiction of the soul. From Him all life proceeds. Only in harmony with Him can be found its true sphere of action. For all the objects of His creation the condition is the same—a life sustained by receiving the life of God, a life exercised in harmony with the Creator’s will. To transgress His law, physical, mental, or moral, is to place one’s self out of harmony with the universe.

To him who learns thus to interpret its teachings, all nature becomes illuminated; the world is a lesson book, life a school. The unity of man with nature and with God, the universal dominion of law, the results of transgression, cannot fail of impressing the mind and molding the character.

## He Cares for Us Every Minute

*Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. Psalm 100:3.*

The work of creation cannot be explained by science. What science can explain the mystery of life?

Life is a gift of God.

The natural life is preserved moment by moment by divine power; yet it is not sustained by a direct miracle, but through the use of blessings placed within our reach.

The Saviour in His miracles revealed the power that is continually at work in man's behalf, to sustain and to heal him. Through the agencies of nature, God is working, day by day, hour by hour, moment by moment, to keep us alive, to build up and restore us. When any part of the body sustains injury, a healing process is at once begun; nature's agencies are set at work to restore soundness. But the power working through these agencies is the power of God. All life-giving power is from Him. When one recovers from disease, it is God who restores him. Sickness, suffering, and death are work of an antagonistic power. Satan is the destroyer; God is the restorer.

A great lesson is learned when we understand our relation to God, and His relation to us.

We have an individuality and an identity that is our own. No one can submerge his identity in that of any other. All must act for themselves, according to the dictates of their own conscience. As regards our responsibility and influence, we are amenable to God as deriving our life from Him. This we do not obtain from humanity, but from God only. We are His by creation and by redemption. Our very bodies are not our own, to treat as we please, to cripple by habits that lead to decay, making it impossible to render to God perfect service. Our lives and all our faculties belong to Him. He is caring for us every moment; He keeps the living machinery in action; if we were left to run it for one moment, we should die. We are absolutely dependent upon God.

# The Great Object of Life

*I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Philippians 3:14.*

When Adam came from the Creator's hand, he bore, in his physical, mental, and spiritual nature, a likeness to his Maker. "God created man in his own image" (Genesis 1:27), and it was His purpose that the longer man lived the more fully he should reveal this image—the more fully reflect the glory of the Creator. All his faculties were capable of development; their capacity and vigor were continually to increase. Vast was the scope offered for their exercise, glorious the field opened to their research. The mysteries of the visible universe—the "wondrous works of him which is perfect in knowledge" (Job 37:16)—invited man's study. Face-to-face, heart-to-heart communion with his Maker was his high privilege. Had he remained loyal to God, all this would have been his forever. Throughout eternal ages he would have continued to gain new treasures of knowledge, to discover fresh springs of happiness, and to obtain clearer and yet clearer conceptions of the wisdom, the power, and the love of God. More and more fully would he have reflected the Creator's glory.

But by disobedience this was forfeited. Through sin the divine likeness was marred, and well-nigh obliterated. Man's physical powers were weakened, his mental capacity was lessened, his spiritual vision dimmed. He had become subject to death. Yet the race was not left without hope. By infinite love and mercy the plan of salvation had been devised, and a life of probation was granted. To restore in man the image of his Maker, to bring him back to the perfection in which he was created, to promote the development of body, mind, and soul, that the divine purpose in his creation might be realized—this was to be the work of redemption. This is the object of education, the great object of life.

To honor Christ, to become like Him, to work for Him, is life's highest ambition and its greatest joy.

# One Lease of Life

*Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them. Ecclesiastes 12:1.*

Life is mysterious and sacred. It is the manifestation of God Himself, the source of all life. Precious are its opportunities, and earnestly should they be improved. Once lost, they are gone forever.

Before us God places eternity, with its solemn realities, and gives us a grasp on immortal, imperishable themes. He presents valuable, ennobling truth, that we may advance in a safe and sure path, in pursuit of an object worthy of the earnest engagement of all our capabilities.

God looks into the tiny seed that He Himself has formed, and sees wrapped within it the beautiful flower, the shrub, or the lofty, widespreading tree. So does He see the possibilities in every human being. We are here for a purpose. God has given us His plan for our life, and He desires us to reach the highest standard of development.

He desires that we shall constantly be growing in holiness, in happiness, in usefulness. All have capabilities which they must be taught to regard as sacred endowments, to appreciate as the Lord's gifts, and rightly to employ. He desires the youth to cultivate every power of their being, and to bring every faculty into active exercise. He desires them to enjoy all that is useful and precious in this life, to be good and to do good, laying up a heavenly treasure for the future life.

It should be their ambition to excel in all things that are unselfish, high, and noble. Let them look to Christ as the pattern after which they are to be fashioned. The holy ambition that He revealed in His life they are to cherish—an ambition to make the world better for their having lived in it. This is the work to which they are called.

Only one lease of life is granted us; and the inquiry with everyone should be, How can I invest my life so that it will yield the greatest profit? How can I do most for the glory of God and the benefit of my fellow men?

## Behind the Scenes of Life

*And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them. Isaiah 42:16.*

In the annals of human history the growth of nations, the rise and fall of empires, appear as dependent on the will and prowess of man. The shaping of events seems, to a great degree, to be determined by his power, ambition, or caprice. But in the Word of God the curtain is drawn aside, and we behold, behind, above, and through all the play and counterplay of human interests and power and passions, the agencies of the all-merciful One, silently, patiently working out the counsels of His own will.

Amidst the strife and tumult of nations, He that sitteth above the cherubim still guides the affairs of the earth. To every nation and to every individual God has assigned a place in His great plan. Men and nations are being measured by the plummet in the hand of Him who makes no mistake. All are by their own choice deciding their destiny, and God is overruling all for the accomplishment of His purposes.

The history which the great I AM has marked out in His Word, uniting link after link in the prophetic chain, from eternity in the past to eternity in the future, tells us where we are today in the procession of the ages, and what may be expected in the time to come.

All that prophecy has foretold as coming to pass, until the present time, has been traced on the pages of history, and we may be assured that all which is yet to come will be fulfilled in its order.

We need to study the working out of God's purpose in the history of nations and in the revelation of things to come, that we may estimate at their true value things seen and things unseen; that we may learn what is the true aim of life; that, viewing the things of time in the light of eternity, we may put them to their truest and noblest use.



# Live While You Have a Chance

*Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest. Ecclesiastes 9:10.*

It is a solemn thing to die, but a far more solemn thing to live. Every thought and word and deed of our lives will meet us again. What we make of ourselves in probationary time, that we must remain to all eternity. Death brings dissolution to the body, but makes no change in the character. The coming of Christ does not change our characters; it only fixes them forever beyond all change.

I appeal to the members of the church to be Christians, to be Christlike. Jesus was a worker, not for Himself, but for others. If you are Christians you will imitate His example. Awake, I beseech you, from the sleep of death. It is too late to devote the strength of brain, bone, and muscle to self-serving. Let not the last day find you destitute of heavenly treasure. Seek to push the triumphs of the cross, seek to enlighten souls, labor for the salvation of your fellow beings, and your work will abide the trying test of fire.

Let us remember that while the work we have to do may not be our choice, it is to be accepted as God's choice for us. Whether pleasing or unpleasing, we are to do the duty that lies nearest. "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest."

If the Lord desires us to bear a message to Nineveh, it will not be as pleasing to Him for us to go to Joppa or to Capernaum. He has reasons for sending us to the place toward which our feet have been directed. At that very place there may be someone in need of the help we can give.

*Whatever the line of work in which we engage, the Word of God teaches us to be "not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord." Romans 12:11.*

*"Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ." Colossians 3:24.*

## Seeking the Heavenly Treasure

*Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.*

*Colossians 3:2.*

The Lord reveals man's relative estimate of time and eternity, of earth and heaven. He has admonished us: "If riches increase, set not your heart upon them." Psalm 62:10. They have a value when used for the good of others and the glory of God; but no earthly treasure is to be your portion, your god, or your savior.

God tests men, some in one way, and some in another. He tests some by bestowing upon them His rich bounties, and others by withholding His favors. He proves the rich to see if they will love God, the Giver, and their neighbor as themselves. When man makes a right use of these bounties, God is pleased; He can then trust him with greater responsibilities.

There is within the worldly man a craving for something that he does not have. He has, from force of habit, bent every thought, every purpose, in the direction of making provision for the future, and as he grows older, he becomes more eager than ever to acquire all that it is possible to gain.

All this energy, this perseverance, this determination, this industry after earthly power, is the result of the perversion of his powers to a wrong object. Every faculty might have been cultivated to the highest possible elevation by exercise, for the heavenly, immortal life, and for the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. The customs and practices of the worldly man in his perseverance and his energies, and in availing himself of every opportunity to add to his store, should be a lesson to those who claim to be children of God, seeking for glory, honor, and immortality. The children of the world are wiser in their generation than the children of the light, and herein is seen their wisdom. Their object is for earthly gain, and to this end they direct all their energies. O that this zeal would characterize the toiler for heavenly riches!

# The Interlude of Silence

## The Arrow of Death

*O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end! Deuteronomy 32:29.*

The Lord “doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men.” Lamentations 3:33. “Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust.” Psalm 103:13, 14. He knows our heart, for He reads every secret of the soul. He knows the end from the beginning. Many will be laid away to sleep before the fiery ordeal of the time of trouble shall come upon our world.

If Jesus, the world’s Redeemer, prayed, “O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me,” and added, “nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt” (Matthew 26:39), how very appropriate it is for finite mortals to make the same surrender to the wisdom and will of God.

We have but a brief lifetime here, and we know not how soon the arrow of death may strike our hearts. We know not how soon we may be called to give up the world and all its interests. Eternity stretches before us. The curtain is about to be lifted. But a few short years, and for everyone now numbered with the living the mandate will go forth: “He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: ... and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.” Revelation 22:11.

Are we prepared? Have we become acquainted with God, the Governor of heaven, the Lawgiver, and with Jesus Christ whom He sent into the world as His representative? When our lifework is ended, shall we be able to say, as did Christ our example:

*“I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.... I have manifested thy name”?* John 17:4-6.

The angels of God are seeking to attract us from ourselves and from earthly things. Let them not labor in vain.

## Light in the Shadows

*But though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies. For he doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men. Lamentations 3:32, 33.*

When my eldest son was sixteen years old, he was stricken down in sickness. His case was considered critical, and he called us to his bedside, and said, "Father, Mother, it will be hard for you to part with your eldest son. If the Lord sees fit to spare my life, for your sake I will be pleased. If it is for my good and His name's glory for my life to close now, I will say, It is well with my soul. Father, go by yourself, and Mother, go by yourself; and pray. Then you will receive an answer according to the will of my Saviour, whom you love and I love." He was afraid that if we should bow together, our sympathies would strengthen, and we would ask for that which it would not be best for the Lord to grant. We received no evidence that our son would recover. He died, putting his full trust in Jesus our Saviour. His death was a great blow to us, but it was a victory even in death; for his life was hid with Christ in God.

Before the death of my eldest boy, my babe was sick unto death. We prayed, and thought that the Lord would spare us our darling; but we closed his eyes in death, and laid him away to rest in Jesus, until the Life-giver shall come to awaken His precious loved ones to a glorious immortality.

Then my husband, the faithful servant of Jesus Christ, who had stood by my side for thirty-six years, was taken from me, and I was left to labor alone. He sleeps in Jesus. I have no tears to shed over his grave. But how I miss him!

It might be that many little ones are to be laid away before the time of trouble. We shall see our children again. We shall meet them and know them in the heavenly courts. Put your trust in the Lord, and be not afraid.

## Man a Mere Mortal

*Shall mortal man be more just than God? shall a man be more pure than his maker? Job 4:17.*

Man is only mortal, and while he feels himself too wise to accept Jesus, he will remain only mortal.

Physical life is not eternal or immortal; for God, the Life-giver, takes it again. Man has no control over his life.

The Word of God nowhere teaches that the soul of man is immortal. Immortality is an attribute of God only.

Upon the fundamental error of natural immortality rests the doctrine of consciousness in death—a doctrine, like eternal torment, opposed to the teachings of the Scriptures, to the dictates of reason, and to our feelings of humanity. What say the Scriptures concerning these things? David declares that man is not conscious in death.

*“His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.” Psalm 146:4.*

When, in answer to his prayer, Hezekiah’s life was prolonged fifteen years, the grateful king rendered to God a tribute of praise for His great mercy. In this song he tells the reason why he thus rejoices: “The grave cannot praise thee, death can not celebrate thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth. The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day.” Isaiah 38:18,19. Popular theology represents the righteous dead as in heaven, entered into bliss, and praising God with an immortal tongue; but Hezekiah could see no such glorious prospect in death.

Peter, on the day of Pentecost, declared that the patriarch David “is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day.” “For David is not ascended into the heavens.” Acts 2:29, 34. The fact that David remains in the grave until the resurrection, proves that the righteous do not go to heaven at death. It is only through the resurrection, and by virtue of the fact that Christ has risen, that David can at last sit at the right hand of God.

## Man's State in Death

*For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun. Ecclesiastes 9:5, 6.*

The theory of the immortality of the soul was one of those false doctrines that Rome, borrowing from paganism, incorporated into the religion of Christendom. Martin Luther classed it with the "monstrous fables that form part of the Roman dunghill of decretals." Commenting on the words of Solomon in Ecclesiastes, that the dead know not anything, the Reformer says: "... Solomon judgeth that the dead are asleep, and feel nothing at all. For the dead lie there, accounting neither days nor years, but when they are awakened, they shall seem to have slept scarce one minute."

The martyr Tyndale, referring to the state of the dead, declared: "I confess openly, that I am not persuaded that they be already in the full glory that Christ is in, or the elect angels of God are in. Neither is it any article of my faith; for if it were so, I see not but then the preaching of the resurrection of the flesh were a thing in vain."

According to the popular belief, the redeemed in heaven are acquainted with all that takes place on the earth, and especially with the lives of the friends whom they have left behind. But how could it be a source of happiness to the dead to know the troubles of the living, to see them enduring all the sorrows, disappointments, and anguish of life? And how utterly revolting is the belief that as soon as the breath leaves the body, the soul of the impenitent is consigned to the flames of hell! To what depths of anguish must those be plunged who see their friends passing to the grave unprepared, to enter upon an eternity of woe and sin!

Christ represents death as a sleep to His believing children. Their life is hid with Christ in God, and until the last trump shall sound those who die will sleep in Him.

## A Goodness in God's Justice

*And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. Matthew 10:28.*

How repugnant to every emotion of love and mercy, and even to our sense of justice, is the doctrine that the wicked dead are tormented with fire and brimstone in an eternally burning hell; that for the sins of a brief earthly life they are to suffer torture as long as God shall live.

Where, in the pages of God's Word, is such teaching to be found? Will the redeemed in heaven be lost to all emotions of pity and compassion, and even to feelings of common humanity? Are these to be exchanged for the indifference of the stoic, or the cruelty of the savage? No, no; such is not the teaching of the Book of God. The theory of eternal torment is one of the false doctrines that constitute the wine of the abominations of Babylon. When we consider in what false colors Satan has painted the character of God, can we wonder that our merciful Creator is feared, even hated?

The principles of kindness, mercy, and love, taught and exemplified by our Saviour, are a transcript of the will and character of God. God executes justice upon the wicked, for the good of the universe, and even for the good of those upon whom His judgments are visited.

Those who have chosen Satan as their leader, and have been controlled by his power, are not prepared to enter the presence of God.

Could they endure the glory of God and the Lamb? No, no; years of probation were granted them, that they might form characters for heaven; but they have never trained the mind to love purity; they have never learned the language of heaven, and now it is too late.

To sin, wherever found, "our God is a consuming fire." Hebrews 12:29. In all who submit to His power the Spirit of God will consume sin. But if men cling to sin, they become identified with it. Then the glory of God, which destroys sin, must destroy them.

## The Portion of the Wicked

*Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die. Ezekiel 18:4.*

While life is the inheritance of the righteous, death is the portion of the wicked.

The soul that sinneth it shall die an everlasting death—a death that will last forever, from which there will be no hope of a resurrection.

It was a marvel to me that Satan could succeed so well in making men believe that the words of God, “The soul that sinneth, it shall die,” mean that the soul that sinneth it shall not die, but live eternally in misery. Life is life, whether it is in pain or happiness. Death is without pain, without joy, without hatred.

Christ endured an agonizing death under the most humiliating circumstances that we might have life. He gave up His precious life that He might vanquish death. But He rose from the tomb, and the myriads of angels who came to behold Him take up the life He had laid down heard His words of triumphant joy as He stood above Joseph’s rent sepulcher proclaiming:

*“I am the resurrection, and the life.” John 11:25.*

The question, “If a man die, shall he live again?” has been answered. By bearing the penalty of sin, by going down into the grave, Christ has brightened the tomb for all who die in faith. God in human form has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. In dying, Christ secured eternal life for all who believe in Him. In dying, He condemned the originator of sin and disloyalty to suffer the penalty of sin—eternal death.

The possessor and giver of eternal life, Christ was the only one who could conquer death. He is our Redeemer.

Christ is life itself. He who passed through death to destroy him that had the power of death is the Source of all vitality. There is balm in Gilead, and a Physician there.



# Immortality Through Christ

## Natural Immortality a Lie

*The getting of treasures by a lying tongue is a vanity tossed to and fro of them that seek death. Proverbs 21:6.*

The great original lie which he, Satan, told to Eve in Eden, “Ye shall not surely die,” was the first sermon ever preached on the immortality of the soul. That sermon was crowned with success, and terrible results followed. He has brought minds to receive that sermon as truth, and ministers preach it, sing it, and pray it.

After the Fall, Satan bade his angels make a special effort to inculcate the belief in man’s natural immortality; and having induced the people to receive this error, they were to lead them on to conclude that the sinner would live in eternal misery. Now the prince of darkness, working through his agents, represents God as a revengeful tyrant, declaring that He plunges into hell all those who do not please Him, and causes them ever to feel His wrath.

A large class to whom the doctrine of eternal torment is revolting, are driven to the opposite error. They see that the Scriptures represent God as a being of love and compassion, and they cannot believe that He will consign His creatures to the fires of an eternally burning hell. But holding that the soul is naturally immortal, they see no alternative but to conclude that all mankind will finally be saved. Many regard the threatenings of the Bible as designed merely to frighten men into obedience, and not to be literally fulfilled. Thus the sinner can live in selfish pleasure, disregarding the requirements of God, and yet expect to be finally received into His favor.

God has given to men a declaration of His character, and of His method of dealing with sin. “All the wicked will he destroy.” Psalm 145:20. Yet all the manifestations of retributive justice will be perfectly consistent with the character of God as a merciful, long-suffering, benevolent being.

And all who have a just conception of these qualities will love Him because they are drawn toward Him in admiration of His attributes.

## Now Is God's Time

*For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation. 2 Corinthians 6:2.*

God has ordained laws for the government, not only of living beings, but of all the operations of nature. Everything is under fixed laws, which cannot be disregarded.

Like the angels, the dwellers in Eden had been placed upon probation; their happy estate could be retained only on condition of fidelity to the Creator's law. They could obey and live, or disobey and perish. God had made them the recipients of rich blessings; but should they disregard His will, He who spared not the angels that sinned, could not spare them; transgression would forfeit His gifts, and bring upon them misery and ruin.

Adam and Eve transgressed the law of God. This made it necessary for them to be driven from Eden and be separated from the tree of life, to eat of which after their transgression would perpetuate sin.

Death entered the world because of transgression. But Christ gave His life that man should have another trial. He did not die on the cross to abolish the law of God, but to secure for man a second probation. He did not die to make sin an immortal attribute; He died to secure the right to destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil. (See Hebrews 2:14).

It is impossible for men to secure the salvation of the soul after death. This life is the only time given to man in which to prepare for eternity.

Probation is granted to all, that all may form characters for eternal life. An opportunity will be given to all to decide for life or death.

Now is the hour of probation. Now is the day of salvation. Now, now, is God's time.

## Christ the First Fruits

*If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. 1 Corinthians 15:19, 20.*

Christ arose from the dead as the first fruits of those that slept. He was the antitype of the wave sheaf, and His resurrection took place on the very day when the wave sheaf was to be presented before the Lord. For more than a thousand years this symbolic ceremony had been performed. From the harvest fields the first heads of ripened grain were gathered, and when the people went up to Jerusalem to the Passover, the sheaf of first fruits was waved as a thank offering before the Lord. Not until this was presented could the sickle be put to the grain, and it be gathered into sheaves. The sheaf dedicated to God represented the harvest. So Christ the first fruits represented the great spiritual harvest to be gathered for the kingdom of God. His resurrection is the type and pledge of the resurrection of all the righteous dead.

The resurrection of Jesus was a sample of the final resurrection of all who sleep in Him. The risen body of the Saviour, His deportment, the accents of His speech, were all familiar to His followers. In like manner will those who sleep in Jesus rise again. We shall know our friends even as the disciples knew Jesus. Though they may have been deformed, diseased, or disfigured in this mortal life, yet in their resurrected and glorified body their individual identity will be perfectly preserved, and we shall recognize, in the face radiant with the light shining from the face of Jesus, the lineaments of those we love.

At His second coming all the precious dead shall hear His voice, and shall come forth to glorious, immortal life. The same power that raised Christ from the dead will raise His church, and glorify it with Him, above all principalities, above all powers, above every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in the world to come.

He will receive us with honor. To us will be given a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

## Death Swallowed Up in Victory

*For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. 2 Corinthians 5:4.*

The Life-giver is coming to break the fetters of the tomb. He is to bring forth the captives and proclaim, "I am the resurrection and the life."

Nowhere in the Sacred Scriptures is found the statement that the righteous go to their reward or the wicked to their punishment at death. The patriarchs and prophets have left no such assurance. Christ and His apostles have given no hint of it. The Bible clearly teaches that the dead do not go immediately to heaven. They are represented as sleeping until the resurrection. In the very day when the silver cord is loosed and the golden bowl broken, man's thoughts perish. They that go down to the grave are in silence. They know no more of anything that is done under the sun. Blessed rest for the weary righteous! Time, be it long or short, is but a moment to them. They sleep; they are awakened by the trump of God to a glorious immortality. "For the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible.... So when ... this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." 1 Corinthians 15:52-54. As they are called forth from their deep slumber, they begin to think just where they ceased. The last sensation was the pang of death, the last thought that they were falling beneath the power of the grave. When they arise from the tomb, their first glad thought will be echoed in the triumphal shout, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" 1 Corinthians 15:55.

The pangs of death were the last things they felt. When they awake the pain is all gone. The gates of the city of God swing back upon their hinges, and the ransomed of God walk in through the cherubims and seraphims. Christ bids them welcome and puts upon them His benediction. "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: ... enter thou into the joy of thy lord." Matthew 25:21.

# The Resurrection to Immortality

*For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. 1 Thessalonians 4:14.*

To the believer, Christ is the resurrection and the life. In our Saviour the life that was lost through sin is restored; for He has life in Himself to quicken whom He will. He is invested with the right to give immortality. The life that He laid down in humanity, He takes up again, and gives to humanity.

When Christ comes to gather to Himself those who have been faithful, the last trump will sound, and the whole earth, from the summits of the loftiest mountains to the lowest recesses of the deepest mines, will hear. The righteous dead will hear the sound of the last trump, and will come forth from their graves.

All come forth from their graves the same in stature as when they entered the tomb. Adam, who stands among the risen throng, is of lofty height and majestic form, in stature but little below the Son of God. He presents a marked contrast to the people of later generations; in this one respect is shown the great degeneracy of the race. But all arise with the freshness and vigor of eternal youth. The mortal, corruptible form, devoid of comeliness, once polluted with sin, becomes perfect, beautiful, and immortal. Restored to the tree of life in the long-lost Eden, the redeemed will “grow up” to the full stature of the race in its primeval glory.

The living righteous are changed “in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.” 1 Corinthians 15:52. At the voice of God they were glorified; now they are made immortal, and with the risen saints are caught up to meet their Lord in the air. Little children are borne by holy angels to their mothers’ arms. Friends long separated by death are united, nevermore to part, and with songs of gladness ascend together to the city of God.

All the precious dead, from righteous Abel to the last saint that dies, shall awake to glorious, immortal life.

## The Resurrection to Damnation

*For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth. Psalm 37:9.*

At the close of the thousand years the second resurrection will take place. Then the wicked will be raised from the dead, and appear before God. Thus the revelator, after describing the resurrection of the righteous, says, "The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished." Revelation 20:5.

At the first resurrection all who came forth had immortal bloom; but at the second the marks of the curse are visible on all. The kings and noblemen of the earth, the mean and low, the learned and unlearned, come forth together. All behold the Son of man; and those very men who despised and mocked Him, who put the crown of thorns upon His sacred brow, and smote Him with the reed, behold Him in all His kingly majesty. Those who spit upon Him in the hour of His trial now turn from His piercing gaze and from the glory of His countenance. Those who drove the nails through His hands and feet now look upon the marks of His crucifixion. Those who thrust the spear into His side behold the marks of their cruelty on His body. And they know that He is the very one whom they crucified and derided in His expiring agony. And then there arises one long protracted wail of agony, as they flee to hide from the presence of the King of kings and Lord of lords.

All are seeking to hide in the rocks, to shield themselves from the terrible glory of Him whom they once despised. And, overwhelmed and pained with His majesty and exceeding glory, they with one accord raise their voices, and with terrible distinctness exclaim, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." Psalm 118:26.

Fire will come down from God out of heaven and devour them, the wicked, and burn them up root and branch. Satan is the root, and his children are the branches.

The destiny of the wicked is fixed by their own choice. Their exclusion from heaven is voluntary with themselves, and just and merciful on the part of God.

# The Hope of the Resurrection

## The Life-giver Is Coming

*If a man die, shall he live again? All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come. Job 14:14.*

The Life-giver will call up His purchased possession in the first resurrection, and until that triumphant hour, when the last trump shall sound and the vast army shall come forth to eternal victory, every sleeping saint will be kept in safety and will be guarded as a precious jewel, who is known to God by name. By the power of the Saviour that dwelt in them while living and because they were partakers of the divine nature, they are brought forth from the dead.

Our fondest hopes are often blighted here. Our loved ones are torn from us by death. We close their eyes and habit them for the tomb, and lay them away from our sight. But hope bears our spirits up. We are not parted forever, but shall meet the loved ones who sleep in Jesus. They shall come again from the land of the enemy. The Life-giver is coming. Myriads of holy angels escort Him on His way. He bursts the bands of death, breaks the fetters of the tomb, the precious captives come forth in health and immortal beauty. Our personal identity is preserved in the resurrection, though not the same particles of matter or material substance as went into the grave. In the resurrection every man will have his own character. God in His own time will call forth the dead, giving again the breath of life, and bidding the dry bones live.

There will be a relinking of the family chain. When we look upon our dead, we may think of the morning when the trump of God shall sound, when "the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." 1 Corinthians 15:52. The last lingering traces of the curse of sin will be removed, and Christ's faithful ones will appear in "the beauty of the Lord our God," (Psalm 90:17) in mind and soul and body reflecting the perfect image of their Lord.

Are we ready so that if we shall fall asleep, we can do so with hope in Jesus Christ?

## Sorrow With Hope

*But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.  
1 Thessalonians 4:13.*

To the afflicted ones I would say, be of good comfort in the hope of the resurrection morning. The waters of which you have been drinking are as bitter to your taste as were the waters of Marah to the children of Israel in the wilderness, but Jesus can make them so sweet with His love.

God has provided a balm for every wound. There is a balm in Gilead, there is a Physician there. (Jeremiah 8:22; 46:11) Will you not now as never before study the Scriptures? Seek the Lord for wisdom in every emergency. In every trial plead with Jesus to show you a way out of your troubles, then your eyes will be opened to behold the remedy and to apply to your case the healing promises that have been recorded in His Word. In this way the enemy will find no place to lead you into mourning and unbelief, but instead you will have faith and hope and courage in the Lord. The Holy Spirit will give you clear discernment that you may see and appropriate every blessing that will act as an antidote to grief, as a branch of healing to every draught of bitterness that is placed to your lips. Every draught of bitterness will be mingled with the love of Jesus, and in place of complaining of the bitterness, you will realize that Jesus' love and grace are so mingled with sorrow that it has been turned into subdued, holy, sanctified joy.

When Henry White, our eldest son, lay dying, he said, "A bed of pain is a precious place when we have the presence of Jesus." When we are obliged to drink of the bitter waters, turn away from the bitter to the precious and the bright. In trial grace can give the human soul assurance, and when we stand at the deathbed and see how the Christian can bear suffering and go through the valley of death, we gather strength and we fail not, neither are we discouraged in leading souls to Jesus.



## When Eternal Life Begins

*And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. 1 John 5:11, 12.*

Jesus declared, “I am the resurrection, and the life.” In Christ is life, original, unborrowed, underived. “He that hath the Son hath life.” The divinity of Christ is the believer’s assurance of eternal life. “He that believeth in me,” said Jesus, “though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.” John 11:25, 26.

To the believer, death is but a small matter. Christ speaks of it as if it were of little moment. “If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death,” “he shall never taste of death.” John 8:51, 52. To the Christian, death is but a sleep, a moment of silence and darkness. The life is hid with Christ in God, and “when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.” Colossians 3:4.

He who Himself was soon to die upon the cross stood a conqueror of the grave, and asserted His right and power to give eternal life. “I will raise him up at the last day.” John 6:40. Christ became one flesh with us, in order that we might become one spirit with Him. It is by virtue of this union that we are to come forth from the grave—not merely as a manifestation of the power of Christ, but because, through faith, His life has become ours. Those who see Christ in His true character, and receive Him into the heart, have everlasting life. It is through the Spirit that Christ dwells in us; and the Spirit of God, received into the heart by faith, is the beginning of the life eternal.

*Jesus is crying, “If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.” “Let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” “Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.” John 7:37; Revelation 22:17; John 4:14.*

## For further studies

*Please consider the following Scripture readings carefully:*

Genesis 2:7 And the LORD God formed man *of* the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

Genesis 3:2-4 And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: (3) But of the fruit of the tree which *is* in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. (4) And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die.

John 8:44 ... He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

Psalms 6:5 For in death *there is* no remembrance of thee: in the grave who shall give thee thanks?

Psalms 115:17 The dead praise not the LORD, neither any that go down into silence.

Job 19:26-27 And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: (27) Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me.

Ecclesiastes 3:19-20 For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast: for all *is* vanity. (20) All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again.

Isaiah 26:19 Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.

Isaiah 38:18 For the grave cannot praise thee, death can not celebrate thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth.

Hebrews 9:27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.

## *The final resurrection*

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. (14) For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. (15) For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive *and* remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. (16) For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: (17) Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. (18) Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

Job 14:15 Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands.

Job 14:15 AMPLIFIED BIBLE [Then] You will call, and I will answer You; You will long for [me] the work of Your hands.

*Psalm 17:15 As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness:  
I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.*