

THE TWO ROADS AND THE TWO DESTINIES

By Caleb J. Baker

“Wide is the gate and broad is the way that *Leadeth to Destruction*, and many there be which go in thereat. Strait is the gate and narrow is the way that *Leadeth unto life*, and few there be that find it” (Matt. 7:13,14).

No Middle Path

That there are but the two roads, is made clear in John 3:18,36, where Jesus says, “He that believeth on HIM is *not condemned*; but he that believeth not is *condemned already*.” “He that believeth on the Son *hath everlasting life*; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.”

Do Men Start on the Broad Road or on the Narrow?

Paul, in writing to the Ephesians who were already saved, says (Eph. 2:1-3): "You hath He quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins;" "We were by *Nature children of wrath*," etc. In Romans 1, Paul examines the Gentiles and finds them "Haters of God;" "Did not like to retain God in their knowledge;" "Filled with all unrighteousness," etc. In the 2nd chapter he finds the Jew judging the Gentiles, and yet doing the same things himself. In chapter 3:9-18 (which has been called God's photograph of man), he sums up Jews and Gentiles as "all under sin;" "none of them righteous, no not one;" "none that seeketh after God;" "none that doeth good *no not one*;" "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God," etc. Read the whole passage, ponder and weigh it well, as it is God's testimony about yourself by nature. It is as He sees you at this moment, if you have never been washed by the precious blood. Perhaps you profess to be a Christian, but have you ever seen yourself, as He describes you here, and then brought to the condition described in verse 19, i.e., had your "mouth stopped" because you were guilty before God? In other words, have you seen yourself a lost, guilty, helpless sinner? You may be moral and religious, but have you ever been born again? Jesus says (John 3:3,7), "Except a man be born

again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." "Ye must be Born Again."

The Clean Footpath

In Proverbs 16:25, we read: "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof are the ways of death." Paul, in Romans 10:1-3, says: "My heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be *saved*, for I bear them record that *they have a zeal of God but not according to knowledge*, for they, being ignorant of God's righteousness and going about to establish *their own righteousness*, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." They *had a way* (and it seemed right to them), but it was not God's way, and it ended in death. They had a *zeal of God*, but it was not in accord with the word of God. They *had a righteousness* of their own, which God says is as filthy rags (Isa. 64:6), but were ignorant of God's righteousness. They had religion but were not saved, like Paul, as stated by himself (Gal. 1:13-16). He was "exceedingly zealous of the traditions of his fathers." But he was "persecuting the church of God and wasting it."

The Strait Gate

What is the remedy or the “Strait Gate” referred to in the text? Jesus says in John 10:9, “I am the Door, by Me if any man enter in he shall be saved.” Christ is not only the door, but He says (John 14:6), “*I am the way*, the truth and the life, no man cometh unto the Father but by Me.”

He says (John 3:5), "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the spirit he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God." The water in this Scripture is not baptism (although baptism is God's ordinance for people after they are saved) but the Word of God. The word water is used again in this sense in Ephesians 5:26, "That he might sanctify and cleanse it (the church) with the washing of water by the word." And, by compar-

ing this with 1 Peter 1:23,25, it is made clear that the seed of life is the Word of God. "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible by *the Word of God; and this is the word which by the Gospel is preached unto you.*"

Death

We have now come to the subject of death, and we will soon come to it in our individual experience, unless Jesus should come quickly and make an exception, as shown at the end of the narrow way. But in the natural order of things death crosses both the broad and the narrow way. There is a solemn and important question asked (Job 14:10): "Man dieth and wasteth away; yea man giveth up the ghost and where is he?" There are two classes, two roads, and two destinies; so this question needs a double answer.

Does the Soul Sleep in the Grave With the Body?

In Acts 7:57-60, we have an account of Stephen being stoned to death, "Calling upon God and saying, Lord Jesus receive my spirit." And in 8:2 we read, "Devout men carried Stephen to his burial." His spirit went to be with the Lord, and his body went to the grave. Philippians 1:23-24, Paul writes: "I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ which is far better, nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you." And again, 2 Cor. 5:5-8, "Whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord. We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be *absent* from the body and to be present with the Lord."

But if a man on the broad road "dieth and wasteth away and giveth up the ghost, *where is he?*"

Solomon wrote (Eccl. 8:10): "I saw the wicked buried who had come and gone from the place of the holy and they were forgotten in the city where they had so done." Solomon, with all his wisdom, could not see beyond the grave, but a greater than Solomon has been here (Matt. 12:42). And he tells us (Luke 16:19-31), "There was a certain rich man; the rich man died and was buried, and *in Hell* he lifted up his eyes being in torment." His body died and went to the grave, but his soul still lived; he could see, speak, feel, remember, reason, and pray, but it was too late; the great gulf was fixed. *His body went to the grave, his Soul went to Hell.*

If it was in these days they would have an impressive funeral service over him and some popular minister would be reading over his body, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the spirit, that they may rest from their labors, and their works do follow them;" "And we bury this our brother in a sure and certain hope of a blessed resurrection;" eulogizing the dead man and extolling his virtues. His coffin would be covered with floral designs of anchors, crosses, crowns, gates ajar, etc. They would take him to the grave and erect a monument over his dead body with a hand pointing to heaven, and "At Rest," or something of the kind inscribed on it, and all the while the man's soul in Hades, praying that a preacher might be sent to his father's house, to testify to his five brethren, lest they also come to this place of torment. We have heard preachers speaking of dear departed ones in heaven, praying for their friends on earth, but we never heard them tell of friends in hell praying for them, but that is what we have in this Scripture. The people insist on being deceived in these matters, and their false teachers pander to their preferences, and so men are dying and going to hell. But God says, "His blood will I require at the watchman's hand" (Ezek. 33:6).

In Job 14:14, another important question is asked “If a man die shall he live again?” and it is answered for the two classes by the Lord Jesus in John 5:28-29. “The hour is coming in which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrec-

tion of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." These are the two resurrections, but we see by other Scriptures, they are a thousand years apart.

The Resurrection of Life

“The first resurrection” of Revelation 20:5, may take place at any moment, when “*The Lord Himself* shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first” (1 Thess. 4:13-18). And we also read of the exception to death, for those on the narrow way. 1 Corinthians 15:51-54, “Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed (he is speaking to Christians only, see chapter 1:2), in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible (that is, the dead in the graves) must put on incorruption, and this mortal (the living) must put on immortality.” And we might notice here that the word immortal is never used in Scripture in connection with the soul; mortality and immortality are always spoken of in connection with the body. This is important, as there is a heresy founded on the belief that “Eternal Life” and “Immortality” are synonymous terms. We have eternal life; the moment we trust Jesus, our souls are saved—“shall never die” and we are not hoping for that, “but ourselves—which *have the first fruits of the fruits of the spirit*, (eternal life) even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to-wit, the redemption of our body, for we are saved by hope” (Rom. 8:21-25). We have eternal life now but Jesus is the One “Who only hath immortality” (1 Tim. 4:16), in other words, a body not subject to death.

The Judgment Seat of Christ

as in 2 Corinthians 5:10, takes place in the heavens and is only for Christians. The question of their salvation will not be raised then; the Lord will reward His own children according to service (1 Cor. 3:8-15).

The Marriage Supper of the Lamb

will take place after Jesus has rewarded His servants, and Satan and his angels are cast out. Then we read of rejoining (Rev. 19:9). "For the marriage of the Lamb is come and his wife hath made herself ready."

The Door Shut for Christendom

In the parable of the ten virgins (Matt. 25:1-13) we have a picture of the professing church. They “went forth to meet the bridegroom;” “Five of them were wise and five were foolish;” “While the bridegroom tarried they all slumbered and slept.” The very meaning of the word church is “called out ones,” as Paul writes to the Thessalonians (1 Thess. 1:9,10): “Ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for *His Son from heaven*, whom He raised from the dead, *even Jesus which delivered us from the wrath to come.*” This then was what they were pretending to do, but they were all asleep. A perfect picture of today, the saved and the lost, in the professing church, and all asleep. They do not believe He is coming, in fact some teach in their creed that He is not. However, “At midnight there was a cry made, behold the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet Him.” “The Bridegroom came.” And *they that were ready* went in to the marriage, *and the door was shut; afterwards* came also the other virgins saying, “Lord, Lord, open to us,” but He said, “I know you not.” “Watch, therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.” And again (Luke 13:23-28): “When once the Master of the house is risen up and hath *shut the door*, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open

unto us, and He shall answer and say unto you, I know you not, whence ye are. Then shall ye begin to say, we have eaten and drunk in Thy presence, and Thou hast taught in our streets. But he shall say, I tell you I know you not whence ye are; *depart* from Me all ye workers of iniquity." It could be only unsaved professors that would say, "We have eaten and drunk in Thy presence."

Reader, if Jesus were to come back tonight, would you be ready? In Genesis 7:1-16, we have a type of this. Noah was preaching the judgment to come for 120 years, but only his family were converted, and God's long suffering came to an end. "The Lord said unto Noah, come thou and all thy house into the ark (v. 16), and they went in, and the Lord shut him in;" but the same hand closed all the rest of the people out. In verse 4 we read that they were in the ark seven days before the flood came; and so if Jesus was to come back tonight the door would be shut, and the Scripture, "Now is the accepted time," "Now is the day of salvation," could not be any more for gospel rejectors.

The Three Reigning Crowns of the World

There are only three places in the New Testament where the words translated crown, mean in the original, reigning crown, i.e., diadem. In all the other places the word translated crown means laurel crown. The first diadem crown mentioned is in Revelation 12:3, where we find the seven crowns on the head of the devil. He is the "Prince of the world" (John 14:30). The same truth is clearly taught in Luke 4:5,6. "The Devil taking Him (Jesus) up into a high mountain, showed unto Him *all the kingdoms* of the world in a moment of time." And the devil said unto Him, "All this power will I give Thee, and the glory of them for *that is delivered unto me and to whomsoever I will I give it*. If Thou therefore wilt worship me all shall be thine." The Lord Jesus would not take it at His hands and so the devil has the crowns of the world today. Nevertheless all this is working out the counsels of God.

During the seven years that follow this present dispensation of grace, Satan finds one who will come to his terms, so we next read of the crowns on the head of Antichrist and where he got them (Rev. 13:1,2). "And the dragon (devil) gave him his power and his seat and great authority. And the world worshiped the beast, saying, who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him?" (v. 4). And in Revelation 19:11-21, we find One Who is able to make war with him. Heaven is opened and Jesus comes forth. "On His head were many crowns." "Thus saith the Lord God, Remove the diadem, and take off the crown—exalt Him that is low, and abase him that is high. I will overturn, overturn it—until He comes *whose right it is*; and I will give it Him" (Ezek. 21:26,27).

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

"I am the bright and the morning star," the Lord Jesus says in Revelation 22:16.

"But unto you that fear My Name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in His wings" (Mal. 4:2). This then is the morning for this groaning world, when Jesus comes as the Sun of Righteousness. "When He shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds" (2 Sam. 23:4). "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea." "God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved; God shall help her, when the morning appeareth" (Psa. 46:1-5, margin).

But a never-ending night will commence for the unsaved. "To whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever" (Jude 13).

"And the devil that deceived them (after his liberation from the bottomless pit) was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, (having been there over a thousand years already) and they shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever" (Rev. 20:7-10).

The End of This World

We read in 2 Peter 3:1-13, that this earth is to be destroyed by fire, that like as the heavens, and the earth, in Noah's day, were by the Word of God stored with water, and the heavens were opened, and the fountains of the great deep broken up, "and the world that was then being overflowed with water perished." So, "the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word have been stored with fire (R.V.) against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." "And the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burnt up." "Nevertheless, we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness." This probably takes place simultaneously with

The Judgment of the Great White Throne.

What a marvel it is that men and women with the Bible in their hands will stoutly maintain there is no hell, no eternal punishment, and still pretend to believe it.

We have frequently heard friends at parting use the expression, "Be good to yourself," and we would beseech our readers to look at the matter calmly and in the light of an endless eternity to be lived through somewhere.

Dear reader, remember as you read the following awful scene, that if you die unsaved you shall be there yourself as surely as God is true: (Rev. 20:11-15) "I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from Whose Face the earth and the heaven fled away." "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the books were opened, (and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books according to their works), and the sea gave up the dead which were in it. And death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them, (that is, the grave delivered up the body and hell delivered up the soul), and they were judged every man according to their works; and death and hell were cast into the lake of fire, (that is, the inhabitants of the grave and hell, the bodies and the souls, reunited). This is the second death, and *whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.*"

But says one, if we are dead, it will be all right for we shall be beyond its sphere. Death is not non-existence. If you are unsaved God reckons you dead now; that is, spiritually dead to Him. And the second death is eternal separation from Him, (see Eph. 2) "and you hath He quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins."

New Heaven and New Earth—The Destiny of the Righteous

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away, and there was no more sea, and I, John, saw the Holy City, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven prepared as a bride adorned for her husband; and I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them and be their God, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away. And He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make

all things new. And He said unto me, write, for these words are true and faithful: and He said, it is done, I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give to him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things, and I will be His God, and He shall be My Son" (Rev. 21:1-7).

The Lake of Fire—The Destiny of the Wicked

"But the fearful and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers and sorcerers, and idolators, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone which is the second death" (Rev. 21:8).

And There Is No Repentance After Death

"He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still" (Rev. 22:11). "For the redemption of their soul is precious and it ceaseth forever" (Psa. 49:8).

"In the place where the tree falleth there it shall be" (Eccl. 11:3). "Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" (Isa. 33:14).

Almost the last words Jesus uttered on the cross were, "It is finished" (John 19:30). What was finished? The work that saves was finished, and you have been thinking of trying to do it for yourself, trying to propitiate God, by your miserable doings.

Man's salvation is always about himself; in Job chapters 29,30,31, we have Job's religion before he saw the Lord, and it is all I, Me, My. In those three chapters these words are repeated 187 times. He is telling what a wonderful man he is. But after a while Job sees the Lord, and it made him look very small in his own eyes, and he says, "Behold, I am vile, what shall I answer Thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth, once I have spoken, but I will not answer; yea, twice; but I will proceed no further" (Job 40:4,5). "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee; wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes" (Job 42:5,6).

God's gospel is not about my merits or my works, or my faithfulness, but the "Gospel of God" is "concerning His Son, Jesus Christ" (Rom. 1:1-3). In that blessed chapter, Isaiah 53, in the 12 short verses we have the little words, He, His, Him, 49 times. Would that my reader understood this. Alas! the natural heart rejects it. Set people to work for salvation and they will go at it; tell them it is all of, through and by Him, and at once there is dissatisfaction. "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and we hid as it were our faces from Him. He was despised and we esteemed Him not. Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions; He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed." We find our work in verse 6 "All we, like sheep, have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way," and then comes what He has done. "The Lord hath laid on HIM the iniquity of us all" (Isa.

53:3-6). Read the whole chapter again and again, and may God reveal His Son to you through it. The great mistake with the natural man is he thinks God saves good people, and he must be good, and then God will save him.

If a man always does what is right, says one, there is no fear of Him. True, but where do you find a man that does right for one day? Let us see what God says. "He looketh upon men, and if any say I have sinned and perverted that which was right; He will deliver his soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light" (Job 33:27,28). "The Son of Man is come to seek and save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10). "For when we were yet without strength in due time Christ died for the ungodly" (Rom. 5:6). "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Tim. 1:15). "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick...I am come not to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance" (Matt. 9:12-13).

To lost, helpless, and ungodly sinners the Lord proclaims, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he who hath no money, come ye, buy and eat, yea, come buy wine and milk, without money, and without price...Incline your ear, and come unto Me; hear, and your soul shall live, and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David" (Isa. 55:1-3). "Be it known to you, therefore, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by Him all that believe are justified from all things from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses" (Acts 13:38-39).

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him, should not perish, but have Everlasting Life" (John 3:16). In the previous passage we have "forgiveness of sins, and justification." This last carries us a step farther, "everlasting life." Jesus says again, "verily verily, I say unto you, he that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation (or judgment, R.V.) but is passed from death unto life" (John 5:24). "Verily, verily, I say unto you he that believeth on Me, hath everlasting life" (John 6:47).

These are the words of the Lord Jesus, and He says, "heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away."

"These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life" (1 John 5:13). The question, "What must I do to be saved?" is answered by the inspired apostle "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:30-31). And the Lord Jesus Himself gives the solemn alternative, *he that believeth not, shall be damned*" (Mark 16:16).

Reader, Where Will you Spend Eternity?

"A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself; but the simple pass on, and are punished" (Prov. 22:3).