

Chapter 3: Difficult Bible Accounts

- [Adam and Eve](#)
- [The deluge](#)
- [The Death of Jesus](#)
- [Bible Difficulties](#)
- [Where is the True Church of God?](#)
- [What After Death](#)

- [Adam and Eve](#)

Did Adam and Eve really exist?

Do we believe the Bible or the scientists, who claim that Adam and Eve are just myths of different peoples? Jesus and his disciples believed that Adam and Eve really existed. In fact, God sent Jesus to redeem the world from the curse of sin which one person [or two] brought into the world. Rom 5:12 Therefore, just as **sin entered the world through one man**, and death through sin, so death spread to everyone, because all have sinned.

1 Cor 15:45 So also it is written, "The first man, Adam, became a living soul." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit.

Act 17:26 From one man he made every nation of humanity to live all over the earth, fixing the seasons of the year and the boundaries they live in,

1 Gen 2:4 This is the history [account, generations, records] of the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day (yowm, at that time) that Jehovah God made earth and the heavens.

5 No plant of the field was yet in the earth, and no

herb of the field had yet sprung up; for Yahweh God had not caused it to rain on the earth. There was not a man to till the ground,

6 but a mist went up from the earth, and watered the whole surface of the ground.

7 Yahweh God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and **man became a living soul.**

Also, Paul testifies of our ancestors: 1 Tim 2:13 For Adam was first formed, then Eve.

14 And it was not Adam who was deceived. It was the woman who was deceived and became a lawbreaker.

2 Cor 11:3 However, I am afraid that just as the serpent deceived Eve by its tricks, so your minds may somehow be lured away from sincere and pure devotion to Christ.

Mat 19:4 He answered, "Haven't you read that he who made them from the beginning made them male and female, There is sufficient evidence in the Bible to confirm the historical existence of Adam and Eve.

The time span of generations

Luke 3:23 Jesus himself, when he began to teach, was about thirty years old, being the son (as was supposed) of **Joseph**, the son of Heli,

24 the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Melchi, the son of Jannai, the son of Joseph,

25 the son of Mattathias, the son of Amos, the son of Nahum, the son of Esli, the son of Naggai,

26 the son of Maath, the son of Mattathias, the son of Semein, the son of Joseph, the son of Judah,

27 the son of Joanan, the son of Rhesa, the son of Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, the son of Neri,

28 the son of Melchi, the son of Addi, the son of Cosam, the son of Elmodam, the son of Er,

29 the son of Josa, the son of Eliezer, the son of
Jorim, the son of Matthat, the son of Levi,
30 the son of Simeon, the son of Judah, the son of
Joseph, the son of Jonan, the son of Eliakim,
31 the son of Melea, the son of Menan, the son of
Mattatha, the son of Nathan, the son of David,
32 the son of Jesse, the son of Obed, the son of Boaz,
the son of Salmon, the son of Nahshon,
33 the son of Amminadab, the son of Aram, the son of
Joram, the son of Hezron, the son of Perez, the son of
Judah,
34 the son of Jacob, the son of Isaac, the son of
Abraham, the son of Terah, the son of Nahor,
35 the son of Serug, the son of Reu, the son of Peleg,
the son of Eber, the son of Shelah
36 the son of Cainan, the son of Arphaxad, the son of
Shem, the son of **Noah**, the son of Lamech,
37 the son of Methuselah, the son of Enoch, the son of
Jared, the son of Mahalaleel, the son of Cainan,
38 the son of Enos, the son of Seth, the son of **Adam**,
the son of God.

In the above list, Noah appears fairly close to Adam. Also, Noah's eldest son Seem is on the list. On the other hand, the milestones of human development mentioned in Genesis chapter 4 are not included in the genealogical list of Jesus.

I draw my attention to the fact that there are only 8 ancestors between Noah and Adam, but a multiple number (75) between Noah and Jesus. Part of the explanation may be that people often reached in the early days of mankind an age nearly 1000 years and when approaching Jesus' times, most often under 100 years. At what age, an ancestor, who is nearly 1000 years old, got his first son, affects the total length of generations. In my opinion, the age of the first child was about the same

as today. For example, Abraham's wife Sarah laughed at the Lord when he promised her a son; even though both Abraham and Sarah had passed the normal childbearing age (NKJV Sarah had passed the age of childbearing). From this we can conclude that Satan quickly received followers from the newly-created humans; only eight generations and God was ready to dispose of the entire mankind he had created.

After Adam and Eve Gen Chapter 4 states: Gen 4:1 The man knew Eve his wife. She conceived, and gave birth to Cain, and said, "I have gotten a man with Jehovah's help." 2 Again she gave birth, to Cain's brother Abel. Abel was a **keeper of sheep**, but Cain was a **tiller of the ground**.

16 Cain went out from Jehovah's presence, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden. 17 Cain knew his wife. She conceived and gave birth to Enoch. He **built a city**, and called the name of the city, after the name of his son, Enoch. 18 To Enoch was born Irad. Irad became the father of Mehujael. Mehujael became the father of Methushael. Methushael became the father of Lamech. 20 Adah gave birth to Jabal, who **was the father of those who dwell in tents and have cattle**. 21 His brother's name was Jubal, who was the father of all **who handle the harp and pipe**. 22 Zillah also gave birth to Tubal Cain, the **forging of every cutting instrument of brass and iron**. Tubal Cain's sister was Naamah.

An interesting question is: what happened before Adam? The creation days (yown) of God were long, not 24-hour days, but hundreds of millions of years. After all, Earth's estimated age is 4.5 billion years.

We also do not know how long Adam and Eve lived in Paradise in peace and quiet until Satan in the form of a serpent came to deceive Eve. We also do not know how

much time passed from Satan's deception to Adam and Eve's first son Cain was born. However, we know that "Adam lived one hundred thirty years, and became the father of a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth. (Gen 5:3). 4 The days of Adam after he became the father of Seth were eight hundred years, and he became the father of sons and daughters" (5:4).

Were there hominids before Adam and Eve?

If we believe the scientists, in Africa there were hominids over several million years ago on the basis of fossil findings, and these hominids developed slowly over millions of years. When the Bible lists the names and professions of Adam's and Eve's posterity, there are professions such as shepherd, farmer, tent maker, music instrument player, a brass and iron toolsmith. Even Enoch, the founder of the first city, as mentioned, he was the son of Adam's son Cain. The contradiction seems to be the timing; modern science schedules these advances of mankind to 40,000 years back in time. The genealogy of Jesus cannot go so far, only about 4,000 years back.

Could it be that the great flood had destroyed all the hominids? There could not have been a lot of human beings, Adam's offspring, because only a few generations had passed from the birth of Adam and Eve. Science wants to believe that man has developed from these hominids. Believe it if you want. Every living thing is created by God because God created life. In theory, it is also possible that hominids were God's first version of man, but it did not satisfy God. As Adam and Eve and their descendants did not meet God's requirements, he decided to destroy all people from the earth. However, God did not want to totally destroy the animals, so Noah was

given the task of collecting two specimens of each animal species into the ark.

– After having written this I found the opinions of two researchers Rana and Ross. They presented a theory that the original home of the hominids was in Mesopotamia and not in Ethiopia: "What if the Garden did not include Ethiopia, but was limited to Mesopotamia? The "out of Africa" theory uses genetic similarity to date and locate the original humans. However, this genetic evidence does not mean the first humans lived in Africa. They could have migrated. Many human populations have collectively migrated thousands of miles. Moreover, the Bible teaches that the first humans were formed in the Garden, but their population expansion occurred outside of the garden's territory. Therefore, they could have migrated to East Africa, as anthropology teaches".

The human race differs from animals for example in that human genetics have much less diversity than animals. "This means that when comparing DNA sequences for any two chimpanzees, any two bonobos, any two gorillas, or any two orangutans, a much greater genetic difference will be observed than for any two human beings compared. Human similarity is observed worldwide, regardless of race and ethnicity" (Rana, Fazale, and Hugh Ross. Who Was Adam?: A Creation Model Approach to the Origin of Man. Colorado Springs, 2005).

The Fall of Adam and Eve (paraptōma)

Satan's temptation: Gen 2:17 **but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat of it:** for in the day that you eat of it you will surely die." 3:4 The serpent [Satan] said to the woman, "You won't surely die,

5 for God knows that in the day you eat it, your eyes will be opened, and **you will be like God, knowing good and evil.**" – 22 Jehovah God said, "Behold, **the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil. Now, lest he put forth his hand, and also take of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever...**" To whom did God utter these words? To the angels who were involved in God's creation.

Did Satan lie to Eve? Not directly, this is what God testifies in verse 3:22: Jehovah God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil." This is exactly what Satan promised. Satan is, however, the father of lie:... doesn't stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks on his own; for he is a liar and the father of it. (Joh 8:44). – Satan knew that the best lie is one in which at least half is true. The other side can be as in Adam and Eve's case that Satan covered what Adam and Eve should have known and remembered, that is, the punishment following the offense.

What should we think of the temptation of Satan, that eating from this forbidden tree Adam and Eve would gain more understanding and become like God to knowing what is good and what is evil. Satan, therefore, did not lie; God Himself proves that Satan's promise was fulfilled and "man has become like one of us so that he knows good and evil." Now we can ask: Why should not a man know good and evil? It is the core issue of all Christian doctrine. It can also be said that the essence of Jesus' teaching and the way to salvation also requires that we have full knowledge of it. Surely some wiser man can explain the matter and give a comprehensive answer. In fact, I would say at least this: God wants man to learn to know good and evil through obedience. Now Adam and Eve learnt to know it, but through disobedience and the

subsequent punishment.

It is not that Adam and Eve ate the fruit of this forbidden tree. Disobedience was their offense.

The tree of life. God 'feared' that Adam and Eve would eat from the tree of life and live forever. Therefore God set an angel to guard the path to paradise and the tree of life so that they could not enter and eat from this tree. By eating the fruit of the tree of life they would have received eternal life. Why was it necessary to place an angel to make sure that Adam and Eve would not have access to Paradise? The simpler would have been to hack the tree so that it would no longer produce fruit.

The Bible, however, tells that God gave Jesus eternal life. It will not be necessary to eat the fruit.

The Revelation tells about the tree of life in the final pages of the Bible:

Rev 2:7 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the assemblies. To him who overcomes I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of my God 22:2 Between the street of the city and the river there was the tree of life visible from both sides. It produced twelve kinds of fruit, each month having its own fruit. The leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. 22:14 Blessed are those who do his commandments (NASB Blessed are those who wash their robes), that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter in by the gates into the city.

In these verses about the tree of life in the Book of Revelation, there is much symbolism and figurative expression.

... it produced twelve kinds of fruit ... each month

having its own fruit ... the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations

First of all, I believe that in the upcoming new world we are in the spirit body. All evil has been overthrown and evil people have been punished. In Revelation 22:14 "washing their robes" is also a figurative expression meaning that such people no longer sin; they are like Christ. Why then does Revelation speak of eating the fruit of the tree of life? And why does it need to produce new, different fruits every month? Even here, my understanding is inadequate. The spirits do not eat fruit except "the fruit of the spirit". Perhaps it is a continuous spiritual growth to gain and intensify the spiritual abilities needed by God's new and more demanding tasks. In my view, in the New World, the universe of God is built further and "mountains moved" as Jesus said we could do with the power of faith.

Finally, the importance of the message of Revelation is emphasized: **"If anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, may God take away his part from the tree of life, and out of the holy city "**

22:17 The Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" He who hears, let him say, "Come!" He who is thirsty, let him come. He who desires, **let him take the water of life freely.**

18 I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book, **if anyone adds to them, may God add to him the plagues which are written in this book.**

19 **If anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, may God take away his part from the tree of life, and out of the holy city,** which are written in this book

What about Adam and Eve in the earthly paradise? Was the

tree of life also a figurative expression or was the tree real? If the question was not of a real tree, why was it necessary for God to set a cherub to guard Adam and Eve not to eat from the tree?

What is meant by knowledge of good and evil? That's what the Bible teaches. To do against God's will is sin and evil. The good is, according to the Bible, to do the will of God. Why should not this be known?

Perhaps the prohibition was a question of something else, that they were tried to remain loyal in the small. Adam and Eve were not limited to anything other than one tiny command to be followed. Obeying or disobeying this command would settle their future; if they were obedient to God, they would live in paradise – perhaps forever. If they did not commit sin, they would not be subject to the consequences of sin i.e. death.

Gen 3:5 for God knows that in the day you eat it, your eyes will be opened, and **you will be like God, knowing good and evil.**" 6 When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that **the tree was to be desired to make one wise** [give understanding], she took of the fruit of it, and ate; and she gave some to her husband with her, and he ate.

Satan realized that man had the need to understand and this is also what Eve had realized; to eat from this tree they would gain more understanding. Satan, later known as the "god of this world", has used this tool to this day. Man wants to know and understand and know how to do everything. Think of what achievements man has achieved, even just over the past hundred years. If this trend continues, there will be even greater achievements in science. Soon we are going to have self-guided cars, which could not even be dreamed of a hundred years ago.

Robots will perform operations in the hospital and stem cells can grow new members into the human body. As such development is progressing, mankind becomes more and more secularized and apostasy takes over. Only a small minority is interested in God's truth and the will of God.

Is the tree of life a real tree or a figurative expression of something? I incline strongly to the figurative expression.

Spiritual Food

1 Cor 10:3 Paul speaks of *spiritual food and drink*: ... and they all ate the same spiritual food, 4 and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of a spiritual rock... Deu 8:3 He humbled you, and allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna, which you didn't know, neither did your fathers know; that he might make you know that man does not live by bread only, but by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of Jehovah does man live.

We could even consider the question of the punishment of God. The violation of Adam and Eve was their first. I might ask: would it not have been fair to give a less severe punishment for the first-timers, like a warning and not so forceful punishment for all humanity – even for generations to come? Of course, they knew that they had earned the death penalty, but did they even understand what death means? Death was not an immediate execution, but an aging body, which would ultimately lead to death. Adam and Eve also brought death to future generations who were not guilty of a violation against God. They inherited the exposure to sin from the first humans. God knew in advance that this will happen. God

also knew that the first sin would lead to a huge expansion of sin, and then finally to salvation through the ransom sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

God was sorry that he had made man on the earth

Gen 6:5 Yahweh saw that the **wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.** 6 Jehovah was sorry that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him in his heart.

7 Yahweh said, "I will destroy man whom I have created from the surface of the ground; man, along with animals, creeping things, and birds of the sky; for I am sorry that I have made them."

For the first time, God was disappointed when Satan succeeded in attracting first Eve and with him Adam to break the command of God not to eat the fruit of the forbidden tree. Adam and Eve received their punishment and were driven out of Paradise.

It did not take many generations until the whole human race was full of evil. God decided to destroy all people, but Noah, with his three sons and their wives, received mercy from God. Why did God repent (nâcham; a primitive root; properly, to sigh, i.e. breathe strongly, by implication, to be sorry, i.e. (in a favourable sense) to pity, console or (reflexively) rue; or (unfavourably) to avenge oneself, repent (-er, -ing, self), and became so grievous to mankind so strongly? He is all-knowing, and knows everything beforehand: the evilness of men could not come as a surprise. Why did God also have to destroy the cattle, the reptiles, and the birds? Why did God, however, want two copies of each species of animals in order to replenish the earth? Why

did God repent? Remember that God knew what was going to happen and he did not take action to prevent it.

A similar event happened when Moses climbed up to the mountain to meet God. When he was not back, the Israelis gathered their golden bracelets and smelted them and made a calf to serve it as a god.

Exo 32:9 Jehovah said to Moses, "I have seen these people, and, behold, they are a stiff-necked people.

10 Now, therefore, leave me alone, that **my wrath may burn hot against them, and that I may consume them**; and I will make of you a great nation." 11 Moses begged Jehovah his God, and said, "Jehovah, why does your wrath burn hot against your people, that you have brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand?

13 Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, your servants, to whom you swore by your own self, and said to them, 'I will multiply your seed as the stars of the sky, and all this land that I have spoken of I will give to your seed, and they shall inherit it forever.'" 14 **Jehovah repented (nacham) of the evil which he said he would do to his people.**

God had also a short temper for the Israeli people's behavior. Could God not prepare for such misconduct that he could have thought in advance of punishing some other way than the people's destruction?

God is a jealous God

Exo 34:14 for you shall worship no other god: for Jehovah, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God.

26:28 Then I will walk contrary to you in wrath; and *I also will chastise you seven times for your sins.*

Deu 4:24 For Yahweh your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God.

Deu 29:23 and that the whole land of it is sulphur, and salt, and a burning, that it is not sown, nor bears, nor any grass grows therein, like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboiim, which *Jehovah overthrew in his anger*, and in his wrath: – 28 and Jehovah rooted them out of their land in anger, and *in wrath, and in great indignation*, and cast them into another land, as at this day.

Our God is a fiery God. He is also jealous and does not tolerate other gods. These emotions blend and produce problems for translators too. Take for example Num 4 25:11 “... so that I didn’t destroy the children of Israel in my jealousy”. We can contemplate God’s impetuosity in the final judgment; will God destroy the evil and ungodly men, or is his fire a cleansing fire? See my article on the cleansing fire of God.

- [The deluge](#)

Is the account of the deluge true?

And if it is, did the great flood destroy all humans on the earth?

Gen 6:17 And I, lo, I am bringing in the deluge of waters on the earth to destroy all flesh, in which is a living spirit, from under the heavens; all that is in the earth will die.

Luke 17:26 “Just as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be in the days of the Son of Man. 27 They ate, they drank, they married, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destr28 Likewise, even as it happened in the days of Lot: they ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built; 29 but in the day that Lot went out from Sodom, it rained fire and sulphur from

the sky, and destroyed them all. 30 It will be the same way in the day that the Son of Man is revealed.

1 Pet 3:20 Who before were disobedient, when God waited patiently in the days of Noah, while the ark was being built. In it, few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water.

Heb 11:7 By faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, reverently prepared an ark to save his family, and by it he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.

Most Bible scholars believe that the flood was all over the globe. It may be difficult to understand and believe from where so much water could rain over the Earth for 40 days, so that the highest peaks of the mountains were covered under water. The Bible also says how much water was on top of these peaks: The waters prevailed fifteen cubits upward, and the mountains were covered. (Gen7:20) Where did the water come from? The explanation is different: most of the water came from under the earth's mantle (Gen 7:11). In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on the same day all the fountains of the great deep were burst open, and the sky's windows were opened. – Ross, Hugh. *The Genesis Question: Scientific Advances and the Accuracy of Genesis*. Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1998. "The fountains of the great deep" burst open with great pressure and the muddy water plunged high in the air and fell back, covering the world and the flora. It may well be that much larger amounts of water burst from beneath the ground than the heavens rained. Underneath the earth's mantle are believed to have huge amounts of water. Studies show that there are still huge amounts of water beneath the surface of dry regions of Africa such as Sahara and Libya. It is a pity that these water reservoirs are not renewable. It has

been calculated that the amount of water to cover the whole world should be 4-5 fold in relation to the waters of all the world seas.

Most people believe that the Bible's account of the deluge is clear and does not leave room for interpretation.

Gen 7:19 The waters prevailed exceedingly on the earth. All the high mountains that were under the whole sky were covered.

20 The waters prevailed fifteen cubits upward, and the mountains were covered.

21 All flesh died that moved on the earth, including birds, cattle, animals, every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, and every man. 22 All in whose nostrils was the breath of the spirit of life, of all that was on the dry land, died. 23 Every living thing was destroyed that was on the surface of the ground, including man, cattle, creeping things, and birds of the sky. They were destroyed from the earth. Only Noah was left, and those who were with him in the ark.

Flood reports are from all over the world on all continents. Common to them is similarity. Could such reports be made irrespective of each other? Even the number of survivors is in the same class. Some of the stories may even be older than Genesis. However, it does not prove that such an account is any more reliable than Genesis.

I look at the account written by Moses with open eyes looking for answers but there is no answer for all questions. There is also a need for scientific studies on events.

Noah's ark

God was tired of the sinful life of mankind. So he gave Noah task of building a big ark:

Gen 6:14 Make an ark of gopher wood. You shall make rooms in the ark and shall seal it inside and outside with pitch. 16 You shall make a roof in the ark, and to a cubit shall you finish it upward. You shall set the door of the ark in the side of it. You shall make it with lower, second, and third levels.

18 But I will establish my covenant with you. You shall come into the ark, you, your sons, your wife, and your sons' wives with you. 19 Of every living thing of all flesh, you shall bring two of every sort into the ark, to keep them alive with you. They shall be male and female. 7:1 Jehovah said to Noah, "Come with all of your household into the ark, for I have seen your righteousness before me in this generation.

7 Noah went into the ark with his sons, his wife, and his sons' wives, because of the waters of the flood. 9 went by pairs to Noah into the ark, male and female, as God commanded Noah.

7:13 In the same day Noah, and Shem, Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah, and Noah's wife, and the three wives of his sons with them, entered into the ark; 15 They went to Noah into the ark, by pairs of all flesh with the breath of life in them.

18 The waters prevailed, and increased greatly on the earth; and the ark floated on the surface of the waters.

The ark was unusually large according to the standard of those days: 6:15 This is how you shall make it. The length of the ark will be three hundred cubits [150 m], the breadth of it fifty cubits [25 m], and the height of it thirty cubits [15 m]. – All in all, a big vessel according to the perception of those days.

All the same, a lot of questions arise:

Noah's family alone (8 people) probably did not have the ability to build the ark alone, although they had decades, maybe as long as a hundred years. Maybe Noah hired builders to help. Construction of a vessel this size at a modern shipyard requires hundreds of workers and subcontractors. On the other hand, the ark was a simple "box" compared to modern ships. Was Noah wealthy enough to be able to hire the necessary auxiliary force? Well, let's assume that Noah got the ark ready after a long construction period. Then what?

Who collected all the animals from all over the world? How were animals identified and how did they keep records to make sure just two of every kind would get into the ark? There are millions of different species. Even today not all species have been found, how did Noah find them and where were they stored before they were taken into the ark? How were polar bears transported from behind the polar circle, from areas not even known? Who penetrated the depths of the rainforests to find and identify unknown species? The big animals were probably in the fencing, but what about thousands of small mice, birds, snakes, etc. How could they be kept in place without them getting away? In nature, there are small animals far more than big animals. What about the thousands of insects, where were they kept? How were the animals fed?

The answer is found in the Bible. The Bible really says that "They went to Noah into the ark, by pairs of all flesh with the breath of life in them". (Gen 7:15). The Bible says "went". How did insects go? Surely they will leave for their own ways if they are released.

Gen 6:20 Of the birds after their kind, of the cattle after their kind, of every creeping thing of the ground after its kind, two of every sort shall come to you, to keep them alive. 7:15 They went to Noah into the ark, by

pairs of all flesh with the breath of life in them. 16 Those who went in, went in male and female of all flesh, as God commanded him; and Jehovah shut him in.

□□□□ bow' The KJV translates Strong's H935 in the following manner: come (1,435x), bring (487x), ... in (233x), enter (125x), go (123x),

This question was a great concern for me. I thought that Noah must have had a large network of agents to gather animals around the world. He must also have been very wealthy to pay for the animals to their suppliers. Then I found in the Bible an explanation: the animals came to Noah alone. Earlier, I had noticed that when the time came, the animals went inside the ark.

Animals act by instinct. The migratory birds know 'when it's time to go to the warmer countries of the south. In the spring, they return to the north and even to their former nests thousands of miles away. Nevertheless, it seems unbelievable how thousands of animals across the globe found their way to Noah; polar bears from the north, kangaroos from Australia, monkeys and gorillas from rainforests not to forget reptiles, birds, insects (?) ...

And the other way round: once a year had elapsed, the animals had to go back to their nesting places. The whole operation is not possible without God's guidance. To gather such a large number of animals would simply have been too much for any human organisation. People considered Noah crazy and laughed at him. Who would have begun to collect animals for him? Then there is the same problem in the opposite direction; restoring animals to their abodes. After the flood there was no one left! The animals themselves had to go back.

God said: Gen 6:17 I, even, I do bring the flood of

waters on this earth, to destroy all flesh having the breath of life from under the sky. Everything that is in the earth will die. – “Everything that is in the earth will die”, said God. However, God did not want to drown the fish or other animals living in the water. Why were these allowed to stay alive? God did not want to destroy the whole life because of all species were assembled a male and female couples. Only humans were to be destroyed, except for the eight members of Noah’s family whom God considered righteous.

After all the foregoing reflection, the essence of the problem is crystallized into the question: if God intended to destroy the mankind, would not it be sufficient that the flood would have covered only those areas where people live? I.e. the question to be answered is:

Did the great flood cover the entire world or only the inhabited areas?

Was a) the entire planet covered under water? Or b) only the inhabited part of the world? What does it mean when the Bible says the “whole world”?

Luk 2:1 Now in those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that the whole world should be registered.

Joh 12:19 The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, “See how you accomplish nothing. Behold, the world has gone after him.”

Act 17:6 When they didn’t find them, they dragged Jason and some other brothers before the city officials and shouted, “These fellows who have turned the world upside down have come here, too,

Act 24:5 For we have found this man to be a plague, an instigator of insurrections among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes.

Joh 21:25 Of course, Jesus also did many other things, and I suppose that if every one of them were written down the world couldn't contain the books that would be written.

According to the literal interpretation of the Bible, the flood was comprehensive throughout the globe. There are also opinions that defend the view that the flood has left some uninhabited areas untouched.

What if the flood was limited to inhabited areas only?

The above questions give rise to the following considerations: what if the flood was territorial? In other words, water covered only the populated areas, in which case, however, the will of God was completed and all the people drowned. The destruction of all life was not the goal of God, because couples of all species of animals were brought into the ark.

What does the Bible mean when it speaks for instance in Gen 41:57 All countries came into Egypt, to Joseph, to buy grain, because the famine was severe in all the earth. NIV And all the world came to Egypt to buy grain from Joseph, because the famine was severe everywhere.

Deu 2:25 This day I begin to put thy dread and thy fear on the face of the peoples under the whole heavens, who hear thy fame, and have trembled and been pained because of thee.

Gen 7:3 also, of fowl of the heavens seven pairs, a male and a female, to keep alive seed on the face of all the earth;

Gen 8:9 but the dove found no place to rest her foot, and she returned to him into the ark; for the waters were on the surface of the whole earth. He put forth his hand, and took her, and brought her to him into the ark.

When the Bible speaks of all the kings of the earth / world or of all countries ... the Bible does not speak of the whole world but of the countries of a region and the kings of this region. This area spoken of in the Bible is often an area around Israel or more widely the "known world". At that time most of the world was completely unknown and uninhabited.

2 Chronicles 9:23 states, "All the kings of the earth were seeking the presence of Solomon." – "All the kings..." In one country there cannot be more than one king. This must mean the known world, the inhabited world of that time.

The Hebrew word meaning world is *erez* and it can be translated 'earth'. Gen. 6:17 Behold, I, even I am bringing the flood of water upon the earth, to destroy all flesh in which is the breath of life, from under heaven; everything that is on the earth shall perish. Genesis 6:17 states: "Everything that is in the land shall die." (This means the flood was universal to wherever humans were). For example: where there were polar bears in the polar regions, there were no people, and the flood did not have to reach that far. The expression "the whole earth" may therefore be limited to the inhabited country.

This is how argued the scientists who do not believe in the flood of the whole world, but only in regional floods. However, water is difficult to hold in place. Let us think that a certain area is to be covered with water so that the entire area has water with a five meter mattress. What is happening? Water flows into the surrounding areas and the ground is exposed. Water simply does not stay in the desired area all the time (because of the attraction of gravity).

Genesis proves: Gen 7:19 The waters prevailed

exceedingly on the earth. All the high mountains that were under the whole sky were covered. Gen. 7:20 NIV “The waters rose and covered the mountains to a depth of more than twenty feet.”

OT scholar John Walton writes: This verb is used for a wide variety of ‘covering’ possibilities. A people or weeds can be so vast that it covers the land (Num. 22:11; Prov. 24:31); a blanket or clothing covers someone (Ex. 28:42; 1 Kings 1:1). Something can be covered in the sense of being overshadowed (cherubim wings covering the ark, 2 Chron. 5:8; clouds covering the sky, Ps. 147:8)... Even today when someone walks in from a downpour we might say, ‘You’re covered with water!’ If Genesis 7:19 is taken the same way, it suggests that the mountains were drenched with water or coursing with flash floods, but it does not demand that they were totally submerged under water.

I share the view that the water actually covered 20 feet below the mountain peaks of the area. But! It occurred to me that, when there were great ups and downs on the surface of the earth, mountain peaks could have escalated to their current heights after the flood. I remember reading that fossils of aquatic animals have been found up in high mountains. This must be due to the fact that the area has been in the past under water for a long time.

Summa summarum: Whether the flood covered all of the globe or just some parts, the will of God was fulfilled and the whole human race was drowned.

Could all the species on Earth fit into the Ark?

Scientific difficulties with a global flood

Who took the animals back to their original living areas? Polar bears, polar foxes and penguins to the north and south hemisphere? Kangaroos to Australia? The rainforest animals back to the rainforest?

Modern science proves that human-like beings existed before the Biblical time of creation of Adam and Eve. From 50,000 to about 40,000 years ago, mankind made a big breakthrough – a “quantum leap”. People started living in communities. They started making weapons for hunting and nets for fishing. People began to pay attention to dressing, they started to play music, paintings were made on rock walls and even jewellery. The dead were also buried as evidence of faith in post-mortem life.

The development of mankind leads my thoughts to the next big problem:

Science has timed the early stages of mankind (homo sapiens) up to about 40,000 BC. At that time, the aforementioned ‘quantum leap’ occurred. The development steps that science has registered are also listed in Chapter 4 of Genesis, which tells about the generations after Adam and Eve.

Surely you realise what the problem is in this observation! The timing of Adam and Eve according to the Bible is about 4,000 years before Christ. Science places Adam and Eve more than 40,000 years before Christ.

The first humans after the creation of animals were according to Scripture Adam and Eve. Science believes that before them there were human-like beings for a long time. God has created them as well, but the Bible does not say anything about it.

The creation of the world took place according to the Bible in six days. Some believe that creation took place

literally in six 24-hour days, but the word used in the Bible in the day *yom* יום can also mean a period of time; Strong's: day, time, period, days, lifetime, etc. In any case, man was created last. The Bible tells us the first people and their offspring. In Genesis chapter 4, we can read the descendants' names and their professions.

If Adam and Eve and their descendants lived on earth some 40,000 years ago, when is the flood believed to have occurred? Science answers: Sometimes, about 8,000 BC – 5,000 BC. (Ian Wilson 'Before the Flood', 2002). God in his forbearance waited about 30,000 years before he had enough of the sinful life of mankind and decided to destroy all humanity except for Noah's family.

As you read the description of the descendants of Adam and Eve at the beginning of chapter 4 of Genesis, your attention will certainly be attached to the fact that they have decent professions suitable for the world in which they lived; Cain was a tiller of the ground, Abel was a keeper of sheep, Enoch even built a town, Jabal had cattle, but lived in tents, Jubal, Jabal's brother played music instruments and Tubal Cain was a blacksmith, a forger of every cutting instrument of brass and iron. Such practitioners do not even remind us of simple hunters, not to mention hominids.

If scientists are to be believed, in Africa there were pre-humans based on fossil discoveries over several million years. These hominids developed slowly during millions of years. When the Bible lists the names and professions of Adam and Eve descendants there are quite sophisticated professions. The conflict seems to be timing; science will schedule these advances in mankind for about 40,000 years back. The genealogy of Jesus cannot go so far, maybe only about 4000 years back in time.

Could it be that God's Flood destroyed all hominids? There cannot have been actual people very much given that Adam and Eve were just a few generations back. Science wants to believe that man has developed from these hominids. Believe if you want. Everyone living is God-created because God created life. In theory, it is also possible that hominids were God's first version of man, but they did not satisfy God. Even when Adam and Eve and their descendants did not meet God's human requirements, God decided to destroy all humans and animals from the earth. However, God did not want to destroy all the animals, this is why Noah was commissioned to collect two pieces of all animal species into the ark.

– After writing this I found the opinions of two researchers Rana and Ross. They present a theory that the original home of the hominids was in Mesopotamia and not Ethiopia: "What if the Garden did not include Ethiopia, but was limited to Mesopotamia? The "out of Africa" theory uses Genetic similarity to date and locate the original humans. However, this Genetic evidence does not mean the first humans lived in Africa. They could have migrated. Many human populations have collectively migrated thousands of miles. In addition, the Bible teaches that the first humans were formed in the Garden, but their population expansion occurred outside of the garden's territory. Therefore, they could have migrated to East Africa, as Anthropology teaches."

The human race differs from animals among others. in that human genetics have much less diversity than animals. "This means that when comparing DNA sequences for any two chimpanzees, any two bonobos, any two Gorillas, or any two Orangutans, a much greater Genetic difference will be observed than for any two human beings compared. The human similarity is observed

worldwide, regardless of race and ethnicity. "(Rana, Fazale, and Hugh Ross," Who Was Adam?: A Creation Model Approach to Origin of Man, Colorado Springs, 2005).

The NT authors believed that Adam and Eve were real, historical figures; Rom 5:14 Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those whose sins weren't like Adam's disobedience, who is a foreshadowing of him who was to come. 15 But God's free gift is not like Adam's offense. For if many people died as the result of one man's offense, how much more have God's grace and the free gift given through the kindness of one man, Jesus Christ, been showered on many people!

1 Cor 15:22 For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ will all be made alive. 45 So also it is written, "The first man, Adam, became a living soul." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit.

Act 17:26 From one man he made every nation of humanity to live all over the earth, fixing the seasons of the year and the boundaries they live in,

Luke 3:38 ... the son of Enos, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.

Mat 19:4 He [Jesus] answered, "Haven't you read that he who made them from the beginning made them male and female,

1 Tim 2:13 For Adam was first formed, then Eve.

2 Cor. 11:3 But I am afraid that somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve in his craftiness, so your minds might be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

How has 8 people managed taking care of animals?

The animals had to be two pieces of each kind except the so-called clean animals of seven pairs? Scientists generally believe that 'kind' is not the same as the

Darwinian word species. Obviously it is the main kinds the Bible is talking about, which have produced 'subspecies' in nature even within a few hundred years. However, there were some 16,000 animals in the Ark, or about 8,000 species in the average size of a small rodent.

These thousands of animals require daily feeding, water, waste removal etc. Imagine a giant barn for a few people to handle. The Bible does not tell you how to do these tasks, but it is clear that the ark has had to take these needs into account at the construction stage. Perhaps there were sloping rails built to remove manure. Pipelines for water distribution. There were still no carnivores. When God created the animals, Gen 1:30 says: "And to all the beasts of the wilderness, and to all the birds of the heavens, and to all those who dwell in the earth and have a living spirit, I will give all the greasy grasses for food." And it happened so. Perhaps in the future the current carnivorous animals will change back to grass eaters. The Bible promises, according to Isaiah 11:7, that in the coming Paradise: The cows and the beasts go past, their calves and their kittens together lie down, and the lion eateth feed as crushed.

Gen 1:30 To every animal of the earth, and to every bird of the sky, and to everything that creeps on the earth, in which there is life, I have given every green herb for food."

Isa 11:7 The cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

From where did the huge amounts of water appear? And where did they disappear?

The "lower parts of the earth opened".

The starting point was, according to the theory, that the globe was much flatter than it is today. The highest mountains were not as high as today, seven kilometres, so water did not have to be a 7-kilometer thick mattress. According to a theory, before the Flood the atmosphere was covered with thick clouds of water almost covering the sun, and the cloudy water then discharged as a powerful rain. More credible and more realistic sounds the theory that underneath the seas the plates were torn apart, and the enormous amounts of water underneath them crashed and plunged into the sky. There were various ground masses besides water, which, when they fell back on the earth, covered the flora and the animals. However, it is not my intention to present a scientific proof of the correct theory. However, it is certain that great geological convulsions have occurred and, according to Scripture, God has done so with his own will and word. God has such unimaginable strengths that Jesus gives a small glimpse of when he told the disciples: "Because of your unbelief. For most assuredly I tell you, if you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you will tell this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you." (Mat 17:20)

Why such a huge operation, scale of the entire planet?

When I write of my astonishment about the flood, I cannot help asking: why a cataclysmic series of events was needed to destroy a small number of people? At that time, there was only a fraction of the current number of over 7,000,000,000 people. I've seen an estimate of 250 million. There is also in my mind a Bible story where the angel of God destroyed 185,000 soldiers during one night. If God had given an order to his angelic forces to destroy the people on the earth the same way as one

angel destroyed the enemy troops of Israel overnight, the destruction of mankind would have taken place in a minute.

Why did God choose such a massive way of destroying the sinful humanity? I do not know, but I know that God regretted doing his punishment this way and promised not to use the flood anymore. In my distant youth said the poet: "God gave Noah rainbow sign, no more water, FIRE next time". Whenever we wonder what God has done, it is good to recall the following Bible passage: For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. (Isa 55:9)

- [The Death of Jesus](#)

Was Jesus dead three days and three nights?

For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale, **so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth** (Said Jesus in Mat 12:40).

Jonah 1:17 Yahweh prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah, and Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

For centuries, both the Catholic Church and Protestant churches have been of the opinion that Jesus was crucified on Good Friday and that he resurrected early on Sunday morning. The biggest problem with this time schedule is that Jesus could not have been **dead** for three nights;

When trying (how many have tried!) to construct how events have begun, progressed during the Passover week and finally ended in the resurrection of Jesus, one

should pay attention to the special days of the week: the two Sabbaths that restrict Jewish behaviour, The Preparation day of Passover, the day when women could shop for spices to make ointment. Today's people are having trouble with the Jewish time concept; The day (sidereal day) starts in the evening when the sun is falling and ends the next day at the same time when at sun fall. "Day" is thus formed from the previous evening and night and from the following daytime until sunset.

In some verses of the Bible, Jesus is said to resurrect on "the third day". This condition may be fulfilled in the Good Friday – Sunday period, but I consider the definition of "three days and three nights" is more important and decisive.

Tuesday 13th of Nisan month

Mar 14:12 On the first day of unleavened bread, when they sacrificed the Passover lamb, his disciples asked him, "Where do you want us to go and make preparations for you to eat the Passover meal? – Many scientists believe this happened a day before Passover on Tuesday the 13th Nisan. Unleavened bread was eaten at the same meal with the lamb. Was this the preparation day of Passover?

Then in the evening when Tuesday evening turned to Wednesday and they had eaten the Passover lamb and the unleavened bread, Jesus and the disciples went to the Mount of Olives and came to Gethsemane. There Jesus prayed, but the disciples were tired and fell asleep. Judas directed the soldiers and the rest of the crowd to arrest Jesus.

John tells what happened on the **day of preparation**. The date of preparation is the day before Passover, even the name of the day tells about its contents, i.e. prepare

for the feast. (Engl. Preparation Day, Greek Paraskeu G3904). Joh 19:14 "Now it was the Preparation Day for the Passover, about twelve noon [Lit. the sixth hour]. He said to the Jews, "Here is your king!" 15 Then they shouted, "Take him away! Take him away! Crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Should I crucify your king?" The high priests responded, "We have no king but Caesar!" 16 Then Pilate handed him over to be crucified, and they took Jesus away. – Jesus was called for crucifixion on the morning of Passover preparation day. Is it possible? John proves that 'the interrogation of Jesus had been completed already in the morning of Preparation Day, and the crowd got their will through and Jesus was to be crucified.

Crucifixion Day on Wednesday, Nisan 14th.

(Year 30 AD Nisan 14th has been Wednesday)

Jesus and the disciples had eaten the Passover meal on the previous night, and then went to Gethsemane where Jesus was caught. Joh 18:28 "Then they led Jesus from Caiaphas to the governor's headquarters. It was early in the [Wednesday] morning, and the Jews did not go into the headquarters for fear that they might become unclean and be unable to eat the Passover lamb" [later in the evening when the Sabbath had begun].

Jesus' capture and taking into interrogations has, in my mind, taken place on the night between Tuesday and Wednesday. The first interrogations had taken place at night and in the morning Jesus was taken to Pilate.

Joh 19:13 When Pilate, therefore, heard these words, he brought Jesus out, and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called "The Pavement," but in Hebrew, "Gabbatha." 14 Now it was the Preparation Day for the

Passover, about twelve noon. [Lit. the sixth hour] He said to the Jews, "Here is your king!"

On Passover Preparation Day all Israel was preparing the Passover lamb as ordered by God: Exo 12:6 and you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month; and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at evening [twilight].

Jesus was flogged and was taken to Golgotha and crucified. At the ninth hour (3 o'clock in the afternoon), Jesus died. The burial of Jesus was urgent, as Luke 23:54 shows: "It was the Preparation Day, and the Sabbath [High Sabbath, not the weekly Sabbath] was just beginning". – The Sabbath began according to the Jewish way at sunset. Jesus was buried in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathaea. **Jesus' 1st night dead.**

Thursday 15th

The 15th day was a Day of Unleavened Bread, i.e. a special Sabbath (High Sabbath) which began on Wednesday evening and ended on Thursday evening. The next day after Passover (i.e. Nisan 15th) begins the feast of unleavened bread that lasts seven days. Its first day is Sabbath: Lev 23:6 On the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread to Jehovah. Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread.

Jesus' 2nd night dead.

Friday 16th

The women bought spices and herbs and made ointment. Mar 16:1 When the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, bought spices, that they might go and anoint Jesus.

Weekly Sabbath began: Normally, Sabbath feast begins on

Friday at sunset with a family dinner, and candles lit.

Jesus' 3rd night dead

Saturday 17th

The normal weekly Sabbath ends. Jesus is resurrected after being dead three days and three nights.

Next Sunday

Mar 16: Very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had just come up, they were going to the tomb. – Jesus was no longer in the tomb, he had risen. The churches have traditionally been of the opinion that the resurrection took place on Sunday night, before women came to the grave early in the morning.

Are there any contradictions in the apostle's accounts?

Mar 14:12: "On the first day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover lamb is sacrificed, Jesus' disciples asked him, "Where do you want us to go and make preparations for you to eat the Passover meal?" – I have inserted the event in this Passover preparation day. If the Pesach is on the 14th of Nisan, the disciples have started preparing the lamb the day before. Tuesday night is counted on the same day as the following Wednesday, which is the Passover day. Can the Passover day be called the first day of unleavened bread? Many scientists accept the assumption that Jesus and the disciples prepared the lamb a little ahead of time.

Mat 26:17 Now on the first day of unleavened bread, the disciples came to Jesus, saying to him, "Where do you want us to prepare for you to eat the Passover?" 18 He said, "Go into the city to a certain person, and tell him, 'The Teacher says, "My time is at hand. I will keep the Passover at your house with my disciples.'" – Matthew

26:17 is in substance identical to Mark. When both apostles give the same testimony, one must believe and adapt the course of events, taking into account this point of reference.

Exo 12:18-20 In the first month, **on the fourteenth day of the month at evening**, you shall eat unleavened bread, until the twenty-first day of the month at evening. 19 Seven days shall there be no yeast found in your houses, for whoever eats that which is leavened, that soul shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he be a foreigner, or one who is born in the land. 20 You shall eat nothing leavened. In all your habitations you shall eat unleavened bread.” –The Jews seek to comply with the instructions given by God concerning the holiday’s observances. Lamb eating and then eating unleavened bread has occurred in the evening when the day was already shifting to the 14th of Wednesday.

Preparation of the Passover. Joh 19:14 Now it was the Preparation Day of the Passover, at about the sixth hour [noon]. And he said to the Jews, Behold your king. 15 Then they cried out, “Go away, take away, crucify him!” Luke 23:54 shows: It was the Preparation Day, and the Sabbath was just beginning. – The Preparation day, which preceded the actual Pesah feast, began on Tuesday and continued until Wednesday evening. The fate of Jesus culminated on the day of Preparation and on the Wednesday part of it.

Is “on the third day” the same as “three days and three nights”?

Luuk 24:6 He is not here but has been raised. Remember what he [Jesus] told you while he was still in Galilee, 7 saying ‘the Son of Man must be handed over to sinful

men, be crucified, and rise on the third day.”

The “three days” condition is well fulfilled by the Jewish way of day counting: It should be remembered that, according to the Jewish way, “the day” begins in the evening when the sun is falling and ends when the sun falls next time.

Wednesday 14th / Thursday

Thursday 15th / Friday

Friday 16th / Saturday

SUMMARY

I have come to the conclusion that Jesus and the disciples celebrated the Passover on Tuesday, a day earlier than the rest of the Jews. After the Pesach meal, they went to Mount of Olives and to Gethsemane. At night Judas betrayed Jesus, who was then arrested and taken into custody.

On Wednesday morning the 14th of Nisan, which was the Passover Preparation day, Jesus’ interrogations resulted in the mob calling for his crucifixion. Jesus was flogged and taken to Golgotha, where he was crucified with two others. It was 6 o’clock i.e. noon.

Jesus was the first to die of the three crucified at 9th hour i.e. 3 o’clock in the afternoon.

These are the facts we know on the basis of the Bible.

We do not know the exact time of Jesus’ death. However, we know that Jewish leaders wanted to hurry to end the crucifixion because the special High Sabbath was about to begin. Therefore, the legs of the other two crucified criminals were broken so that they would die more quickly and could be buried. Pilate gave permission to bury Jesus in the tomb which belonged to Joseph of

Arimathaea. I estimate that Jesus was placed in the tomb at around 18 o'clock in the evening when Passover feast was about to begin.

The burial time determines the time of resurrection: "Mat 12:40 ... **so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.** So Jesus was to be dead in the tomb for 72 hours:

From Wednesday at 6 pm to Thursday 6 pm/ from Thursday at 6 pm to Friday 6 pm/ and from Friday 6 pm to Saturday at 6 pm

The resurrection of Jesus is scheduled for Saturday at 6 pm, when the weekly Sabbath was running out. This is how the days are counted from the Wednesday evening (burial time) to exactly the same time on Saturday, and the commonly used phrase "on the third day" meets the same requirements as "three days and three nights".

Are there any alternatives within the timetable?

Crucifixion on Wednesday is possible, but the resurrection on Sunday night is too late

Crucifixion on Thursday is not possible because Thursday was the day of a High Sabbath.

Crucifixion on Friday is possible, but the resurrection on *Sunday* is too soon; Jesus was supposed to be dead in the tomb for three nights and now there is one night missing. In this case, the time and length of interrogation of Jesus should also be changed, but it is not in accordance with the Bible's account.

How is the schedule to go? My own interpretation is as follows: Jesus was crucified on Wednesday and was also buried just before the High Sabbath began. *Jesus rose*

from the dead and walked out of the tomb on a Saturday evening just before the Sabbath ends.

Sunday morning

The women came to the tomb: Mar 16:4 Then they looked up and saw that the stone had been rolled away. (For it was a very large stone.) 5 Entering into the tomb, they saw a young man [angel] sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe, and they were amazed.

6 He said to them, "Don't be amazed. You seek *Jesus, the Nazarene, who has been crucified. He has risen. He is not here.* Behold, the place where they laid him!

The angel just says that Jesus is not here. He DOES NOT say when Jesus has risen and left the tomb. Churches, both the Catholic Church and Protestant churches assume the resurrection occurred a little earlier at night. Even if the assumption is right, Jesus would have been dead in the tomb FOUR NIGHTS! Wednesday night / Thursday night: Thursday night / Friday night: Friday night / Saturday night and fourth night: Saturday / Sunday night.

▪ [Bible Difficulties](#)

Who is the "King of this world"

"We know that we are from God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one" (1 Joh 5:19). What John says is to the greatest extent true. The evil i.e. Satan is, according to Scripture, "the king [god, prince] of this world".

2 Cor 4:4 In their case, the god of this world has blinded the minds of those who do not believe to keep them from seeing the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God.

John 12:31 Now is the judgment of this world. Now the

prince of this world will be cast out. Eph 2:2 in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the powers of the air, the spirit who now works in the children of disobedience;

In general, people believe that God is ruling the world. People just do not understand why God allows many things or why God does not intervene in events when something bad is happening. In particular, believers are being tested; they find it hard to believe the events they are suffering with because they consider themselves true believers and God does not prevent evil events. God is almighty, and he is also just and righteous; how could God allow injustice to win? It may not be possible for God to allow his faithful servant to become a victim of an unfair destiny!

But this happens, why? Think about Job; Satan argued that Job believed in God because God bestowed Job, his righteous servant, all sorts of success in the world. Satan claimed to God that if Job was deprived of the results of his earthly success, he would curse God and turn away. This did not happen, though Satan harassed Job and even caused him all kinds of hardships. Job had even grown abscesses and all his friends abandoned him. Job, however, believed in the Lord despite all the hardships.

Why does God let Satan work against God's will? The Bible does not tell you more about the following. This is just what I imagine in my mind: Satan argued that Job was a rare exception. "Give me all the power in the earth and I will show that I am right. People choose me when I give them wealth and power. You are obeyed only by a few that society has rejected." Perhaps God said this way: "All right, you have all the power on earth for a certain time to turn humanity to follow you. However, my own you cannot destroy if they have my seal.

When the time is over, your power will end and you yourself will be destroyed.”

How did Satan succeed? Well, really well! Most of humanity serve false gods. There are many Christians, but they are nominally Christians and have forsaken the true faith and most do not really believe in God. One could say that Money is their God. Mat 13:22 What was sown among the thorns, this is he who hears the word, but the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful.

What is Satan's plan for the end-times?

Satan is charming mankind. For the past hundred years, mankind has taken a lot of technological steps forward: automobile, airplane, internet, achievements in health care ... New inventions are constantly being made. Think of all the advances that mankind has taken in the technical sense over the last hundred years. Human health is improved, life expectancy increases. Secularization advances and man forgets God.

As we look at today's world, we cannot fail to notice the ever-accelerating technical development – we could say in all sectors of society. This affects Western countries and parts of the rest of the world. China is evolving at a daunting pace. The rest of the world's countries are lagging behind; Africa, South America, Russia, Asian countries ... What is common with these underdeveloped countries? They are not Christian except for a small part. But that also suits Satan well. The main thing is that they do not rely on God. One of Satan's "titles" is the prince of the power of the air. For centuries this has been a mystery to people. Today, when mankind has developed air planes and rockets,

visited the moon, plans trips to Mars, and sends scientific research equipment to space, it's easier to understand what the prince of the power of the air could mean. The Revelation tells about the future activities of Satan's forces: 20:9 and they did go up over the breadth of the land, and did surround the camp of the saints, and the beloved city, and there came down fire from God out of the heaven, and devoured them;

The KJV translates Strong's G305 [ἀναβαίνω anabainō in the following manner: to go up, move to a higher place, ascend] go up (37x), come up (10x), ascend (10x), ascend up (8x), climb up (2x), spring up (2x), grow up (2x), come (2x), enter (2x), arise (2x), rise up (2x), miscellaneous (2x), or ascend (1x).

People's values have changed. Satan wants to promote such a development that makes people to forget God's purpose for mankind. Even in Eden, it turned out that Eve was fascinated by the idea of understanding everything, like God. Modern people want to know everything and master everything. All this Satan promises to humans. There is only one thing people lack – eternal life. In one apocrypha, Satan was described in this way; he has the means to cause death, but he could not create life.

Apostasy is what has happened to them. Unfortunately, this is also the case with most of the world's churches.

Population growth in underdeveloped countries also means that the good news of the gospel do not reach the ever-increasing number of world population. Jesus Christ preached good news about the coming Kingdom of God. God's Kingdom means God's government. Satan's grip tightens and the government in the world is "Satan's government."

God asks for advice (1 Kings)

King Jehoshaphat of Judah and the king of Israel were negotiating to start war in Ramoth Gilead. The king of Israel gathered four hundred prophets, and all of them assured that the war would succeed. Yet Micaiah the prophet was consulted: "Micah, are we to go to Ramoth Gilead or not to go?" And he said unto him, "Come forth, and you shall overcome, and the Lord shall deliver it into the hand of the king."

1 Kin 22:19 continues: "Micaiah said, Therefore hear you the word of Jehovah: I saw Jehovah sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him on his right hand and on his left".

20 Jehovah said, Who shall entice Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-Gilead? One said on this manner; and another said on that manner.

21 There came forth a spirit, and stood before Jehovah, and said, I will entice him.

22 Jehovah said to him, 'How?' He said, 'I will go forth, and will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.' He said, 'You shall entice him, and shall prevail also: go forth, and do so.'

What is noteworthy here? First, a vision where God is sitting on his throne, and all the hosts of heaven were in front of him. Then God asked a question: "Who shall entice Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-Gilead?" Why should God ask such advice from his angels? And was God provided with good advice? No, "one said one thing and the other said another" as one translation indicates.

Then came forth a spirit before God ... Who is this spirit, the Bible does not tell, but I bet the spirit was Satan. He promised to entice Ahab by being a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. God accepted Satan's proposition and answered: 'You shall entice him,

and shall prevail also: go forth, and do so'.

The whole scene is strange. How is it possible for God to gather millions and millions of angels to ask them how to seduce a little king to wage war against another king on earth. The assignment is given to Satan, to the one who seduced Adam and Eve into sin. One would think that Satan would be the last one God would show his trust. Satan's solution is characteristic of him; Satan is going to be a lying spirit in the mouth of all Ahab's prophets. Is not God alone able to decide how to get two kingdoms to fight with each other? Did God have no other solution than war?

"The sun stood still" (Joshua 10:12-13)

The Israelites had to avenge their enemies the Amorites. The battle lasted and lasted, and no clear victory was gained. Jos 10:12 "Then spoke Joshua to Jehovah in the day when Jehovah delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel; and he said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand you still on Gibeon; You, Moon, in the valley of Aijalon. 13 The sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the nation had avenged themselves of their enemies. Isn't this written in the book of Jashar? The sun stayed in the midst of the sky and didn't hurry to go down about a whole day".

Did the sun stop? The modern man could say that the sun does not even orbit the earth! And did the earth stop rotating? I will not ponder either of them. Instead, I ask: If God wanted Israel to overcome the Amorites, why did God simply not do as he is told in 2 Kings 19:35: "And that night the angel of the Lord went out and struck a hundred and eighty-five thousand men in the camp of the Assyrians, and when it rose early in the

morning, behold, they were all dead bodies. ” – Imagine, one angel killed 185,000 enemy soldiers during the night.

God uses various means to achieve his goal. He can assist his chosen people in winning the battle or he can actually intervene in the events with his angels. Again, it is worth recalling an important biblical passage: For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. (Isa 55:9)

Why Is the Word of God written so impenetrably?

Why is the Word of God written so unclear? Although we have many different translations, explanatory texts and dictionaries today, there is not much increase in people's understanding. I ask: Why did God give such an ambiguous Bible? Why did Jesus not even want his listeners to understand?

If God wanted people to understand, he could have written the Bible so that no interpretation problems would have emerged. If Jesus wanted the great crowds to understand and believe, could he not even explain what His parables meant?

Why is the Bible so much full of figures of speech, symbols, figurative narrative? There are many people, both laymen and church officials, who believe that everything that is said in the Bible must be literally true and understood so. Particularly, this is the true in this chapter. Penalties for the final judgment with the fiery lake must be taken literally. People (who in their own mind are sinless and righteous) just want the punishment of God to be strictly enforced. – Understanding the Bible is easier when the reader learns

to realize when it a question of a figurative expression and what is behind the figure of speech and what its purpose is. Each parable aims to teach a spiritual truth. Jesus said that “the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life”. (Jhn 6:63)

Why Has God Given People a Different Amount of Faith?

... God has allotted to each a measure of faith (Rom 12:3)

Why God did not give everyone as much faith but instead He gave a different measure? Rom 12:3 For by the grace given to me I ask every one of you not to think of yourself more highly than you should think, rather to think of yourself with sober judgment on the measure of faith that God has assigned each of you.

1 Cor 12:11 But one and the same Spirit produces all these results and gives what he wants to each person.

Rom 9:21 A potter has the right to do what he wants to with his clay, doesn't he? He can make something for a special occasion or something for ordinary use from the same lump.

2 Tim 2:20 In a large house there are not only utensils made of gold and silver, but also those made of wood and clay. Some are for special use, while others are for ordinary use.

God distributes gifts as he wills, to each according to their capabilities. God has also decided whom he calls and whom he chooses and whom he attracts to himself and to Christ. Paul did not have the opportunity to refuse Christ's invitation. For three days he was blind, without eating and drinking. Then the enemy of the Lord became his steady advocate. God does his will. The man

who feels that he has not received as much as some others can be comforted that God remembers him in the final judgment.

What happens to people who receive little faith?

How does Jesus judge them at the last judgment? Jesus told about this in his parable.

Mat 25:14 “For it is like a man, going into another country, who called his own servants, and entrusted his goods to them.

15 To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one; to each according to his own ability. Then he went on his journey.

16 Immediately he who received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents.

17 In like manner he also who got the two gained another two.

18 But the one who received one talent went off, dug a hole in the ground, and hid his master’s money.

The man of the parable (Jesus) gave his servants money to invest “each according to his ability”. The man expected results to accumulate during his trip; the one who had received a big sum was expected to have better results than the small servant who had just received a small sum. – This is also the case with faith; most of mankind has had little faith. From them, Jesus only looks for the minimum, to keep it safe what they have got. For those who have had much faith – they are often teachers, priests, bishops, even popes – Jesus expects much more. When they are in service in the local Congregation or in the Church in a major position of power, Jesus judges them more severely than those who have got less faith. If they have worked well and turned

many to righteousness, they will shine brightly like the stars. In the opposite case: if they have forsaken the faith of Christ, persecuted believers otherwise, burned them at the stake, or if they have committed paedophilia and raped the little and innocent trusted in their care, their judgment is severe.

Dan: 12:3 “Those who are wise shall shine as the brightness of the expanse; and those who turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever”.

Mat 18:5 Whoever receives one such little child in my name receives me [Jesus], 6 but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to stumble, it would be better for him that a huge millstone should be hung around his neck, and that he should be sunk in the depths of the sea.

Jam 3:1 Let not many of you be teachers, my brothers, knowing that we will receive heavier judgment.

When God has given people a different amount of faith, for those received less it is enough “just to believe”. If there is little faith, it is more difficult to understand God’s will and implement it. What did God think about at this point? Perhaps he has planned to save in the end the people who have little or no faith. If that were not the case and only the people of the strong faith would find salvation, God would not be righteous.

Why would not God himself follow his own commandments?

God commands us to love our enemies: Mat. 5:44 But I tell you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who mistreat you and persecute you. – If sinners at the last

judgment are the enemies of God, should not God follow his own commandment and love them? God guided us to forgive our offenders, if necessary, even "seventy times seven". Why would not God himself be merciful and forgiving to his creation, but would send them in the fiery lake for eternity? Why? God says in the Bible that he wants everyone to be saved. However, he intends to destroy most of humanity. The Bible assures several times that sinners will receive a judgment in the fiery lake of eternal fire.

Rom 8:20-21 "For the creation was subjected to vanity, not of its own will, but because of him who subjected it, in hope 21 that the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of decay into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. God declares here that [the whole] creation contrary to its own will be subjected to corruption, but is liberated from the bondage of corruption (KJV) to the freedom of the glory of the children of God. But, should not the majority of the creation be punished in the burning lake forever? The Roman letter promises hope to the creation, but in many places the Bible assures it is damnation, weeping and gnashing of teeth, eternal separation from the glory of God etc.

God created people and subjected them to 'corruption'. Old English translations like the KJV use the word vanity, which could be characterized also by pursuing one's own interest, by living in the way of this world. God also ensured that among people there are righteous people who are his chosen ones.

I am now drawing this important conclusion: God made in his own wisdom an important dichotomy regarding his creation. We have also read how God gave faith to each one of us according to his own discretion. For the sake of salvation, people go from a different starting point

to compete for the prize of eternal life. I will, however, come to the final conclusion that God will correct the situation in the last judgment and offer salvation easy. From the Bible we already know that to gain salvation it is enough to call out just one word: Jesus! If you want to be verbose, you can say: Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me! But that one word is enough. Jesus knows what you mean by saying it. He remembers it at the last judgment.

Act 17:31 "because he has appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by the man [Christ] whom he has ordained; whereof he has given assurance to all men, in that he has raised him from the dead."

God has appointed a human as chief judge. Christ condemns all mankind in a righteous way. In the Bible, judgment is based on the works of each person. Rev 20:12 ...The dead were judged out of the things which were written in the books, according to their works. There are various works and therefore various judgments. It is certain that judgments are righteous. Many sinners are cleansed of their actions and receive life. However, I do not believe in universalism that all people will ultimately be saved. In the last chapter of this series of articles, 'Last Judgment', I deal with the Lord's cleansing fire disclosed in the Corinthians letter, fire that burns away human sin after resurrection. People, many sinners, can thus be saved, but there seems to be a prerequisite for that; man must have "built his house" on Christ. This fire is not a purgatory, in which the Catholics believe. Purgatory burns people after death before a person reaches heaven.

The purifying fire burn people after the resurrection, for a person to be purified and saved. This involves at least one major problem. If it is true that bad people

will suffer a certain time in the fiery lake, what will happen to them when the punishment is over? Can they join the others in the heavenly paradise? Or is their destiny annihilation, the end of existence? Or is it so that there is no fiery lake but those who are not directed to a purifying fire of God, shall be annihilated immediately? A difficult question I cannot answer.

The future of mankind

The Resurrection body and the Future of Man: The Bible tells of the Resurrection Body of Christ, that Jesus could move freely, even through the walls and doors, and move from one place to another in no time. Jesus could also take a fleshly human body to allow Thomas to find the traces of crucifixion in his hands. Is the resurrection body of ordinary people the same kind? I'm pretty sure that at least the participants in the first resurrection have bodies similar to that of Jesus. They will rise up in the clouds to meet Jesus. It's not possible with fleshly bodies.

Here is a most important promise concerning the future of believers.

The Bible says: 1 Joh 3:2 Dear friends, we are now God's children, but what we will be like has not been revealed yet. We know that when Christ is revealed we will be like him (phaneroō eimi homoios autos), because we will see him as he is. – When we think of how wonderful and perfect man Jesus Christ was while living on earth, can a man have a higher dream than to become like him?

The participants of the first resurrection will receive many other abilities and mighty powers on the basis of faith. I will tell you about these in another article.

God tests and punishes his own already on earth, and they no longer need to attend the final judgment with the world. 1 Cor 11:31 But if we judged ourselves correctly, we would not be judged. 32 Now, while we are being judged by the Lord, we are being disciplined lest we be condemned along with the world. – The word for condemnation is in Greek κρίνω krinō. When the church of God is condemned, it includes the Lord's chastisement. Chastisement is in Greek παιδεύων paideuo, which according to Strong's includes the following characterizations: educate, discipline (by punishment): chasten, instruct, learn (to cause one to learn), teach. Further, God's chastise means producing suffering, pain, even great loss. The congregation is not included in the same group with the rest of the world. Read more in the article.

<https://salatturaamattu.fi/mita-on-jumalan-kuritus/>

God is working constantly, the world is not ready yet. When God has worked for a long time, God also has his limitations: everything cannot be completed in the blink of an eye. Joh 5:17 But Jesus answered them, "My Father is still working, so I am working, too."

Joh 14:12 Most assuredly I [Jesus] tell you, he who believes in me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater works than these will he do; because I am going to my Father.

What will people do in God's New World? I dare say they do not just sit on the edge of the cloud, they are working. It is proved by 1 Cor 3: 9 **"For we are God's co-workers"**.

- [Where is the True Church of God?](#)

In this article, I discuss the following problem: there are thousands of Churches in the world and many of them claim to be the only true Church accepted by God and the only one whose doctrine is in accordance with the Bible. I do not name any church that would be the only true church of God. Instead, I try to bring forth the factors and conditions that must be fulfilled for the Church to be the Church of God. I believe that in many Churches there are individuals whom God accepts. The problem is that they do not form the majority in the Church and are not in charge of it. An important question arises: God says that the His people should go out of the harlot church in order not to be involved in its sins.

What is the Church?

The Greek word for Church or Congregation is ἐκκλησία *ekklēsia*. It means to be *called out*. Called out from what? According to my own interpretation called out of this world, the worship of false gods and the worship of God in a church when worship includes non-biblical teachings.

Rev 18:4 Then I heard another voice from heaven saying, "Come out of her, my people, so that you don't participate in her sins and suffer from her plagues. Also 2 Cor 6:17 Therefore, "'Come out from among them, And be separate,' says the Lord, 'Touch no unclean thing. I will receive you. 18 I will be to you a Father. You will be to me sons and daughters,' says the Lord Almighty."

Where should God's people go out so that people should not be part of her sins? When we read the whole chapter 18, we learn a lot more. Babylon the Great has just fallen. What is this Babylon the Great? The Revelation tells us that with this Babylon, the kings of the Earth have "engaged in fornication", which is a figurative expression of the exercise of the false religion and the power it brings.

When Babylon is destroyed in one moment, Rev 18:9 KJV "And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning" And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more (KJV)". Babylon the Great is a city, but not an ordinary city. It is revealed when the Bible describes its inhabitants.

Rev 18:10 standing far away for the fear of her torment, saying, 'Woe, woe, the great city, Babylon, the strong city! For your judgment has come in one hour.'" Who live in this city – besides the merchants? It is revealed in verse 18:16, saying, 'Woe, woe, **the great city, she who was dressed in fine linen, purple, and scarlet**, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls! 17 For in one hour all this wealth has been destroyed!"– The city, which was dressed in 'fine linen, and purple' means that the city had plenty of people dressed in linen, and purple, they are the servants of the Whore of Babylon.

This is the city that has the largest Christian church in it. 'Come out of it my people', says Christ to the

world through John. The judgment and destruction of this city and its great church will come in a moment. From this Church says Revelation: "and all the nations were deceived by your *witchcraft*" (18:23) and this church is guilty of:"In her was found the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all who have been slain on the earth" (18:24).

This city and the religious might it represents describe not only this one city, even though it is the centre of this harlot church. Believers and congregations can be found all over the world. 'Get out of it', says Christ. It is difficult because the church in question has a tight grip on people: leaving is forbidden people who do so are threatened with the most severe punishment – eternal separation from God's connection. This kind of tight grip on the own parishioners keep also Jehovah's Witnesses.

Already in the mid-16th century, efforts were made to define the qualities of a Church approved by God: "The marks, by which **the true Church is known**, are these: if the pure doctrine of the gospel is preached therein; if she maintains the pure administration of the sacraments as instituted by Christ; if church discipline is exercised in punishing of sin." ([The Belgic Confession](#), 1561). Until the Reformation, the Catholic Church was in supreme dominance and defined the doctrinal content, and also the sacraments and the Church order. In this article, I wonder what God thinks about the rather variegated patchwork of doctrines in the world's churches.

In my opinion, the churches want to follow the doctrine

of the Bible. Some say that everything else is out of the question. However, the Catholic churches (Roman Catholic and Greek Catholic) give much weight to tradition and the Church's own regulations. The word of the Pope weighs a lot, he is after all – Vicarius Filii Dei – the alternate of the Son of God" on earth.

At the beginning of the Revelation, we look at the churches in the present Turkish region, how they had moved away from the apostolic faith and teachings. Rev 2:5 says: "Remember therefore from where you have fallen, and repent and do the first works; or else I am coming to you swiftly, and will **move your lampstand out of its place**, unless you repent." – A lamp and a lampstand depict a church and the status of the church as a maintainer of the true faith. If the church does not repent, it can be removed from among other churches.

(Thayer's Lexicon: to take it out of the number of churches, remove it altogether)

Unchristian churches are generally considered to be: Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, Adventists, Urantia. In fact, I have become familiar with Jehovah's Witnesses doctrine in their weekly 'Bible studies'. In fact, at these events, JW's own books were studied, and from time to time, they glanced at their own Bible if it confirmed the biblical doctrine of the book. I stopped attending these events when I noticed how tightly they held on to their doctrines, which I could not accept. As human beings, they were exemplarily benevolent and striving for their mutual love to prevail at the church assembly.

I have written an article about some of the features of the Catholic Church. Their teachings include so many

non-Biblical doctrines that I cannot regard their doctrine to be in accordance with the Bible. This is the most important question in deciding whether God will accept the Church as his own.

What we must believe according to the Bible?

This is well summarized in the [Apostolic Creed](#). It is the oldest creed originating close to the apostolic time. Later creeds go over the Bible. For example, the Athanasian Creed, which requires believers to recognize the equal deity of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Spirit with the consequence that they otherwise lose their chance to be saved.

The deity of Jesus is therefore a fundamental doctrinal controversy. I have written about Jesus Christ in various articles in these pages. According to the Bible, it is certain that Jesus is the only begotten Son of God. It is also certain that Jesus is Lord and Christ, because God the Father has made him so. The Bible never says directly that Jesus and the Holy Spirit would be equal in Godhead with God the Father.

Christian Churches therefore have their own opinions. However, the Church must not condemn those who do not recognize Jesus and the Holy Spirit as equal Gods with the Father, but confess Jesus as the only begotten son of God. The Bible prohibits believers from declaring a condemnation to anyone. It's up to God and Christ.

1 Joh 4:1 Beloved, don't believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. 2 This is how you can recognize God's Spirit: Every spirit who acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God.

There are many denominations in the world, each with its own secure doctrines of faith. They are often opposed to the views of other churches. It is clear that not everyone can be right. How does God relate to different views? In an article I asked why God did not give us a completely unambiguous Bible? Surely he could have put such clear words in the mouths of his prophets that there would be no problems of interpretation. I have no other explanation but this: God wants people to struggle and study the Bible to find the truth. People need to be patient for those who present other types of opinions, and not to curse them into the deepest hell. Paul spoke of the churches of God, in his letters to the churches in the present Turkish territory. 2 Tes 1:4 As a result, we boast about you among God's churches—about your endurance and faith through all the persecutions and afflictions you are experiencing. Some Churches have added "Church of God" to the name of their Church affirming their adherence to the apostolic doctrine. Good if that were the case.

1 Tes 5:21 "Test all things, and hold firmly that which is good." God's purpose is that men seek the truth, explore what the different directions of doctrine offer, and that men would establish their faith in versatile knowledge and ultimately conviction of the true doctrine. If a person is bound to a certain Church and its doctrine from the day of baptism, such a search for

truth is not possible. That's why people are told: Get out of that so that you don't get involved in its sins. The question is whether it is possible to live in accordance with God's will and at the same time be a member of such a church whose doctrine is not biblical? I interpret the biblical exhortation as leaving away meticulously because if Satan is given a little finger, he takes the whole hand. However, it is not up to me to attract people away from the Church they believe to be God's. I have met many such people, for example Jehovah's Witnesses, and I believe they are totally sincere in their faith.

Now that you have found the right truth and the right church, then what? Joh 17:14 I have given them your word. The world hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 2 Tim 3:12 Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. And again: Rom 8:8 Those who are in the flesh can't please God. 9 But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if it is so that the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if any man doesn't have the Spirit of Christ, he is not his – These verses show that choosing the truth and observing it in life is by no means easy. It is often the case that small churches are unconditional regarding the observance of the doctrine they claim to be right. For large ones it is often enough to externally follow the Church's instructions.

In the Bible, the First Church is described in Acts chapter 2:

2:42 And **they were continuing steadfastly in the doctrine of the apostles**, and in fellowship, and in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

43 Fear came on every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles.

44 All the believers were together, and **they shared everything** with one another.

45 **They sold their possessions and goods**, and distributed them to all, according as anyone had need.

46 They had a single purpose and went to the temple every day. They ate at each other's homes and shared their food with glad and humble hearts.

47 praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church those being saved from day to day.

1 Cor 12:11 But the one and the same Spirit works all of these, distributing to each one separately as he desires.

12 For as the body is one, and has many members, and all the members of the body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ.

13 For in one Spirit **we were all baptized into one body**, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free; and were all given to drink into one Spirit. – God wants to see the members of his own Church as one body baptized together in the Spirit.

Maybe we'll see something like this in the last days:
2:17 'It will be in the last days, says God, That I will

pour out my Spirit on all flesh. Your sons and your daughters will prophesy. Your young men will see visions. Your old men will dream dreams. 2:21 It will be, that whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved.'

Schism and how to prevent it

The main Churches interpret the body of Christ to mean congregations located on different parts of the world. The ecumenical movement seeks to unite the teachings and congregations of religions. How can this be successful? The God of the Bible is very strict about the right doctrine and does not tolerate false teachings. He does not allow traditions to be followed and priority must be given to the doctrine of the Bible.

Paul says in Eph 4:14 "that we may no longer be children, **tossed back and forth and carried about with every wind of doctrine**, by the trickery of men, in craftiness, after the wiles of error; 15 but speaking truth in love, **we may grow up in all things into him, who is the head, Christ**; 16 in whom the whole body is united and held together by every ligament with which it is supplied. As each individual part does its job, the body's growth is promoted so that it builds itself up in love".

The Bible makes every effort to encourage the members of the church to build in love, avoiding all kinds of

doctrines, to him who is the head of the true Church – to Christ.

2 Cor 11:4 warns: For if he who comes preaches another Jesus, whom we did not preach, or if you receive a different spirit, which you did not receive, or a different gospel, which you did not accept, you put up with that well enough.”

The biblical idea that there should be only one church whose head is Christ is a beautiful idea. What is the reality? There are thousands of Christian Churches, and most disagree doctrinally. The Catholic Church, through its strict hierarchical structure, has been able to better keep the churches around the world in conformity. Doctrinal schisms however, began already during Paul’s time.

The members of the congregation affirmed in 1 Kor 1:12 to be ... “I belong to Paul,” or “I belong to Apollos,” or “I belong to Cephas [Peter],” or “I belong to Christ.”, Indignantly Paul rightly says: 1:13 “Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized into the name of Paul?” – It must be said that, despite everything, Paul managed to keep the churches under one head, Christ, better than today. At Paul’s time, communication was difficult and it took months for the letter to be delivered.

The doctrinal dispersion of the churches is manifested in, for example, from the Romans: 16:17 “Now I beg you, brothers, look out for those who are causing the divisions and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the

doctrine which you learned, and turn away from them. 18 For such people are not serving Christ our Lord but their own desires. By their smooth talk and flattering words they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting.”

What does God think of the following Churches?

1 Tes 5:21 **“Instead, test everything. Hold on to what is good,”** This could be considered a good guide for Christians who think about which Church to join. Instead of joining one Church in turn and experiencing all the Churches, one could instead study the doctrines of all Churches and choose the one whose doctrine is as close as possible to the apostolic teaching.

Jesus taught in Mat 11:28-30: “Come to me, all you who labor and are heavily burdened, and I will give you rest.

29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart; and you will find rest for your souls..

30 For ***my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.***”

In the following passages I go through a few churches from the point of view of how closely each one follows the teachings of Jesus and the apostles, and whether participation in the activities of the Church is in accordance with Jesus’ promise mediated by Matthew.

The Catholic Church

Even the starting point of the Catholic Church is distorted. Saying to Peter that “on this rock I will build my Church,” Jesus didn’t mean Peter as the rock. The early church was a group of congregations in the present Turkish region and the Middle East. When the number of congregations grew, it became necessary to create a common leadership for these churches; the Catholic Church (Catholic meaning a ‘common’ church) was formed. It took for itself the right derived from Peter to become the Church of all Christianity. It nominated bishops and popes to follow Peter; Peter was supposed to be the first bishop of Rome.

Protestant Churches

In the 16th century, Reformation was born in opposition the teachings of the Catholic Church. Reformation was initiated by Professor Martin Luther of the University of Wittenberg, who nailed the 95 famous theses on the door of the church. These theses opposed certain teachings and practices of the Catholic Church. In England, John Wycliffe opposed the power of the Pope, the worship of saints, the celibacy of the priests, and the sale of indulgences. The Catholic Church, of course, opposed Wycliffe’s theses as heretical, and in 1415 the Church declared him heretic. Some years later, the

Catholic Church dug his bones from the tomb and burned them. The ashes were thrown into the river.

[Reformation](#) was on the right track, but the work was left halfway. The result was bitter wars and when they ended the Catholic world remained catholic, and the Churches of protestant countries that had left the Catholic Mother Church have not in all respects adhered the word of the Bible.

The Evangelical- Lutheran Church today is like the Laodicean Church, which Christ depicts blind (needs eye salve) and lacks religious zeal (is neither cold nor hot). Does Christ vomit at least part of the churches belonging to this group from his mouth? Have these Churches become too official, whose services are formalistic, not declaring the coming of the kingdom of God? The mission of the Church is to guide its members into the kingdom of God. Therefore, the doctrine of the Church must not deviate from the doctrine proclaimed in the Bible, which clearly states what kind of people cannot inherit the kingdom of God:

1 Cor 6:9 Or don't you know that the unrighteous will not inherit the Kingdom of God? Don't be deceived. Neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor male prostitutes, nor homosexuals,
10 nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor slanderers, nor extortioners, will inherit the Kingdom of God.

6:19 nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor slanderers, nor extortioners, will inherit the Kingdom

of God.

6:20 for you were bought with a price. Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

The existing big churches are often indifferent to the lives of their parishioners. Everyone can live the way they want. Especially Evangelical-Lutheran churches are indifferently free-minded. The walls are wide and the ceiling is high. It seems that those who live in sin will be at peace, but those who want to cherish the apostolic faith in the Church are mostly just distractions that are hardly tolerated. The issues of controversy are attitudes towards *women's priesthood*, the *same-sex marriages*, and generally *attitude towards gays*.

1 Cor 14:35 But if they desire to learn anything, let them question their husbands at home; for **it is a shame for a woman to speak in a church**. 1 Tim 2:12 "Moreover, I do not allow a woman to teach or to have authority over a man. Instead, she is to be quiet." – Is it that this and the following behavioural guidelines were intended only for people who lived two thousand years ago. Today's people are said to live in a completely different world and they are not affected by these ancient Bible instructions. Really? On the other hand, at the time of Jesus, there were several women in the church who played a significant role in the church and were not left home. In his letters, Paul sent greetings to them and in this way showed respect for women.

1 Tim 1:10 for the sexually immoral, for homosexuals, for slave-traders, for liars, for perjurers, and for any other thing contrary to the sound doctrine;

3 Moos 18:22 And you shall not lie with a male as one lies with a woman; it is a perversion. 3 Moos 18:23 "You shall not lie with any animal to defile yourself with it; neither shall any woman give herself to an animal, to lie down with it: it is a perversion.

Gal 5:19 Now the works of the flesh are obvious, which are: adultery, sexual immorality, uncleanness, lustfulness,

Gal 5:20 idolatry, sorcery, hatred, strife, jealousies, outbursts of anger, rivalries, divisions, heresies,

Gal 5:21 envyings, murders, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these; of which I forewarn you, even as I also forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the Kingdom of God.

Gal 6:7 Do not be deceived, God is not mocked. For whatever a man may sow, that he also will reap.

Eph 5:5 Know this for sure, that no sexually immoral person, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ and God.

Col 3:5 Put to death therefore your members which are on the earth: sexual immorality, uncleanness, depraved passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry;

Col 3:6 It is because of these things that the wrath of God is coming on those who are disobedient.,

Heb 12:14 Pursue peace with everyone, as well as holiness, without which no one will see the Lord.

Heb 13:4 Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the bed be undefiled: but God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterers.

Rev 22:15 Outside are the dogs, the sorcerers, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.

The above list of horrors, of which the Bible warns parishioners. The Churches do not accept these, but they are often silent and do not interfere with what is happening in the Church. The true Church of God must not tolerate and quietly accept these unbiblical conducts, some of which were familiar even during Moses.

Jehovah's Witnesses (Watchtower Bible & Tract Society)

There are small doctrinal questions and then there are great ones. As an example of a small one is to say, as JWs claim, that Jesus was crucified on a stake and not a cross-shaped tree. Bigger doctrinal bias is, to claim that Jesus is Michael the Archangel.

Jehovah's Witnesses are easily identified by circulating from door to door to conduct a Bible study with those living in the apartment. However, Jesus gave a different kind of instruction for preaching the gospel; the gospel was to be proclaimed publicly and openly. The proclaimers were allowed to stay in a host family and enjoy its hospitality, but as Luke said: 10:7 "Remain in that same house, eating and drinking the things they give, for the laborer is worthy of his wages. *Do not go from house to house.*"

For Jehovah's Witnesses, proclaiming the kingdom of God is an important part of their activities. The doctrine of Jehovah's Witnesses differs in many respects from the doctrine of other Churches. Perhaps the most striking is that Jesus is not God, he is the Son of God, who at the beginning was the Archangel Michael. The general public also knows that Jehovah's Witnesses do not accept blood transfusions, even if the patient is at risk of dying.

At one point, I investigated these verses of the Bible they refer to: all the verses in the Bible that mention blood are about eating food with blood used in the cooking. This is because the animal's soul (i.e. its life force) is in the blood. Acts of the Apostles provide blood instruction: 15:20 " but that we write to them that they abstain from the pollution of idols, from sexual immorality, **from what is strangled, and from blood.** 15:29 that you abstain from things sacrificed to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality, from which if you keep yourselves, it will be well with you. Farewell."

– The instructions relate to eating meat where blood has not been let run off.

I have a couple of times participated in the in commemoration of Christ held on 14th day of Nisan when the Eucharist was distributed. Communion cups and communion bread circulate from one participant to another, but the participants are not allowed to enjoy the wine or bread; it is only for those who believe they belong to the so-called "small group" of 144,000. The number of this small group has been filled up a long time ago and the members of the group have died and

therefore new members cannot be added into this – and no one else can enjoy the Lord's Supper.

The peculiar interpretation of the words of Jesus concerning the Eucharist: 1 Cor 11:25 " In the same way he also took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink, in memory of me." 26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes." – In that situation, of course, Jesus showed his words to the apostles, but he in no way limited his message to the few of the elect. "As often as you..." simply refers to all believers who gather to remember the Lord's death. Jesus further stated: 11:28 " **A person must examine himself** and then eat the bread and drink from the cup.".- According to this statement of Jesus, the Lord's supper is meant for all men after he has tested himself.

Church leaders are to be servants of its members, and they must be like Christ, humble and modest. The former leader of Jehovah's Witnesses built a huge mansion for Jesus to be his home for his second coming, but when Jesus did not come, he took it to himself.

Mormons (The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints)

Two young men in dark costumes with briefcases came to my home. They told me they were the elders of the Church. I realized that their religion demanded mission work abroad for a certain time. A mother of a young man said she was happy when her son had had time to see the

latest Star Wars movie before leaving for a foreign mission (as it should probably not be possible during a mission abroad). I have no other experience of them than other than this one hour visit.

Mormons are especially known for being polygonal, which is forbidden in today's society. The second point is that even though they value the Bible, a more important book for them is the Book of Mormon. To me, it seems that Jesus is displaced.

Restored Church of God

"No one wants to harbor the thought that they may have been deceived and betrayed by a false prophet or religious fraud who claims to be "God's Apostle" or "God's Prophet" and who said his church was "God's only true Church" with "absolute truth."

This kind of thoughts are raised by those who have dissociated from the RCG. These highlight the procedures of the RCG predecessor, Herbert W. Armstrong and the present leader David C Pack, for the religious content of the Church; for example a large number of unjustified prophecies. How do you recognize the [Church that is not of God?](#) A very sure way is to investigate whether a church leader has been guilty of making predictions that have not materialized, though they are said to originate from God. HWA made about 200 such predictions during the years he was in charge.

Similar predictions that do not originate from God have

also been produced by Jehovah's Witnesses. Usually, their predictions have concerned the timetable of Jesus' second coming. According to the latest prediction, Jesus was supposed to come in 1975. This caused enormous joy among the members. Many Jehovah's Witnesses also sold their possessions in order to be able to make their living with those funds while they were preaching the coming of the kingdom of God under Jesus. When this did not happen, the board of directors of the Jehovah's Witnesses withdrew from all responsibility, even though they had been involved in supporting the prophecy. The event shows how dedicated the members of Jehovah's Witnesses are to their calling and, secondly, how their church leadership bears no responsibility for false prophecies.

Of course, it is necessary to study the doctrine of whether it is in accordance with the Bible. Here is the problem that there are so many opinions on the interpretation of the doctrine. Is Godhead formed of three persons, or do we have only one God the Father? This is what the Jews have believed through the ages, and Jehovah's Witnesses believe today. Or, do we have two Gods i.e. Jehovah and His Son Jesus – as the RCG Church believes?

It is also worth looking at the Church's leadership. The previous leader of WCG, Herbert W. Armstrong, turned out to be a false prophet and false Elijah. The leader of RCG, David C Pack, does not get a better mark, at least from those members of the Church who, after being disappointed with the Church and its leaders, have given evidence of RCG's unchristian doctrine and pressure on members.

The RCG has an interesting interpretation of the lost tribes of Israel: these tribes are found among the nations of the world today. The United States and Britain are part of Israel, being one of its lost tribes. In general, one can ask what happened to the lost tribes of Israel? Have they merged into the pagan world and lost their pure Judaism? But how could the USA be a descendant of a lost tribe? The US has received immigrants from tens of countries and there is no pure 'USA race' in the racial sense (except Native Americans). I don't know how David Pack justifies his wild doctrine, even though he has written a book about it.

Matthew testified that in the end times many false prophets will arise: 24:11 Many false prophets will arise, and will lead many astray.

Mat 24:24 For there will arise false christs, and false prophets, and they will show great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the chosen ones.

Apt 20:29 For I know that after my departure, vicious wolves will enter in among you, not sparing the flock.

When you get to know these people's personal experiences of cruel treatment and economic exploitation under the guise of religion, you can only say that the Bible was able to warn of this for two thousand years ago. I can't say how much of this happens outside Jehovah's Witnesses and the RCG. The religious organization has a great power and a tight grip on its members because they present themselves as representatives of God. The members believe in their intimidation of the fiery lake of hell, if they leave the church they have joined, and to which they are usually bound by baptism.

If you are a baptized [RCG member](#) and you are separated from the Church, you have no chance of salvation according to the RCG doctrine. The explanation is that you have never received the gift of the Holy Spirit because it is only received by a devoted member of the true Church of God, where Jesus Christ is working and the Church is, of course, the RCG. If you do not repent and get back, you will have to suffer during the upcoming tribulation when the other Church members are brought to safety and, of course, at the last judgment you will find yourself to be in the fiery lake of hell.

Safeguarding the unity

Rom16:17 Now I urge you, brothers, to watch out for those who create divisions and sinful enticements in opposition to the teaching you have learned. Stay away from them!

Tit 3:10 Have **nothing to do with a person who causes divisions** after you have warned him once or twice 11 For you know that a person like this is corrupt and keeps on sinning, being self-condemned.

1 Cor 5:12 For what have I to do with also judging those who are outside? Don't you judge those who are within?

1 Cor 5:13 But those who are outside, God judges. **"Put away the wicked man from among yourselves."**

Already in the days of Paul, attention was paid to the unity of the church and the dangers that threatened the church, if it were to keep doctrinal unity. Not only was the doctrinal disagreement a threat, but also the behavior of the parishioners. To the Romans, Paul writes that parishioners must withdraw from those who disagree or otherwise aggravate. It is the heresy you should avoid, as well as other sinners such as adulterers, greedy, idolaters, blasphemers, drinkers... These should not be socialized or even eaten with. "put away from among yourselves that wicked person." Also 2 Tes 3:6 guides: " Now we command you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw yourselves from every brother who walks in rebellion, and not after the tradition which they received from us."

What kind of Church does God want?

God wants the Church to be united, not dispersed and discouraged by contradictory doctrines. 1 Cor 14:33 " for God is not a God of confusion, but of peace. As in all the assemblies [churches] of the saints,"... decently and in order." (14:40). Paul emphasizes in his letter to the Philippine 1:27 Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, that, whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your state, that you **stand firm in one spirit, with one soul** striving for the faith of the gospel; 2:2 then fill me with joy by **having the same attitude**, sharing **the same love**, being **united in spirit**, and keeping **one purpose** in mind.

Small religious communities are often very scrupulous to guard the purity of the doctrine and the proper behaviour of parishioners. Especially the Jehovah's Witnesses and the RCG have dismissed parishioners who deviate from the doctrines confirmed by the leadership. The "shunning" has been rigorous; not even the closest relatives are allowed to be in contact with the dismissed person. The shunning is justified by the Bible's instructions that such a person you are not allowed to socialize with, not even eat together.

Indeed, the Bible calls for the removal of those who do not follow the promptings of the leadership in terms of doctrinal purity and proper conduct. But, wouldn't it be enough just to separate the person from the church? A friendly greeting and conversation could lead to the desired change and would not need to completely break off the normal forms of polite interaction between people.

Church leadership may impose on the parishioners' ways of conduct that have no Biblical foundation. For example, in the 1970s, Jehovah's Witnesses were forbidden to smoke. If a member did not quit smoking within 6 months, the member was dismissed. But wine and other alcohol you are allowed to use reasonably. When I asked a Jehovah's Witness why smoking tobacco was forbidden, I got a counter-question, "don't you think smoking is unhealthy"? I would have required a Biblical reasoning. Yes, it is unhealthy alright. However, the Bible's doctrine is not based on visions of health. "That which enters into the mouth doesn't defile the man; but that which proceeds out of the mouth." (Mat 15:11).

Ilm 3:14 And to the angel of the church of Laodicea, write: These things says the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Head of the creation of God:

15 I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. **I wish you were cold or hot.**

16 So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will vomit you out of my mouth.

17 Because you say, 'I am rich, and have gotten riches, and have need of nothing;' and don't know that you are the wretched one, miserable, poor, blind, and naked;

18 I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire, that you may become rich; and white garments, that you may clothe yourself, and that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and **eye salve to anoint your eyes, that you may see.**

19 As many as I love, **I reprove and chasten. Be zealous** therefore, and repent. 20 Look! I am standing at the door and knocking. If anyone listens to my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and **eat with him**, and he will eat with me. 21 He who overcomes, I will give to him to sit down with me on my throne, as I also overcame, and sat down with my Father on his throne.

Christ wanted the believers in God's church not to be indifferent, but to be zealous.

The Laodicean Church considered itself to be rich, who didn't need anything. Christ, however, said the opposite was true, saying, "You are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked." He urged to buy "eye salve" to see. But Christ has a promise to give: If someone hears his voice and "opens his door" to him, Christ enters and "dines" with him. Christ rebukes and punishes those whom he loves. And the greatest promise: who wins gets to sit with Christ on his throne. – There is a lot

of symbolism in this verse of Revelation: “eye salve”, “open the door to Christ”, “dine”. Buying eye salve means finding information to see the truth. Opening the door to Christ means receiving Christ in one’s heart. At that time, dining took place by settling down; Christ offers rest and peace to anyone who receives him. Joh 14:23 Jesus answered him, “If a man loves me, he will keep my word. My Father will love him, and we will come to him, and **make our home with him**. Matthew Henry puts it this way in his commentary: “Christ and his repenting people will **enjoy pleasant communion** with each other”. I think *Pleasant Communion* must be interpreted as pleasant interaction. “Eating” can of course mean normal eating, but in this context it has a different meaning.

John describes this interaction, connection with God saying: We [God and Christ] come to him and **we will stay with him**. – Then the state of man is calm and happy as he has a connection with God and Christ. Isaiah also spoke of this connection saying: 58:9 Then you shall call, and Jehovah will answer; you shall cry, and He shall say, Here I am.” And 65:24 ” It shall happen that, before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.”.

Do not believers notice the dispersion of Christianity into thousands and thousands of churches? It’s not God’s purpose. Satan is not dispersed, his troops are completely unified. Why don’t Christians fight for unity? Not for being divided into disagreeing denominations fighting with each other; even religious wars – long and bloody – have been waged for faith.

Feed my lambs

Joh 21:15 So when they had eaten their breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I have affection for you." He said to him, "Feed my lambs."(Joh 21:15-17). – Why did Jesus ask the same thing three times? Therefore, because it was so important. This feeding lambs / sheep is a figurative expression for providing spiritual food for God's Church members.

It is the duty of the Church leadership not only to provide the Church with spiritual food, but also to nurture the Church so that there is mutual love among it. Doctrinal unity is also important; If there are different doctrinal groups in the Church, the Church will not be the Church of God. That is why management must separate those members from among those who do not remain united in teaching but break down the Church in different directions.

The matter can also be seen in the opposite way: if the doctrinal line of the congregation is not in accordance with the Bible, the member must act as 2 Corinthians 6:17 exhorts: "Therefore, "'Come out from among them, And be separate,' says the Lord, 'Touch no unclean thing. I will receive you. 18 I will be to you a Father. You will be to me sons and daughters,' says the Lord Almighty." – This is what the Jews did who separated from the Jewish Synagogue and became Christians. The Gentiles who had previously worshiped idols also left the old gods and joined the new apostolic Church. In this way should Christians do today if they find that their own Church does not follow the teachings of Jesus and the apostles and does not preach the right gospel. Rev 18:2 He cried with a mighty voice, saying, "Fallen,

fallen is Babylon the great, and she has become a habitation of demons, a prison of every unclean spirit, and a prison of every unclean and hateful bird!

3 For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her sexual immorality, the kings of the earth committed sexual immorality with her, and the merchants of the earth grew rich from the abundance of her luxury.”

4 I heard another voice from heaven, saying, **“Come out of her, my people, that you have no participation in her sins, and that you don’t receive of her plagues,**

I have noticed that there are a lot of Christians whose Christianity is only that they have been baptized as a child. There are also hundreds of millions of Christians who do not love the truth enough to make sure whether their church teaching is in accordance with the Bible. They attend the mass, and make signs of the cross, pray for the saints etc. With my wife we watched an Italian TV series about a Catholic priest who assists the police and helps to solve crimes and he is exemplary in many respects as a congregation shepherd. However, he does not see anything wrong in praying to Virgin Mary or the saints, or by telling the dying man that he goes straight to heaven. Satan’s ingenious plan works; he combines the good and the right Biblical word with false truth and everyone swallows it as the full truth. I have noticed that there are a lot of Christians whose Christianity is only that they have been baptized as a child. There are also hundreds of millions of Christians who do not love the truth enough to make sure whether their church teaching is in accordance with the Bible. They attend the mass, and make signs of the cross, pray for the saints etc. With my wife we watched an Italian TV series about a Catholic priest who assists the police and helps to solve crimes and he is exemplary in many

respects as a congregation shepherd. However, he does not see anything wrong in praying to Virgin Mary or the saints, or by telling the dying man that he goes straight to heaven. Satan's ingenious plan works; he combines the good and the right Biblical word with false truth and everyone swallows it as the full truth.

Ilm 18:4 "Then I heard another voice from Heaven saying," Come out of my people, so that you don't get in her sins and suffer from her plagues.

At the beginning of this passage, John heard the angel declare how the Babylon the Great has fallen. Now, John hears another voice calling "Get out of it"

The question arises: At what period of time is this call directed? Does the exhortation in the Revelation refer to the Church in John's time or does it also concern the Churches of today? John saw his vision some decades after Christ's ascension. The assemblies were scattered and small. However, they had a powerful apostolic spirit, and the members of the Church were eager to hear from the apostles. The doctrine was rather unified. There was not any Catholic Church, it was just developing. There was no big harlot with whom world leaders were connected. I think it is meant for the end-times; Babylon the Great (the false powerful church supported by Satan, with great influence in the world) has been crushed. This has not yet happened, but it does not mean that it would not be appropriate to leave this mighty church.

Another question: In the wrong Church, there is a part

of good that God values. Couldn't I stay in this church and see to it that I do not take part in anything against the Bible, only that which is good? Such thinking is understandable. However, the Bible warns that, by staying in this harlot Church, you risk in participating in its sins and receiving her plagues.

I myself have experienced this problem when about fifty years ago I left my Church. I have not found the Church of God in my own country. Through the Web, however, I have got to know a Fellowship working outside the official Church, whose mission is to restore the apostolic faith. The idea behind it is: we have only one God who gave his only Son a task to proclaim of the kingdom of God and the gospel of salvation.

- [What After Death](#)

In this article, I will address the following:

Before dying: Spiritual death – What does the Bible say about the state after death? – Heaven – New heaven, new earth – Purgatory compared with God's purifying fire – Third heaven in the Bible – Third heaven in 2 Cor 12:2 – Abraham's bosom – Intermediate state – Third heaven according to the Apocrypha – Where in heaven does God live? – Conceptions of death – What do we know about the near-death experiences? – Paradise

Before Death: Spiritual Death

After the Fall in Paradise, Adam and Eve first suffered a **spiritual death**. Namely, on the day they did not die physically, but they **were separated from God, then they died spiritually**.

Eph 2:1-3 clarifies: "You used to be dead because of your offenses and sins," – Most of humanity is spiritually dead. They live in sin, are on-going against the will of God and do not even try to find the way to be saved. They don't even realize they are on their way to destruction. Of them, the Bible uses the phrase, "walk according to the course of this world." 2 "in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the powers of the air, the spirit who now works in the children of disobedience, 3 among whom we also all once lived in the lust of our flesh, doing the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest." – *The Prince of the powers of the air* is Satan. Satan causes the lust of the flesh and the awakening of ill thoughts. Such people are obsolescently called 'children of wrath', which means they are subject to God's wrath and vengeance in the last days. Jude describes them as follows: 1:12 "These are spots in your love-feasts, feasting together with you without fear, pasturing themselves; clouds without water, carried along by the winds; autumnal trees, without fruit, **twice dead**, rooted up;" – "**Twice dead**" refers to two deaths; the first death must be confronted by every man, but the second death must be confronted only by the one who is condemned to death in the last judgment. At this point, they live an active, enjoyable life and, in their own mind, they are far from dead. They just don't realize they are on the road to death.

The spiritually dead are physically alive. They just do not realize they are spiritually dead who, in the final judgment will experience the **second death**.

What does the Bible say about the state of life after death?

"You shall return to dust"

Ecc 9:5 "For the living know that they will die, but the dead don't know anything, neither do they have any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten."

Psa 146:4 His spirit departs, and he returns to the earth. In that very day, his thoughts perish.

Gen 3:19 By the sweat of your face will you eat bread until you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken. For you are dust, and to dust you shall return."

Ecc 3:19 For that which happens to the sons of men happens to animals. Even one thing happens to them. As the one dies, so the other dies. Yes, they have all one breath; and man has no advantage over the animals: for all is vanity.

20 All go to one place. All are from the dust, and all turn to dust again.

Act 24:15 having hope toward God, which these also themselves look for, that there will be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.

Dan 12:2 Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.

4 But you, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run back and forth, and knowledge shall be increased."

10 Many shall purify themselves, and make themselves white, and be refined; but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand; but those who are wise shall understand.

Heaven

Heaven or Earth, what does the Bible say about the state after death?

Psa 37:29 "The righteous shall inherit the land, and live in it forever.." There are two options; the righteous live on earth as **co-workers of God** – according to my interpretation in the spirit body. The second group comprises those who will be judged and are disposed of connection with God. It is entirely based on whether or not one had resorted to Jesus Christ alone to atone for one's sins (Mat 24:46; Joh 3:36). As the Bible says; **the righteous shall inherit the earth.**

New heaven, new earth ...

Rev 21:1 **I saw a new heaven and a new earth:** for the first heaven and the first earth have passed away, and the sea is no more.

2 I saw the holy city, **New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,** made ready like a bride adorned for her husband.

3 I heard a loud voice out of heaven saying, "**Behold, God's dwelling is with people, and he will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God.**"

4 He will wipe away from them every tear from their eyes. **Death will be no more;** neither will there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain, any more. The former things have passed away."

5 He who sits on the throne said, "**Behold, I am making all things new.**" He said, "Write, for these words of God are faithful and true."

21:27 Nothing unclean, or anyone who does anything

detestable, and no one who tells lies will ever enter it. Only those whose names are written in the lamb's Book of Life will enter it.

The second last chapter of Revelation tells of the time when the Millennial kingdom of Christ is over, and it is the time of the last judgment. There will be major changes to the past. God says he will make everything anew. The Holy City, the New Jerusalem descends from God out of heaven down to earth. God's dwelling is now in the midst of men. Death has been removed. There is no pain or sorrow left, all the consequences of sin have been removed. **The righteous have indeed inherited the earth.**

With the resurrection and judgment, mankind is now in the spirit body. The death that took everyone who lived in the physical body was cast and destroyed in the fiery lake. However, my attention is drawn to the last verse of the 21st chapter; "And nothing common, nor that maketh an abomination and a lie, shall at all enter into it [New Jerusalem]; but those only who are written in the book of life of the Lamb." –I don't have any doubts about the accuracy of the verse. Surely it is that nothing impure can enter the city of God. But! Somewhere outside the city, there is probably this kind of impurity. Why else would the Bible have spoken like this? Does it mean that all the sinners have not been destroyed? – If the sinners have been abolished there is no need to make such a statement. This and other issues I have yet to study.

The last chapter of Revelation speaks of a "river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." In the second verse, the Bible tells that "between the street of the city and the river there was the tree of life visible from both sides. It produced twelve kinds of fruit, each month

having its own fruit. The leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.”

In verse 22:4 it is said:” They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads.” – These verses, among others, are figurative expressions.

My purpose was to write about heaven and whether it is the destination of humans after death. Well no, because as we read from the Bible above, **heaven and God Himself descend to dwell on the earth**. The last two chapters of Revelation are prophecy. The reader is returned to the surface of the modern world in 22:11:” Let the one who does what is evil continue to do evil, and let the filthy person continue to be filthy, and the righteous person continue to do what is right, and the holy person continue to be holy.”

I have collected a few quotes submitted online. References to these passages are accompanied by references to Bible passages as if they confirmed the views expressed. People often believe that as soon as they die, good people will go to heaven and bad sinners will go to hell. This is what most people mistakenly believe but their faith is not based on the Bible. Opinions such as the following are often expressed by major ecclesiastical counseling organizations:

”When a person dies physically, his connection to the temporal world ends. According to the Bible, the human soul/spirit enters into a special intermediate state, which in the Bible is called either hell or (third) heaven. There, man awaits the end of the present world, the return of Jesus, the resurrection of the body and the final judgment followed by new eternity.”

”It is evident that the soul/spirit of the believer immediately moves to Christ and the physical body

remains in the tomb. In the resurrection of believers, the physical body rises and is glorified. After that, it connects with the soul/spirit. This renewed and glorified body-soul-spirit is the abode of the believer forever in the new heaven and in the new earth (Rev. 21-22)."

"After Christ entered the kingdom of death, the intermediate state ceased to signify hell to the believer and became a **blissful state in the presence of the Lord in heaven, or "paradise."** (Eph 4:8; Heb 11:39-40) Eph 4:8 "Therefore he says, "When he ascended on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men." – Heb 11:39-40 reads as follows: 39 "And these all, having obtained witness through faith, did not receive the promise, 40 God having foreseen some better thing for us, that they should not be made perfect without us." (My comment: These verses, however, say nothing about a change of the intermediate state in connection with the Lord in heaven, or "paradise".)

"First of all, the Bible tells us that **at some point after death, the soul/spirit of man is taken to heaven** because his sins have been forgiven and he has accepted Christ as his savior. (Joh 3:16, 18, 36). (My comment: Catholics! Just have a look at the verse in John 3:13 that testify: "**No one has ascended into heaven**, but he who descended out of heaven, the Son of Man, who is in heaven.")

... but **after death**, the judgment of God shall follow. **The Catholic Church believes that as a result of this personal judgment, the person enters heaven, purgatory or hell.** 1 Cor 3:13–17: 13 "the work of each shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare it, because it is revealed in fire; and the fire shall try the work of each what it is. 14 If any man's work remains which he built on it, he will receive a reward. 15 If any man's

work is burned, he will suffer loss, but he himself will be saved, but as through fire. 16 Don't you know that you are a temple of God, and that God's Spirit lives in you? 17 If anyone destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him; for God's temple is holy, which you are."

This is how a catholic website teaches. Reference is made to 1 Corinthians 3:13-17. I want to pay attention to the words "the day shall declare it, because it is revealed in fire;" and "the fire itself will test what sort of work each man's work is." – I completely disagree with the Catholic doctrine; not everyone will be tried and judged individually immediately after death! There is nothing in those verses about going to heaven, about purgatory, about going to hell. God's fire tests a person who is under judgment when it is due time for judgment and people are resurrected for judgment. Translated from:

<http://hyviauutisia.net/pelastuminen/viimeiset-asiat/>

"Therefore, after death, a person resides in a "temporary" heaven or hell. After this temporary realm, at the final resurrection, a person's eternal destiny will not change. The precise "location" of that eternal destiny is what changes. Believers will ultimately be granted entrance into the new heavens and new earth (Revelation 21:1). Unbelievers will ultimately be sent to the lake of fire (Revelation 20:11-15)." <https://www.gotquestions.org/what-happens-death.html>

From the examples above, the question arises: If believers go to heaven immediately after death, what is the purpose of the resurrection of the 'righteous and the wicked.' (Act 24:15)

These examples give rise to one of the most common misconceptions. The reason for this false belief may be that when an individual person dies, his spirit –

perhaps also his soul – ascends to heaven to God. This is not yet a resurrection. Whether the human spirit (and possibly also the soul) is in heaven in a conscious state, or in an unconscious state sleeping, I cannot say. The Bible does not say much about taking the spirit to heaven, but it is evident from Stephen's prayer when he was stoned to death: Acts 7:59 They stoned Stephen as he called out, saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my Spirit!"

The human soul is immortal. However, opinions are divided on this. I find the immortality of the soul clear, because all the deeds of man, both good and bad, are stored in the soul. In the final judgment, a person must make an account for all the deeds of his life as described in Matthew 25. Even in secular law, the accused is given evidence of where he has broken the law.

Jesus instructs in Mat 10:28 "Don't be afraid of those who kill the body but are not able to kill the soul. Rather, fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in Gehenna. [hell]" – Who can kill the body but not the soul? Satan is not able to kill the soul. But God can: He is the one who can kill both soul and body. In the last judgment, those whose souls are exposed to sin that God's purifying fire cannot purify, or who have not built their lives at all on Christ, will be condemned to "black darkness."

In my view, the soul is immortal and, after death, moves to heaven together with the human spirit.

Purgatory compared to God's purifying fire

Only the saints can enter the kingdom of God. By saints I mean people who are **sanctified** and have no impurity. Heb 12:14 "Pursue peace with all, and **holiness, without**

which no one shall see the Lord.” – This is supposed to mean access to the first resurrection. God has foretold and chosen the saints who will lead the Millennial kingdom under Christ. They also serve as judges when the final judgment is handed down. To achieve this, they have been tested in their lifetime, perhaps more severely than other people. 1 Cor 11:32 “But when we are judged, (G2919 *krinō*: to separate, put asunder, to pick out, select, choose) we are punished by the Lord, **that we may not be condemned with the world.**

– Participants in the first resurrection have already been segregated and **severely disciplined throughout their lives so that they do not have to share with others the final judgment.** NASB: “...we are disciplined by the Lord so that we will not be condemned along with the world.” The purpose of the verse is like this: “Because we are separated from the rest of the world, the Lord will chastise us, lest we be condemned with the world.”

The second resurrection, also called the *resurrection of judgment*, does not have to be pursued – everyone participates there and will be condemned. The judgment is accompanied by **the fire of God, which examines and tests men, and purifies. Purification, on the other hand, means sanctification, because the impurity of sin is no longer left in man. A purified and sanctified person is worthy of seeing the Lord in the kingdom of God.**

According to the Catholic rhetoric (in my interpretation), the purgatory cleans man of the filth of sin and thus sanctifies a person worthy of the kingdom of God. The purifying fire of God, spoken of in 1 Corinthians 3:13-15, strives for the same goal. 3:13 each man’s work will be revealed. For the Day will declare it, because it is revealed in fire; and **the fire itself will test what sort of work each man’s work is.**

14 If what a person has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. 15 If any man's work is burned, he will suffer loss, but **he himself will be saved, but as through fire.**

Here both the purgatory and the purifying firework in the same way. What is the difference between the Catholic concept of purgatory and God's purifying fire?

Catholics believe that the fire of purgatory begins to affect a person immediately after death, so that he or she will be cleansed rather quickly and is fit to reach heaven. Catholics believe that after experiencing the purgatory phase, one will go to heaven, that is, without participating in the final judgment. Or will those ascended to heaven descend for the final judgment, though they have already reached heaven for the Lord? This contradiction occurs not only with Catholics, but also in other interpretations of the intermediate state where people suffer punishment before the final judgment.

God's purifying fire examines man after the resurrection and **at the last judgment**. Even if a man has died 2,000 years ago, his resurrection cannot take place until the Second Coming of Christ has taken place and the following Millennial kingdom has come to an end and the time of the last judgment has come.

The third heaven in the Bible

There is not much talk about the third heaven in the Bible. It is apparent from the longings in particular in the writings of Paul.

For believers, the post-mortal state is moving out of the body home to the Lord.

2 Cor 5:6 Being therefore always of good courage, and knowing that, while we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord;

7 For we live by faith, not by sight.

8 We are confident, then, and would prefer to be away from this body and to live with the Lord.

– What does Paul mean by “moving out of the body and getting home to the Lord?” First, Paul states that ‘in this body’, that is, the physical and mortal body, we are separated from the Lord Jesus. Paul would like to get out of the mortal body, which means moving into the spirit body. When this happens at the first resurrection, Paul, along with other righteous men, will enter into the spiritual bodies and rise up into the clouds to meet Christ. 1 Cor 15:52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and **we will be changed**. 2 Cor 3:18 But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are **transformed into the same image** from glory to glory, even as from the Lord, the Spirit..

– This is about the first resurrection, which at first involves a so-called **rapture**. ‘Up’ is confined to the clouds and not to God’s heaven. The rapture only occurs when the Second Coming of Christ is a fact. In no case at the time of each person’s death. Jesus overcame death with his own death and defeated Satan who had the power of death.

Heb 2:14-16 Since then the children have shared in flesh and blood, he also himself in like manner partook of the same, that through death he might bring to nothing him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, 15 and might deliver all of them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. 16 For it is

clear that he did not come to help angels. No, he came to help Abraham's descendants. Rev 1:18 and the Living one. I [Christ] was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. **I have the keys of Death and of Hades.** – Jesus freed believers from the fear of death and the slavery of death. Notably, humanity has a future with God before angels.

Although the creed refers to the resurrection of the body, the body does not arise as a physical, carnal body, but as a spirit body. Indeed, Mark writes in his gospel: 12:25 "For when they will rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are **like angels in heaven.**" After all, angels are, as we know, spirit beings who can take a physical body if needed.

1 The 4:16-17 " For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with God's trumpet. The dead in Christ will rise first; 17 then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air. So we will be with the Lord forever."

Joh 14:2-3 "There are many rooms in my Father's house. If there were not, would I have told you that I am going away to prepare a place for you? 3 If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and will receive you to myself; that **where I am, you may be there also.**" – Jesus promised his apostles to come back to earth. When Jesus comes back, THEN He will receive the apostles and others to him, where he is. These believers approved by Jesus, are believers who have received the spirit and seal of God. The second group are those who rise to the first resurrection from the dead. Together they rise up to receive Jesus 'in the clouds'. Jesus, together with these saints, establishes and rules the Millennial kingdom together with them. In verse 14:3 Jesus promises

to take them to **where he is**. It does not mean to heaven, but to earth in his kingdom. When Jesus has full access to heaven, I believe that his saints, who will be in the spirit body, also have the opportunity to go there. What is meant by Jesus' saying that he "goes to make a place for you". Surely it is not a matter of "room arrangement," but of plans to cleanse heaven of Satan's angels.

Many, not only Jesus' disciples, believed that Jesus would return shortly after his departure to heaven. Jesus said he was just going to make a place for them. Why has it taken 2000 years to 'prepare a place'? Only the Father in heaven knew when the time of the return would be and when will be the great tribulation and great upheavals that would befall the world.

In this article in chapter "Other observations of 2nd Enoch's book," I will explain how I understand the times of God, that is, God's millenniums; the eighth day and the seventh day preceding it as Christ's Millennial kingdom. It is only when Christ's kingdom arrives and his promised return will take place, THEN he will take the apostles with him.

Third heaven in 2 Cor 12:2

Paul writes 2 Cor 12:2 "I know a man in Christ, fourteen years ago (whether in the body, I don't know, or whether out of the body, I don't know; God knows), such a one caught up **into the third heaven**. 12:4 how he was caught up into **Paradise**, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter." – Paul does not dare to say more, not even who is this man he knows. Someone has speculated that the man in the third heaven was Paul himself. However, Paul has been pondering the future and

tells how he would already like to come home to the Lord. 2 Cor 5:8 We are confident, then, and would prefer to be away from this body and to **be at home with the Lord**. 5:9 So whether we are at home or away from home, our goal is to be pleasing to him.

– In his letter to the Philippians Paul however is telling of his longing: 1:21 For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

22 But if I live on in the flesh, this will bring fruit from my work; yet I don't make known what I will choose.

23 Indeed, I cannot decide between the two. **I have the desire to leave this life and be with Christ, for that is far better.** – After Paul died, did he get to heaven where he earnestly wanted to go? The Bible says that no one ascended to heaven except Jesus, the Son of God (John 3:13). Paul himself knew that he could not get to Christ immediately after he died, for he himself wrote in the First Corinthians that the Saints would be the first to be resurrected, but just before Jesus' second coming: 1 The "4:16 For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with God's trumpet. **The dead in Christ will rise first.**"

The Resurrection: John writes in his gospel: 5:25-26 "Verily, verily, I say unto you, that an hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, **and they that have heard shall live.** 26 For even as the Father has life in himself, so he has given to the Son also to have life in himself." – When God gave eternal life to his son Jesus, it also means that Jesus has the power to raise people from the dead. Jesus calls a small group to the first resurrection. Only these will hear his voice and they will rise. The true believers alive on earth are also called for the First Resurrection.

At the end of the Millennial kingdom, **the second resurrection** takes place. John tells about it in verses 28-29: “Don’t marvel at this, for the hour comes, in which all that are in the tombs will hear his voice, and will come out; those **who have done good, to the resurrection of life**; and **those who have done evil, to the resurrection of judgment.**” – Protestant churches have emphasized the importance of grace in their dogma. Grace is essential, but the counterpart of grace is deeds; John divides the resurrected people into two groups according to their deeds. So, what is faith without works of faith?

The call to resurrection takes place in groups; first a small group [[144 000?](#)] and then the rest. I do not believe that individual people will ascend to heaven – or to the intermediate state of third heaven.

However, Paul’s testimony as part of the Bible is important and worth taking seriously. Paul would not have written about the third heaven had he not believed that his acquaintance was telling the truth. The third heaven certainly exists. This does not mean, however, that the wild accounts of the Apocrypha discussed below are truthful. Or contemporary accounts of the experiences of thousands of people after their death. More of them later.

Abraham’s bosom

Abraham’s bosom refers to the Jewish concept and, when converted to Christianity, the time and place “where the righteous dead await Judgment Day”. This concept was formed in Judaism during the Second Temple in 516 BC – 70 AD, i.e. it was also in use during Jesus’ time and describes the whereabouts of righteous souls.

The Bible knows two different 'sections' in the intermediate paradise: a blissful state which is called the bosom of Abraham and its opposite which is a place of misfortune, pain, and trouble. Intermediate state is a place where the dead are in spirit body waiting for the last judgment. The Bible does not speak much about the intermediate state or paradise or third heaven, which is why I have doubts about its existence.

Intermediate state

Theologians often interpret the intermediate state as a place where people are rewarded or punished. People would fall into this state (place) after their death. This state would be the place where the dead would await the final judgment. However, there is a contradiction in this; often there are two sections and a gap in between. In one, people enjoy themselves in "Abraham's bosom" and in another, they suffer pain as if by punishment. Note, however, that even if people are in the interim state, **they have not yet been given the final judgment!**

This state, commonly referred to as the **intermediate state**, is not based on the Bible. One would imagine that one of the most important stages in the salvation of man would be described in the Bible as well and the intermediate state would have been talked about in many Bible books. But no way, such a term does not even exist. The central argument in Luke's parable of Jesus is that it is not possible to force a sinner who has not yet been condemned by the last judgment to such a hell. Biblical accounts of the punishment of the fiery lake will not come to be realized until the very end of time, when Satan and his troops have been destroyed and condemned in the last judgment with other unrepentant sinners.

I firmly believe that no one can be condemned to eternal damnation without judgment!

The description of the suffering in the place where the rich man was taken might better reflect the Jewish perception of *Gehinnom*; "[Hell](#) is not a punishment in the conventional sense; it is, in fact, the *expression of a great kindness*. The way our soul is cleansed in *Gehinnom* is similar to the way our clothes are cleaned in a washing machine. If, at the end of our life, we leave this world without fixing the wrongs we have done, our soul is unable to reach its place of rest on high. *We must go through a cycle of deep cleansing.*"

Jesus was a Jewish prophet and a rabbi who knew the "Bible" (Old Testament Scriptures; Law and Prophets) of the time. In his parable, would he have wanted to promote a profound transformation of the concept of hell from a one-year punishment of pain to everlasting torture? Is this how God of love would work? Should Christ, as the supreme judge of the last judgment, provide such instructions of judgments to the saints who judge with him.

1 Cor 6:2-3 You know that the **saints will rule the world**, don't you? And if the world is going to be ruled by you, can't you handle insignificant cases? 3 Don't you know that **we will judge angels**? How much more, things that pertain to this life?

Jewish conception in relation to the soul and the intermediate state judgment:

When the soul departs from the body, it stands before the heavenly court to give a "judgment and accounting" of its earthly life. But the heavenly court does only the "accounting" part; the "judgment" part—that, only the soul itself can do. Only the soul can pass judgment

on itself; only it can know and sense the true extent of what it accomplished, or neglected to accomplish, in the course of its physical life. Freed from the limitations and concealments of the physical state, it can now see G-dliness; it can now look back at its own life and experience what it truly was. The soul's experience of the G-dliness it brought into the world with its mitzvot and positive actions is the exquisite pleasure of Gan Eden (the "Garden of Eden"—Paradise); its experience of the destructiveness it wrought through its lapses and transgressions is the excruciating pain of Gehinnom ("Gehenna" or "Purgatory").

For a G-dly soul spawns far more good in its lifetime than evil. The core of the soul is unadulterated goodness; the good we accomplish is infinite, the evil but shallow and superficial. So even **the most wicked of souls, say our sages, experiences at most twelve months of Gehinnom, followed by an eternity of heaven.** Furthermore, a soul's experience of Gehinnom can be mitigated by the action of his or her children and loved ones, here on earth. Reciting *kaddish* and engaging in other good deeds "in merit of" and "for the elevation of" the departed soul means that the soul, in effect, is continuing to act positively upon the physical world, thereby adding to the goodness of its physical lifetime. https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/282508/jewish/What-Happens-After-We-Die.htm

Third heaven according to the Apocrypha

Heaven or the heavens? How many heavens are there? In our prayer, we pray, "Our Father who are in the heavens," According to this prayer, there would be more than one heaven. However, in the same prayer, Mat 6:10 speaks of heaven in singular: "Let your kingdom come.

Let your will be done, as *in heaven*, so on earth..”

1 Kin 8:27 is on the side of more heavens: “But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, the heavens, and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house which I have built!”

The Jewish apocryphal books, especially the second book of Enoch, speak of ten different heavens.

2 nd book of Enoch (the original text *in italics*, my comments like this)

Chapter 8. *”And those men took me from there, and they brought me up **to the third heaven**, and set me down there. Then I looked downward, and I saw Paradise. And that place is inconceivably pleasant.*

I saw the trees in full flower. Their fruits were ripe and pleasant-smelling, with every food in yield and giving off profusely a pleasant fragrance.

*In the midst of them was the Tree of Life, at that place were **The Lord takes a rest when He goes into Paradise**. That tree is indescribable for the pleasantness and fine fragrance, and more beautiful than any other created thing that exists.*

From every direction it has an appearance which is gold looking and crimson, and with the form of fire. It covers the whole of Paradise and has something of every orchard tree and of every fruit. Its root is in Paradise at the exit that leads to the earth.

Paradise is in between the corruptible and the incorruptible. Two streams come forth, one a source of honey and milk, and one a source that produces oil and wine and it is divided into four parts. They go round

with a quiet movement and they come out into the paradise of Edem, between the corruptible and incorruptible.

From there they along and divide into forty parts and it proceeds in decent along the earth. They have a revolution in their cycle, just like the other atmospheric elements.

There is no unfruitful tree there, every tree is well fruited and every place is blessed. There are 300 angels, very bright, who look after Paradise; and with never-ceasing voice and pleasant singing, they worship The Lord everyday and hour. And I said, "How very pleasant is this place!" And those men said to me:"

Chapter 9. *"This place, Enoch, has been prepared for the righteous,*

who suffer every kind of calamity in their life

and who afflict their souls,

and who avert their eyes from injustice,

and who carry out righteous judgment,

and who give bread to the hungry,

and who cover the naked with clothing,

and who lift up the fallen,

and who help the injured and the orphans,

and who walk without a defect before the Face of The Lord,

and who worship Him, only.

even for them, this place has been prepared as an eternal inheritance."

There are **two sections in the Third Heaven**. The first section is reserved for the righteous. Who are these righteous? The description is reminiscent of Christ's final judgment. Mat 25:35-36 for I was hungry, and you gave me food to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave me drink; I was a stranger, and you took me in; I was naked, and you clothed me. I was sick, and you took care of me. I was in prison, and you visited me.' – Other actions in favor of one's neighbor are listed: just condemnation, clothing the naked, raising the fallen, helping orphaned people. In addition to these social characteristics, it is mentioned finally; to walk without blemish on the face of the Lord and serve him only. No very unusual requirements.

Then follows the description of the second group, which closely resembles the place of fiery suffering in which the rich man had fallen, as described in the parable of Jesus 'the Rich Man and Lazarus'. There every place is on fire or ice cold. The constant thirst troubles those who are there. Guardian angels torture them mercilessly. Who goes there?

The list is long: God-contemptuous, weird [homosexuality, debauchery] sinners, zoophilia, practicing magic and witchcraft, stealing and lying, depriving the poor, those who do not feed the hungry. Finally: those who worship soulless and lifeless gods who cannot see or hear, useless gods, and who also build carved images for worship.

Chapter 10. *"Those men carried me to the northern region, and they showed me there a **very frightful place; and all kinds of torture and torment are in that place, cruel darkness and lightless gloom. There is no light***

there, and a black fire blazes up perpetually, with a river of fire that comes out over the whole place. Fire here, freezing ice there, it dries up and it freezes.

There, there are very cruel places of detention, dark and merciless angels, carrying instruments of atrocities and torturing without pity.

I said, "Woe, woe! How very frightful this place is!" Those men said to me, "This place, Enoch, has been prepared for those who do not glorify God. And for those who practice on the earth the sin which is against nature, which is child corruption in the anus in the manner of Sodom. For those who practice witchcraft enchantments, divinations, trafficking with demons, who boast about their evil deeds – stealing, lying, insulting, coveting, resentment, fornication and murder.

For those who steal the souls of men secretly, seizing the poor by the throat, taking away their possessions, enriching themselves from the possession of others, defrauding them; who, when they are able to provide sustenance. For those who bring about the death of the hungry by starvation and when they are able to provide clothing, take away the last garment of the naked.

*For those who do not acknowledge their Creator, but bow down to idols, which have no souls, which can neither see nor hear, vain gods; constructing images, and bowing down to vile things made by hands – for all these, this place has been prepared for an **eternal reward.**"*

Those who commit such sins are described as having this punishment as the **eternal inheritance**. Again, we come across the common concept of eternity for Jews. In this article, I will highlight such a place of punishment and the associated maximum punishment, which according to **Jewish 'eternity' is not more than one year.**

Chapter 18. And those men took me up on their wings and placed me on the **fifth heaven** and I saw there many innumerable armies called Grigori (Watchers). Their appearance was like the appearance of a human being, and their size was larger than that of large giants. And their faces were dejected, and the silence of their mouths was perpetual.

And there was no liturgy in the fifth Heaven. I then said to the men, who were with me, "What is the explanation that these ones are so very dejected, and their faces miserable, and their mouths silent? And why is there no liturgy in this Heaven?" And those men answered me, "These are the Grigori, who turned aside from The Lord, 200 myriads, together with their prince Satanail. And similar to are those who went down as prisoners in their train, who are in the second Heaven, imprisoned in great darkness. And three of them descended to the earth from The Lord's Throne onto the place Hermon. And they broke the promise on the shoulder of Mount Hermon.

And they saw the daughters of men, how beautiful they were; and they took wives for themselves, and the earth was defiled by their deeds. They and the wives of men **created** great evil in the entire time of this age, acted lawlessly and practiced miscegenation and gave birth to giants, great monsters and great enmity.

And this is why God has judged them with a great judgment; and they mourn their brothers, and they will be outraged on the Great Day of The Lord."

I said to the Grigori, "I have seen your brothers and their deeds and their torments and their great prayers; and I have prayed for them. But The Lord has sentenced them under the earth until heaven and earth are ended forever." And I said, "Why are you waiting for your

brothers? And why don't you perform the liturgy before The Face of The Lord? Start up your liturgy, and perform the liturgy before The Face of The Lord, so that you do not enrage your Lord God to the limit."

And they responded to my recommendation, and they stood in four regiments in this heaven. And behold, while I was standing with those men, 4 trumpets trumpeted in unison with a great sound, and the Grigori burst into singing in unison. And their voice rose in front of The Face of The Lord, piteously and touchingly.

In which Heaven does God live?

Chapter 20. *Those men lifted me up from there and they carried me up to the **seventh heaven**. And I saw there an exceptionally great light, and all the fiery armies of the great archangels, and the incorporeal forces and the dominions and the origins and the authorities, the cherubim and the seraphim and the many-eyed thrones, the regiments and the shining otanim stations. I was terrified, and I trembled with great fear.*

*Those men then picked me up and led me into their midst and said to me, "Be brave, Enoch! Do not be frightened!" **They showed me the Lord from a distance, sitting on His exceedingly high Throne.***

*And **what is on the tenth heaven, since the Lord is present there?** And on the tenth heaven is God, and it is called in the Hebrew language Aravoth. All the heavenly armies came and stood on the ten steps, corresponding to their ranks, and they did obeisance to The Lord.*

Then they went to their places in joy, merriment and in immeasurable light, singing songs with soft gentle voices, while presenting the liturgy to Him gloriously.

You will note that **in the third heaven**, in the middle of the trees, where the **Tree of Life is**, the place where **the Lord is resting** as he goes to paradise.

Chapter 22. And on the tenth heaven, Avaroth, I saw the view of The Face of The Lord, like iron made burning hot in a fire and brought out, and it emits sparks and is incandescent.

*Thus even I saw The Face of The Lord, but The Face of The Lord is not to be talked about, it is so **marvelous, supremely awesome, and supremely frightening**. And whom am I to give an account of The Incomprehensible Being of The Lord, and of His Face, so extremely strange and indescribable?*

How many are His commands, His multiple voice, The Lord's Throne, supremely great and not made by hands, the choir stalls all around Him, the cherubim and the seraphim armies, and their never silent singing.

*Who can give an account of His **beautiful appearance, never changing and indescribable, and His Great Glory**? I fell down flat and did obeisance to The Lord. And the Lord, with His own mouth, said to me, "Be brave, Enoch!" Do not be frightened! Stand up, and stand in front of My Face forever."*

Michael, The Lord's archistratig, lifted me up and brought me in front of The Face of The Lord. And The Lord said to His servants, sounding them out, "Let Enoch join in and stand in Front of My Face forever!" And The Lord's glorious ones did obeisance and said, "Let Enoch yield in accordance with Your Word, O Lord!"

And The Lord said to Michael, "Go, and extract Enoch from his earthly clothing. Anoint him with My delightful

oil, and put him into the clothes of My Glory." So Michael did, just as The Lord said to him. He anointed me and he clothed me. The appearance of that oil is greater than the greatest light, and its ointment is like sweet dew, and its fragrance myrrh; it is like the rays of the glittering sun.

I looked at myself and I had become like one of his glorious ones, and there was no observable difference.

The Lord summoned one of His archangels, Vrevoil by name, who was swifter in wisdom than the other archangels, and who records all The Lord's Deeds. The Lord said to Vrevoil, "Bring out the books from my storehouses, and fetch a pen for speed-writing, give it to Enoch and read him the books." Vrevoil hurried and brought me the books, a knife and ink. He gave me the pen for speed-writing from his hand.

Other observations from the 2nd book of Enoch

In chapter 33 we read: "On the eight day, I likewise appointed, so that the eight day **might be the first, the first-created of the week, and that it should revolve in a revolution of 7000; so that 8000 might be in the beginning of **a time not reckoned and ending, neither years, nor months, nor weeks, nor days, nor hours**, like the first day of the week, so also that the eighth day of the week might return continually."**

"a time not reckoned and ending, neither years, nor months, nor weeks, nor days, nor hours"

An elusive statement, the content of which I interpret from the Bible as follows:

4,000 years from the days of Adam and Eve to Christ.

From Christ to the present day 2000 years. When the Second Coming of Jesus is supposed to take place soon, and the Millennial kingdom of Christ after his second coming has lasted 1,000 years, **then** starts – as it is called- **“a time not reckoned and ending”**. The endless time begins.

Perceptions of death – A survey of the beliefs in a European nation

All life ends in death; 34% believe this in 2011 and 25% in 1999.

The belief that Jesus will come to earth for the second time to condemn the living and the dead has also decreased to 28% in 2011 from 59% in 1999.

Only 12% believe that **all people will be raised from the dead** and others will have eternal life.

9% think that **eventually all people will be saved**.

10% believe that **people will be born again into this world**.

1% think **only believers will be saved** and the unbelievers will vanish.

(Gallup Ecclesiastica 2011 and 1999).

Rom 10:9 "If you declare with your mouth that Jesus is Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." – The title of my recently published article was; "One birth, two deaths or two births, but one death." We all die at least once. If we are born again of the Holy Spirit, we will be saved from the second death. God raised His Son Jesus from the dead and Jesus raises us who believe in him as our saviour.

Jesus Christ declares: "Rev 1:18 "I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. **I have the keys of Death and of Hades.**"

Near death experiences

Experiences can be divided into two main groups:

1. **Out of body experiences:** does not require death and cessation of brain function. According to one estimate, about a third of people who experienced such an event had gone through also a Near death experience.
2. **Near death experiences:** the person actually dies, the electric curve of the brain is a straight line.

What do we know about near-death experiences?

A great number of people have had such experiences. What they have in common is that the experiences are very similar regardless of where people live, age, education and cultural background. These are people who have been **declared dead** by the doctors. "None of the patients had a measurable brain electrical curve at that time; so, all the observations had been made without brain activity."

Features common to experiences include according to Dr. Raymond Moody: "Life after Life" a work from the 1970s:

1. **Detachment from the Body; hovering higher watching his dead body**

These stories are very similar: the patient is detached from his body and sees himself on the operating table as his spirit rises above the body. I have read that in

order to ensure the veracity of such reports, in the operating room has been hidden signs so high that the patient does not normally detect them. As far as I know, nobody has yet been able to tell what is written in the hidden messages.

2. Despite death, the dead patient can tell what happened around his body

The patients were able to retrospectively describe in detail the resuscitation procedures, even though physicians were confident that the patients were dead.

It has been reported that people who have been blind since birth, have followed the activities of doctors and attempts to resuscitate them. They have been able to describe events they have seen when blind and dead.

3. The deceased go towards a bright light. At the end of the light tunnel there are dear relatives and friends

The light tunnel phenomenon has also been encountered when pilots have been tested on high-speed, centrifugal force-generating devices. However, I have not heard pilots' report experiences of meetings with dead loved ones. Nor have pilots reported other 'near death' - phenomena.

4. Meeting the Light Being

To the dead had appeared a *Light being*, warm and loving spirit, the kind they had not previously encountered. This creature posed a question to the deceased asking him to evaluate his life and helped him by presenting the highlights of his life in a blink of an eye. Who is this Light being? Those with a Christian background have talked about Jesus or an angel. Muslims, on the other hand, believe that the Being of light was Allah.

According to Dr. Moody, "There was an unobstructed flow

of thought with the Light Being, and it happened so clearly that no misunderstanding or lying to the Light was possible. Moreover, this unobstructed exchange did not even occur in the person's mother tongue. However, the understanding was immediate and complete. The creature asked the person questions like, "Are you ready to die?", "What can you show me about your life?", "What is good in your life?" Or "was it worth it?"

According to Dr. Moody, every person on the brink of death sought to express the same idea, and they all emphasized that, although the question was so profound in its emotional meaning, it was by no means judgmental. They felt an absolute love and acceptance radiating from the Light being regardless of the possible answer. According to Dr. Moody, the purpose of the question seemed to be to make the mortal reflect on his life, and to help the person who was asked the question to start now to follow the path of truth."

Many people characterized their new experiences by saying that they were confident that the new environment was not just three-dimensional. They were able to understand one another and communicate wordlessly and quickly.

5. The whole life lived was thoroughly discussed

In a blink of an eye, the Being gave the dying an overview of his life, the only purpose of which was said to be to encourage the person to ponder. Some had remembered their life stages in great detail for a long time after this experience. Some characterize this as an act of upbringing by the Light being, during which the Being emphasized two things in life: we need to learn to love one another and to constantly increase our knowledge.

Throughout the ages, dying people other than these

interviewed, have told us their lives were presented in front of their eyes in one moment. After recovering from the near death experience, the people interviewed were able to tell other people about every step of their lives in great detail. For example, the memories of childhood had been accurately recalled to their minds.

6. Enormous sense of peace and well-being, reluctance to return to one's body

According to Dr. Raymond Moody, many people who have undergone the near death experiences depicted in the early stages of their experience wonderfully pleasing emotions and experiences: infinite peace, pleasure, well-being and silence. Consistently, they describe their experiences as unspeakable.

7. The decision to return to one's own body

Everyone involved in the near-death experience had to make the decision whether to return to their former lives or not. It was often difficult to make this decision because the new experience of life was so positive. The return was often influenced by the knowledge of work still to be done in the old life.

8. The disappearance of the fear of death

As a result of these experiences, those interviewed no longer felt the fear of death. The new state turned out to be such a pleasant haven of happiness that many longed to stay in it. In addition, they were convinced that there would be life after death.

9. Other observations

After death, many people felt that they had acquired **new supernatural abilities**. Also, there have been reports that the children's IQ had increased after the near-death experience.

Many also said they had experienced "a level where all

knowledge exists". The importance of acquiring information was highlighted in the report of several participants in these experiences.

Telepathy seemed to be the form of communication for the spiritual body: according to their reports, the dead just knew exactly what people were thinking. When they died, people also began to think more clearly and faster than when they were in the physical body. A person who had had a near death experience told: "It seemed that there was no limit to this spiritual sense, just as I could look at everywhere and anywhere. When I wanted to see someone farther away, it felt as if he had been a part of me, as if some searching device had found that person. And then I felt that if anything happened anywhere in the world, I could be there."

Near death visitors told of **many dimensions**; they were firmly of the view that the world was by no means merely three-dimensional.

The experiences of the people interviewed turned out to be largely similar to those interviewed decades ago.

According to Dr. Moody, the people he researched and reported were healthy and well-balanced individuals who were able to distinguish dreams and images from reality. However, people understood that in our modern society, these kinds of stories were not at all understood. They would have been considered mentally unbalanced if they had shared their experiences. Both doctors and priests used to label frontier experiences as delusions.

People who have had near death experiences have in their stories highlighted experiences that refer to the content of the **Jewish Apocrypha**. The message of the **Tibetan Book of the Dead** also reveals similar issues to those of survivors of death. In addition, the Tibetan

Book of the Dead is said to contain more advanced stages of death than the “ordinary” participants in the near death experience have been able to access. I’m not familiar with these.

Those involved in Near death experiences do not particularly feel that their experience have been Christian. Those who spoke to the Light being did not all consider the being to be Christ, but some said he was an angel. The connections with the Tibetan Book of the Dead are very far from the world of the Christian faith: **rebirth** and especially the rebirth in the animal world is an abomination to the Christian believer. I cannot believe in the ultimate ‘enlightenment’ through rebirth.

That is why I bring up to the idea for reflection: Who is behind this variegated ‘interim wonder-world’? Most probably not our God or Christ. Rather, it is Satan who makes every effort to disperse and divert people from the Bible’s faith. Someone who has experienced such a Near death experience comments on the Lord (Light being) saying to him that Lord was not interested in the content of the theology of the Church, but in the “content of the human heart rather than the head.” Raymond Moody is of the opinion that “God intended religion essentially for love and good life, regardless of doctrinal persuasions about God, Christ, salvation, and the Church.” – Really?

Emphasizing love is a central observation of many experiences. That is also the central message of the Bible: God is love and people must love one another, even their enemies. Another theme that emerged is the **acquisition of knowledge**. The Bible does not consider acquiring secular or scientific knowledge worthy of emphasis. However, knowledge has grown in importance over the last hundred years. Its amount has literally

exploded. The increase in knowledge has led to many inventions that have raised the standard of living of humanity quickly and high. The effects are by no means just good.

Mankind has secularized and religious life has lost its significance. This can be seen from various surveys that show that people do not care about the truth of the Bible and the teachings it provides. Humans have ceased to believe and have been replaced by living "according to the course of this world." (Eph 2:2) That's what Satan likes.

Increasingly, I am becoming more inclined to interpret Satan as being behind these interim teachings.

If we believe in the Bible and not in these inexplicable experiences or the books of Eastern religions, we can base our faith in the Bible: Ecc 9:10 "Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might; for **there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in Sheol, where you are going.**"

Paradise

We all know that Jesus Christ was *crucified* and God raised Jesus from the dead after he had been dead for three days and three nights. All believers believe this. I too believe that Jesus really died and was three days as dead as one can be. Those who regard Jesus as God believe that Jesus did not die completely; only his human half died. A God cannot die. However, I will not write about this in this context.

But of where Jesus was as dead. Was he in paradise with the other crucified criminal? Or did Jesus promise that the criminal crucified with Jesus would sometimes later

come to paradise with Jesus.

You will find the right solution as soon as you can put the comma in the right place in the following Bible verse: Luke 23:43 And Jesus said unto him "Truly I tell you **today** you will be with me in Paradise."

– I deliberately omitted the comma because, at the time of Jesus and the apostles no commas were used. The commas in the Bible were added afterwards. In this particular verse, the place of the comma solves a big scholarly question. All the big churches believe that Jesus meant that he and the robber were just about to die, and that Jesus promised to take the robber to paradise the very same day.

The churches believe that Jesus did not die the same kind death as ordinary people. Ordinary people die according to the Bible, they are completely unconscious until the resurrection, and only then will resurrect and prepare to receive the final judgment.

So, Jesus went to paradise for three days.

The important question is: Is this paradise that Jesus went to (and promised to take the criminal with him) *the third heaven* mentioned in the Bible? In the book of Apocrypha (Second Book of Enoch), **the third heaven is a paradise upon which even God will rest.**

Yet another question: Is the paradise meant by Jesus the same paradise as the one experienced by those who have had near-death experiences? They also tell they have spoken to a Light being (possibly Jesus himself, or an angel or Allah)?

Alternative 1: To paradise as soon as death occurs.

A worldly paradise was not immediately available.

Paradise in Eden had been destroyed. Elsewhere, God had not established a new paradise. The Gentiles must have had beautiful places, but what would Jesus and the robber have done there. No, a worldly paradise does not seem possible. Heaven? Jesus was not yet going there. His work with the disciples was still unfinished. Surely Jesus would not have taken the thieves to heaven before he had prepared the place for the apostles?

What about the third heaven Paul wrote about? This is, in my opinion, the only paradise I can think of if Jesus was to go there and take the robber with him as soon as death occurred.

Alternative 2: To Paradise Later

I think it is possible to accept the following translation, which sets the comma as follows: "Truly I tell you today, you will be with me in Paradise." Jesus must have been aware of God's plans to establish the Millennial kingdom on earth. It would be led by Christ, along with a small group of righteous Saints. These and the robber with them would be raised in due time when Christ would come the second time on earth. Then would the promise of Jesus be fulfilled, to take the robber with Christ to paradise.

Today. (Or 'this day') One may, however, ask in connection with this interpretation, why would Jesus have stressed that he was saying that to the robber '**today**'? Isn't it obvious? In the Bible, when God speaks and wants to emphasize his message, he says, for example, I assure you today. When Jesus says: **Verily I say to you today** ... it is the same thing! For example: Deu 8:19 It shall be, if you shall forget Jehovah your God, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, *I testify against you **this day** that you shall surely perish.*

The robber said to Jesus while he was next to Jesus on the cross: Luke 23:42 "Jesus, remember me **when you come into your kingdom!**" This is perhaps a more important verse than the following, which is used to prove that Jesus and the robber would go to paradise together on the same day. The criminal didn't even mean it. He said, "**when** you come to your kingdom." After all, the robber did not even know the time when Jesus would come to his kingdom. Even Jesus himself did not know the schedule. Only God the Father in heaven knew it. The robber expressed his desire for the future, the day in the future, when Jesus would fulfil his promise of return.

In search of the correct interpretation, I return to Paul and Stephen. Why did Paul write only a few lines about the third heaven? Was it still a secret and forbidden to talk about it? Surely it is supposed to be a secret even today.

Just before he died, Jesus cried out, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!" (Luke 23:46). And Stephen said, "Lord Jesus, receive my Spirit!" (Acts 7:59). It is clear from these verses that the human spirit leaves from the body in death. Does God receive it in paradise – the third heaven?

Can it be possible that the truth about paradise and the third heaven would be revealed in these near death reports? I've thought about it and come to the conclusion that it is not according to the Bible, that Jesus as the Word of God would accept all religions and forgive all sins and evil deeds without regret. That all religions would merge into one mass without the last judgment and the associated punishment. Or will the spirits be captured from paradise to judgment, and then perhaps destroyed. Would Jesus' affirmation of the last judgment and of the accompanying punishment not be true, but perhaps just intimidation?

The Bible tells us that in the last days there will be a great delusion to which many fall. "For this reason, **God will send them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie.**" (2 The 2:11)

What do I think?

It is, of course, interesting to read the Apocrypha. They are part of Jewish history and reflect their thinking. There may be some truth to them. On the other hand, we know with certainty that some are pure nonsense. Think about this, for example: you are reading an article that seems to be of good quality. Then the article explains that the sun's light is provided by a large number of angels who daily maintain the sun's light. This one piece of information drops the credibility of the entire article. Such information and the like are included in the articles of the Apocrypha. You know how to react to what you read if there are claims like this!

Nowadays, it seems that people look for content in their lives from the wonders of the East, for example in the Book of the Dead of Tibet. This book seems refreshingly different compared with the old and dusty Bible, which doesn't even seem to be agreed between churches. It is true that modern day science has brought to light new and interesting findings about the Mayan culture, for example. It should also not be forgotten that science has also brought many discoveries concerning the Bible.

There is enough to study in the Bible for everyone; I found it myself. Nearly every day I find something new that I had not noticed before.

Post Scriptum

I had completed the first version of this article. At 4:30 AM (I often write at night), as I tried to get some sleep, something struck me. It concerned the comments of the experiences of this article, which showed how the Light being had met the evil deeds of all people with great understanding and sympathy. I know that Jesus would not be so forgiving unless man had repented and asked for forgiveness. This had been bothering me as I tried to think of the right attitude towards the Light being.

That's when it occurred to me what the Bible says, **"Satan disguises himself as an *angel of light*."** (2 Cor 11:14: NASB) Immediately I realized that the **Light being was Satan himself.**

As we know from the Bible, Satan is trying to deceive in every way possible. Not only does Satan himself pretend to be the "angel of light," but also priests who assist Satan to preach the "other gospel than that you have received from Christ."

When writing these articles, I have always prayed to God to let his Holy Spirit guide me to write in agreement with the Bible. I am convinced that this has also happened.