



Just outside the limits of Tombstone, Arizona, is the Tombstone Graveyard, most often referred to as Boot Hill. Perhaps the reason for the name is that most of the 'inhabitants' of Boot Hill died with their boots on, either victims of violent death, or engaged in violent actions. But not all died with their boots on. Three men, part of the Clanton-McLaury Clan who died at the OK Corral compliments of Doc Holiday and Bat Masterson and company, did die with their boots on, but there are others who died victims of the brutal the brutal atmosphere prevailing in Tombstone. There were many who died of other causes such as three year old Eva Waters who died of Scarlet Fever, and one year old Thomas Cowan who died of diphtheria. And, of course, a respectable number of the graves belong to men who were hanged in execution of a jury's verdict, or by a lynch mob – a fairly balanced set of books. One Frank Bowles died after having been thrown from his horse causing his rifle to accidentally discharge hitting his leg. He lingered unattended in a mining camp until the leg was infected with gangrene – a condition from which he died. His tombstone bears this inscription:

*In memory of Frank Bowles,
born Aug. 5, 1828,
died Aug. 26, 1880.
As you pass by, remember that
as you are, so once was I, and
as I am, you soon will be.
Remember me."*

It should be noted each grave-stone faces west, and over the wilderness scene the crucifixion thorn broods in silent and solemn loneliness.

Some of the dead at Boot Hill were wanted “dead or alive.” Whether they were taken dead or alive no longer matters, for all are certainly dead insofar as the law is concerned today. That holds true for every human inhabiting the planet today. In the eyes of the law, every man, woman, and child is already dead for the verdict of the law is always death. “*23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.*” (Romans 3:23) *23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.* (Romans 6:23) You may aver these verses apply only to sin, not law-breaking, in which case you would be mistaken: *4 Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.* (1 John 3:4) The law is a multiple purpose teacher to instruct us in righteousness, of that which is wicked, and the hopelessness of man to satisfy that law without a Redeemer. In fact, we were saved under the terms of the law. Jesus Christ satisfied the penalty for our salvation if we have sought and received mercy and grace.

We are all sons and daughters of someone, are we not, on this earth? But in eternity, we also must lay claim to a father, or a FATHER! *1 Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. 2 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. 3 And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.* (1 John 3:1-3) The Sons and Daughters of the Heavenly Father do not mingle and mix with the sons and daughters of the wicked: *14 Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? 15 And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? 16 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, 18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.* (2 Cor 6:14-18)

Our countenance shall be changed when we are glorified in our Lord. But more than appearance marks the sons and daughters of men – so the sons and daughters of God. The son or daughter takes on the resemblance to the features of the Parent, but also the NATURE. In God, that nature is one of righteousness and compassion.

Our death certificates are executed at our birth. We are as good as dead as we grow into adulthood. *1 And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; 2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: 3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. 4 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, 5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;* (Eph 2:1-5) Please look carefully at these five verses. To be quickened means to be “made alive!” Something that is already alive cannot be made alive. We must already be dead in order to be made alive. Were you ever dead in trespasses and sins? Certainly you were, and so is every man born of woman. We all walked in the way of the world until we received that grace and mercy made available in the calling and election of God. Lazarus was dead as a door knell in that stone vault of a tomb. He could not come to Jesus of his own volition. HE WAS DEAD! But when our Lord called, “*Lazarus, Come Forth!*” Lazarus had no choice. He immediately came forth bound tightly in grave clothes. Jesus then said to those around him, “*Loose him and let him go.*” It is when the Son sets us free that we are free indeed.

There is more revealed in Hebrews 11 than the natural eye and understanding can discern.

Even accomplished scholars of the Word fail to fathom the depths of its meaning; however, there is simplicity to God's Word that allows even rude scholars such as you and me to comprehend the vital points. *8 By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. 9 By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: 10 For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. 11 Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised. 12 Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable. 13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. 14 For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. 15 And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. 16 But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.* (Heb 11:8-16)

That ONE which sprang from Abraham's advanced age was Isaac, but spiritually, the Redeemer to come. Isaac, like Jesus, was born through a miracle of birth. He was the fullness of Israel as are all who have believed the Promise made unto Abraham. *16 Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.* (Gal 3:16) And Christ is our Ark into which we are formed at salvation as One with Christ and, therefore, One with the Father. *26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.* (Gal 3:26-29)

If one simply reads the Holy Scriptures in their absolute simplicity, I cannot see how any would believe that God has chosen a special race, nation, or tribe as His Chosen People other than those who have placed their trust, faith, and hope in the beloved Son of God – our Lord Jesus Christ.

Do you have a lonely grave reserved at Boot Hill, or in a lonely tomb of Moab? Or have you received the Promise of the eternal life made available in Jesus Christ our Lord?

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