

**THRU THE BIBLE SYNTHESIS**  
**"Part XXXIX: John - Triumphant In Life's Most CRITICAL Issue"**

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

How can one get to heaven today? Here are some ideas:

- (1) The Book of Mormon, in 3 Nephi 27:16 teaches that to receive eternal life one must repent, be baptized and endure a godly life to the end. For those who do, this passage quotes Jesus to say: "Behold, him will I hold guiltless before my Father...when I shall...judge the world."
- (2) The Jehovah's Witnesses organization believes that only 144,000 people go to heaven, and that that number was filled up by 1935! If you become a follower of Jehovah today, you will belong to Him but not go to heaven with the 144,000! If you are begin to follow Jehovah today, Jehovah's Witnesses say that you will die, cease to exist and God will recreate you in the end after Armageddon in order to live on the earth. (Van Baalen, Chaos of the Cults, p. 272)
- (3) Followers of the Islamic faith think that we cannot tell if we are going to heaven. They believe that every man's good deeds will be weighed by God against his evil deeds on the final day of judgment, and only then will the balance of the two sets of deeds reveal if one enters Paradise or languishes in hell (SIM Now , July-August, 1989, p. 2-5).
- (4) Followers of the New Age movement have a different belief. They say that death does not end one's hope for eternal life, but that he keeps coming back by way of reincarnation as a different life forms until eventually, he lives well enough to enter the eternal state (Word of Life quarterly, Winter 1991).
- (5) Freemasonry takes a more eclectic approach, promoting the "ushering in (of) a one-world religion . . . at whose shrine the Hindu, the Persian, the Assyrian, the Chaldean, the Egyptian, the Chinese, the Mohammedan, the Jew and the Christian may kneel . . ." ("The Kentucky Monitor," Fellowcraft Degree, p. 95)

In view of the varying views on how to gain eternal life, or just what it MEANS to do just that, is **it safe to assume that if one lives a reasonably decent life as an active, FRIENDLY church- or mosque- or temple-goer of SOME RECOGNIZED religion that he will make it to "heaven" where "God" is?!**

(We turn to the "Need" section of the sermon notes . . .)

***Need:*** "I have long been active in my church, synagogue, temple etc. doing good and living as a model citizen so that I could one day enter 'heaven' with a good passing grade. I would therefore assume that I WILL reach that 'heaven' in eternity, right?! RIGHT?!!"

- I. **Throughout Old Testament history, God's people, Israel failed to counter Nimrod's world apostasy to the point that the WORLD became spiritually destitute and headed to ETERNAL HELL.**
  - A. Though God created the world and set man up as His deputy, sin deposed him, and Satan became ruler on earth, Gn. 1-5; 2 Cor. 4:4.
  - B. **The EFFECTS of this fall for man meant ETERNAL separation from God in HELL**, Rom. 1:18 and Rev. 20:15 with Gen. 2:17; 3:6.
- II. **This need was met by God Who is love, and He worked to save:**
  - A. God renewed history through the Noahic Flood, Gen. 6:1-9:7.
  - B. Yet, Noah's descendant, Nimrod, began an apostasy opposing God's rule on earth, Gen. 10:8-10; 11:1-9; Rev. 12:1-3.
  - C. God chose Abraham to start a nation to check Nimrod, Gn. 12:1-3.
  - D. Yet, that nation, Israel repeatedly failed to curb Nimrod's error, and even became hopelessly corrupted by it instead, Gn. 12:4-Malachi.
  - E. God thus sent His long-promised Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth, but Israel rejected Him, crucifying Him on the cross, Matthew-Luke.
  - F. However, in grace God **utilized** the death of Christ as the means for making Jesus the substitutionary atonement for man's sins that man might be saved by faith alone in him, Acts 2:23-24; John 3:16.
- III. **God then led the Apostle John to FOCUS man on the critical life-and-death issue that men might believe in Christ for salvation!**
  - A. John's Gospel was penned decades after Christ had walked on earth when John had time to focus on the **meaning** of that life, Bible Knowledge Commentary, N.T., p. 267; Leon Morris, John, p. 45.
  - B. **In pondering Christ's role in history, John was overwhelmed by man's life-and-death plight that Jesus came to address:**
    - a. John noted that Jesus, as **God had created** all that **exists**, 1:1-3.
    - b. He then naturally recalled the **fall** of man, and its fateful **ETERNAL** effects, and of the **helplessness** of man to affect his **eternal** destiny for blessing on his **own**, Jn. 1:5,12-13; 1 Jn. 5:12
    - c. He saw Jesus as God's **Focal Point** of **history** to **salvage** man in his crisis of **eternal** life-and-death, Jn. 1:4; Gn. 2:17; 3:6.
  - C. **Overcome with the enormity of the stakes involved in Christ's coming, John went beyond writing a biography to get his readers to BELIEVE in Christ that they might be SAVED, Jn. 20:30-31!**

1. John did not give an exhaustive biography of Christ's life, Jn. 21:25.
2. Rather, he **selected** material to elicit a **response of faith** in Jesus as **Messiah** and **God** so that his readers would be **saved**, Jn. 20:31!

John arranged his Gospel with this ardent drive, B.K.C.,N.T., p. 269ff:

0. He listed **7 miracles** that are convincing "signs" of Jesus' identity:
  - a. Jesus turned water into wine (Jn. 2:1-11) to show He brings **joy in salvation** superior to Moses who turned water to **blood in judgment**, Jn. 1:17 with Ex. 7:14-15.
  - b. Jesus' healing the official's son from a **distance** in Jn. 4:46-54 reveals He can save John's reader's **now** from **heaven** far away!
  - c. John revealed Jesus as **Messiah** in healing the invalid at the Bethesda pool in fulfillment of Isa. 35:1-7, John 5:1-18.
  - d. Like Moses who fed Israel in the desert with manna, Jesus fed the 5,000 to reveal He was **Messiah**, Jn. 6:5-14 & Deut. 18:18f.
  - e. As Moses brought Israel **through** the Red Sea, Jesus led His disciples **over** the sea and saved Peter **out of** its hold, 6:16-21.
  - f. Jesus healed the blind man as **Messiah**, Jn. 9:1-7 with Isa. 35:5.
  - g. Jesus raised Lazarus from the **dead** as the Resurrection and the Life, the **ultimate** victory for man who is lost in sin, Jn. 11:1-45!
1. He listed seven relevant **evangelistic claims** of Jesus:
  - a. Jesus **gives eternal life** as the Bread of Life, Jn. 6:35.
  - b. He is the **truth** of salvation as the Light of the World, 8:12; 1:4.
  - c. He is the Gate of the sheepfold, the **way** to salvation, Jn. 10:7,9.
  - d. This Good Shepherd **by grace** gives Himself **for** His own, 10:11
  - e. Jesus is the Resurrection and the Life, the **full** Victor over man's worst sinful failure of death, Jn. 11:25 with Gen. 2:17.
  - f. Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life, the **comprehensive** and **sole** answer to man's struggle against sin and death, Jn. 14:6.
  - g. Jesus is the **true** Vine, the **real** Source of God's spiritual life that replaces man's fruitless **false religions**, Jn. 15:1,5; Is. 5:1-11.

**John's contribution to the "thread of redemption" is the news that Jesus is GOD and FOCAL POINT of HISTORY to be BELIEVED for RECEIVING the victory of eternal life over Adam's sinful fall!**

***Concluding Application:* If we are counting on our own merits to gain Heaven, we must (1) note from John's Gospel that our efforts are futile, and (2) believe on Christ as Savior from sin to receive eternal life, Jn. 1:12-13; 3:16. (3) As a BELIEVE R, follow John's lead in SHARING this LIFE SAVING Gospel with a lost, needy world!**

**Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)**

How can one get to heaven today?

(1) An Arab who earned an honors M.A. from the Islamic University of Al Azhar, Cairo, who majored in Islamic Law, & was named preaching sheik in mosques in Beirut, Tripoli & Sidon, wrote:

**"When I was serving my religion in its many duties, I honestly believed that I was serving God. But so many difficulties and problems came into my life, I began to think perhaps that was not the way God wanted me to serve Him. I became increasingly dissatisfied, and asked God that if this were not the way, would He please show me the right way.**

**After that I kept having a dream in which I was walking along a path that always ended at a church. Every time I had this dream I asked God if it had come from Him. And another thing -- I kept thinking of Christ. The picture of Him on the cross, with blood flowing from His wounds, kept imposing itself on my mind. This was even against my will, because I had been taught that Christ was not crucified. In spite of my continued rejection of Christ, this picture came to my mind more and more, and every time it happened I felt a great happiness. It seemed that Christ was ordering me to follow Him.**

**After a long time I finally decided . . . to accept Christ . . . The love of Christ changes men." (SIM Now, Jul-Aug., '89, p. 11)**

**"I was in a desert where there is no plant, no life, lost and sick . . . Suddenly the wilderness turned into a garden . . . What a wonderful power is this, which changed the impossible things in me . . . Today I want to speak in a loud voice to everyone . . . 'Come on you man, to God. He is a merciful and loving God . . . He is the Savior!' . . . Is there any man who has seen Jesus face to face or even in a dream nowadays? . . . I am so keen to see Him!" (Ibid., p. 8)**

**Christ is the WORLD'S Way, the Truth and the Life. We find eternal life by faith in Him.**