



I LOVE the LORD, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications. 2 Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live. 3 The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow. 4 Then called I upon the name of the LORD; O LORD, I beseech thee, deliver my soul. 5 Gracious is the LORD, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful. 6 The LORD preserveth the simple: I was brought low, and he helped me. 7 Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the LORD hath dealt bountifully with thee. 8 For thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling. 9 I will walk before the LORD in the land of the living. 10 I believed, therefore have I spoken: I was greatly afflicted: 11 I said in my haste, All men are liars. 12 What shall I render unto the LORD for all his benefits toward me? 13 I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the LORD. 14 I will pay my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of all his people. 15 Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints. 16 O LORD, truly I am thy servant; I am thy servant, and the son of thine handmaid: thou hast loosed my bonds. 17 I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the LORD. 18 I will pay my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of all his people, 19 In the courts of the LORD'S house, in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem. Praise ye the LORD. (Psalm 116:1-19)

Recently, we have studied two presentations on Death. Remember death has no substance at all – it is simply the absence, like a shadow, of Light. In its pure form, death is more than physical – it is spiritual to a greater extent. Separation from God is the real meaning of death, and that is a most unpleasant place to spend eternity. ¹¹ *And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven.* ¹² *But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.* (Matthew 8:11-12) The 'children of the Kingdom' are the unbelieving Jews. Jesus was describing the call of the Gentiles represented in the faith of the centurion whose servant the Lord had healed. Those who do not know the Lord are in that outer darkness already, for they remain dead in trespasses and sins. Many natural descendants of Abraham did not believe. It

is those of all races who believe that are the children of Abraham and not those who merely have the blood of Abraham coursing through their veins.

There is one verse in the center of Psalms 116 (above) that stands out in my mind: *"I will walk before the LORD in the land of the living."* Where is the "land of the living" and how may we attain to it? The "land of the living" was in ancient Eden ere Adam brought shame and ruin upon the human race as its federal head. By Adam came all pain, suffering, death and calamity upon the race. But by the second Adam (Jesus Christ) came life eternal. ⁴⁵ *And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.* ⁴⁶ *Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual.* ⁴⁷ *The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven.* ⁴⁸ *As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly.* ⁴⁹ *And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.*

The darkness of Death cannot abide the Light and Life of Christ for He has conquered Death and the grave. Now, my Christian friends, do you consider yourself to be in Christ and One with Him? If so, death can have no power over you either. At the instant of this mortal life, your soul, which never dies, will enter into the Paradise of Christ. Those who walk before the Lord in faith and grace are citizens of that "Land of the Living."¹ *And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect.* (Genesis 17:1)

The Lord is my God and my Redeemer, and He is not the God of the dead, but of the living. Is Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob dead? ³¹ *But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying,* ³² *I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.* (Matthew 22:31-32) What of poor Moses who struggled with a rebellious people for forty years in the Wilderness and at last was not allowed to enter the Promised Land. God led him up Mt. Nebo of Pisgah and merely showed Moses the Promised Land beyond Jordan Banks. ⁵ *So Moses the servant of the LORD died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the LORD.* ⁶ *And he buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Bethpeor: but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day.* (Deuteronomy 34:5-6) So, that was the end of Moses, wasn't it? His bones lie somewhere in a valley in the Land of Moab right where God buried him -- An emphatic NO, that was not the end of Moses!

When do we see Moses again? ¹ *And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart,* ² *And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.* ³ *And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him.* (Matthew 17:1-3) We read Moses died on Mount Nebo and was buried in the Valley of Moab back in Deuteronomy; so, where do we find Moses in his next appearance? We see Him talking with Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration! Dead men do not walk and talk, do they?

How much faith do we own? Are we fearful of dying and leaving the world's treasure behind? I hope not for the treasures of the world are mere smudges on the linen compared the bright and gleaming lights of Heaven. Not only that, all the treasures of the world are finite and will pass away in fervent heat at the last day; but the treasures of Heaven are on deposit in such a secure bank that no thief can ever enter, and the atrophy of the physical universe cannot affect -- and those treasures we place on deposit in that Fair City will be an eternal possession.

I will admit that I have reasons, as we all have, for wanting to live long enough to insure that my wife is well cared for all her days. I even worry about the care of my two pet cats, but God is wise and providential. He will care for all things needful when

He calls us home. So, I do not fear death. I learned this fact a few years ago when I had a very close call with that old Imposter!

We have the promise of our Lord of those points I have made above. When Martha lamented the death of her brother Lazaraus, ²³ *Jesus saith unto her, **Thy brother shall rise again.***²⁴ *Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.* ²⁵ *Jesus said unto her, **I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:***²⁶ ***And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?*** (John 11:23-26) I know I repeat this promise of our Lord quite often, but I do so because it is important to remember! '*Repetition aids recall*' is a fundamental principal of learning. Further our Lord says: ²⁴ ***Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.***²⁵ ***He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.*** (John 12:24-25)

The Land of the Living is with Christ. If we are in Christ, we shall arise from our long slumber in the resurrection just as our great sovereign and Redeemer did on Easter morning. That Paradise of God was taken from the earth at the sin of Adam; however, it is in secure borders in Heaven today where we shall partake of the first joys of Adam at the ancient Eden. That same Paradise has been made ready in waiting for our journey there, and the Tree of Life, shunned by our first parents, will be there beyond the Gates of Splendor as well: ⁷ ***He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.*** (Revelation 2:7)

New Jerusalem represents the Bride of Christ – the Church in that Holy City: ¹ *And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.* ² *In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was therethe tree of life, which bare twelve manner offruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.* ³ *And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him:* ⁴ *And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads.* ⁵ *And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.* (Revelation 22:1-5)

After our two devotions on Death, my own and Hap's, I believe we should be reminded of life itself and what a great and endearing promise we have in that life which has no end. How often I wanted to fall out on long forced marches as a cadet with full field pack. The road was rough and the grade was always steep up Bear Mountain; but our cadre would tell us, "look up, not down. The top of the mount is just beyond the next curve." So, we would rally and take heart, and carry on in that hope. Life is like that in so many ways. We see through a glass darkly, but the day comes when we, like Moses and Elijah, shall see Him face-to-face. Moses represented the Law given the Old Testament church, and Elijah represented the Prophets God sent of old to teach us of the growing Light to come. Remember the two men on the Road to Emmaus? When they could not understand that the one to whom they spoke was the risen Lord, He approached them in this manner: ⁴¹ *And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, **Have ye here any meat?***⁴² *And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb.* ⁴³ *And he took it, and did eat before them.* ⁴⁴ *And he said unto them, **These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me.***⁴⁵ *Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures,* ⁴⁶ *And said unto them, **Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:***⁴⁷ ***And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached***

*in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.*⁴⁸ *And ye are witnesses of these things.* (Luke 24:41-48)