

Misunderstood Verses



REGARDING:

THE KINGDOM OF GOD & ***ETERNAL LIFE***

*“be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh
you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear”*
1st Peter 3:15

LESSON #1

Questions regarding the Kingdom and destiny of the earth

Promise of the future Kingdom, the *restored**** Kingdom of God on earth –***

READ: 2nd Sam. 7:12-16, 24; Isaiah 2:2-4; Daniel 2:44; Dan. 7:27;

I. THE KINGDOM “AT HAND” or “NIGH” AT CHRIST’S FIRST COMING

READ: Matt. 3:2; 4:12-17; Luke 10:8,9 *Those of the mainstream churches rely on such language to prove that Christ established a “spiritual” Kingdom or the “Church” as the Kingdom during his first appearance, or that “it is in our hearts”. The false conclusion is that the believer is already in the Kingdom or that they possess the Kingdom in their hearts.*

What does the term “kingdom of heaven” refer to?

- Phrase found exclusively in Matthew (32 times).
- In all parallel passages it appears as “the Kingdom of God”.
- God is the source of its planning, organization and establishment – not man – which explains the use of the two phrases.
- Question: Has this “kingdom” ever existed?

ANSWER

- In these passages do we find the phrase used that the Kingdom was then “set up” or “established”? No we do not, nor any other passages like the ones we have looked up.
- **Luke 16:16.** We do not read here “that the Kingdom of God is ‘set up’; we read that it was what?

Answer: _____

*A distinction needs to be made between preaching and a setting up of the Kingdom. The ministry of John the Baptist and Christ was to make known the Kingdom of God. Also read **Luke 8:1; 9:2***

- **2nd Tim. 4:1.** Here we see that the resurrection and judgment is to take place “at his appearing and his kingdom.” This clearly states when the Kingdom is to be set up. How can this scripture be correct if the Kingdom (as some believe) is already in existence somewhere? These are events that have not yet taken place.
- **Matt. 25:31-34.** Concentrate on the word “THEN”. The kingdom will have been “prepared from the foundation of the world” – AS A PLAN. It was this plan (like the plans of a building before it is built) that was being openly and clearly preached to the people at Christ’s first appearance.

Question: Why would it be necessary for Christ to give the inheritance of the Kingdom to the faithful at his return, if they already possess it or are in it?

- **Luke 19:11-14.** Christ corrected his listeners misconception that the kingdom should “immediately appear” with this parable. Many who followed after Christ were wanting the Kingdom to be set up right away, but Christ teaches them that he must first leave and would not have a Kingdom until he returned → Remember Matt. 25:31.
- **What do we do with the phrase “at hand” as is found in the opening readings?**

1. The word does not indicate a definite time, but there is a sense that we can say that the Kingdom was at hand.
2. What was the mission of John the Baptist? Isaiah 40:3; Matt 3:3. To herald and prepare for Christ who was at hand.
3. The word “kingdom” is from the Greek word *BASILEA*. Not only can it represent a kingdom, but it also is representative of *royalty or a royal person*.

DIAGLOTT TRANSLATION: “*REFORM! Because the ROYAL MAJESTY of the heavens has approached.*”

The future king of the Kingdom was before them, though the appointed time for the setting up of the Kingdom had not yet arrived. Christ represented the principles and character of the future Kingdom and was the living figure head as to its future reality.

- Is the Kingdom “The Church” (or Ecclesia) made up of the believers, that was set up by Christ during his first appearance? This can be answered by considering the following questions – “*What was the purpose or characteristic of the Kingdom? If the Kingdom is already in existence (established by Christ during his first appearance) then does it reflect what the scriptures say it will be?*”
 1. Isaiah 9:6 – Christ called the “Prince of Peace”.
 2. Luke 2:14 – The Declaration of the angels.
 3. Isaiah 2:1-3 – Do we see any of these conditions now in existence?

SUMMARY: *It was the work of Christ and his disciples to preach the Kingdom – not to then set it up. The Kingdom has been planned by God since the beginning. When Christ appeared the 1st time, it was being proclaimed by its future King himself as well as by his future co-rulers.*

II. THE KINGDOM IS “WITHIN” YOU.

Read: **Luke 17:20, 21.** *This passage is used by those who think the Kingdom is symbolic language for the condition of God’s “grace” and good feelings that dwell in one’s heart.*

ANSWER:

- **DIAGLOTT TRANSLATION:** “*Nor shall they say, ‘Behold here! Or behold there! For behold, GOD’S ROYAL MAJESTY is among you.’*”
 - The word “within” is from the Greek word (“entos”, derived from “en”) which means *to be in the midst of*, or as is rendered in the Diaglott – “among”. It is translated as “among” 115 times in the N.T. John 1:26 is one example.
 - “Without observation” literally means, “*Stop looking around, the King is among you.*” Also, Christ’s first coming would not be accompanied by the same display as will his second. The first appearance was in preaching the Kingdom, and was not accompanied by the military and grand force that will accompany his second appearance. (First as a lamb, and Second as a lion). A degree of spiritual discernment and faith was necessary to recognize him. His second appearance will be obvious to all.
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III. “THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN SUFFERETH VIOLENCE”

Read: Matthew 11:12. *Some will also point to this verse as proof that a spiritual Kingdom is already in existence.*

ANSWER:

The violence against “the kingdom of heaven” was done against those who preached the Kingdom. John was beheaded, Christ shamed and crucified and his apostles persecuted. The Jewish leaders of

the time tried to preserve their own power and claim to “the kingdom” by force rather than accepting Christ. They viewed Christ “the royal personage” and his followers as threats to their own self interests.

IV. “EVERY MAN PRESSETH INTO IT”

Read: **Luke 16:16**. *This is falsely understood to mean by some that the Kingdom was already in existence and that people were already “pressing” into it.*

ANSWER:

- DIAGLOTT: “*The law and the prophets were till John; from that period, the Kingdom of God is proclaimed, and every one presses **towards** it.*”
 - For those who think that the Kingdom was set up during Christ’s ministry or at Pentecost when Christ had already risen to heaven, then how can one explain the words here that would place it starting during John’s ministry?
 - Notice that no words are found that the Kingdom was “established”, but that it was “PREACHED” – as we have already discussed in previous verses. Luke 8:1; 9:2
 - Notice the word as rendered “into” in the KJV is “towards” in the Diaglott. It is from the Greek word “eis”, which means motion “to” or “unto” an object, with the purpose of reaching or touching something.
 - Our movement, or pressing “towards” the Kingdom officially begins at baptism. We are not in the Kingdom, but in earnest expectation are working “towards” it. Philippians 3:13,14; 2nd Peter 1:10,11
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V. “MY KINGDOM IS NOT OF THIS WORLD”

Read: John 18:36 - *This passage is falsely used with the idea that Christ’s Kingdom is not or will never be on earth, but in heaven.*

ANSWER:

- There is a conflict here for those who say “the Church” is the Kingdom or that it is in our “hearts”. WHERE IS THE PROBLEM? Answer → If they try to use this verse to counteract a Kingdom on earth they then destroy their own idea of “the Church” being the Kingdom or “in our hearts” – both of these false ideas are forced to admit that such ideas about a kingdom would still have to be on earth and not in heaven.
 - The Kingdom will be on earth! Ps. 2:8; Dan. 7:27; Zech. 14:9; Matt. 6:10
 - Christ does not say the Kingdom would not be on the earth, but “not of this WORLD”. “World” is from the Greek word “kosmos” – this word does not represent what we consider to be the earth itself, but represents the order or system of things like society or government.
 - The Kingdom will not have anything to do with man’s systems, it will completely be organized by God – “a heavenly kingdom”. Christ’s first appearance was when the Roman Empire dominated the earth, but Christ was not influenced and did not participate in that world and neither did his followers → John 8:23; 15:18,19; 17:14-16; Eph. 2:2.
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VI. “FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS NOT MEAT AND DRINK”

Read: **Romans 14:17** - *This is used to prove that the Kingdom is not literal, and that “the Kingdom” represents the effects of spiritual conversion – the emotions one is filled with when they “get religion.”*

ANSWER:

Context is always important and especially here. The Roman believers were arguing and judging each other over the eating of certain kind of foods and the celebration of certain days. This verse concludes that the Kingdom and our striving to be in the Kingdom is not about what foods we eat or what special days that we observe (this was the emphasis of the Jews and the pagan religions as well). It was about “righteousness, peace and joy.”

VII. “TRANSLATED US INTO THE KINGDOM OF HIS DEAR SON”

Read: **Colossians 1:13** - *This verse is thought by some to absolutely prove that the believer enters into the Kingdom once they are converted.*

ANSWER:

- We have to be careful not to put too much emphasis on “tenses”. God speaks as though things already exist or have been fulfilled. Isaiah 9:6; Romans 4:17
 - We know that entrance into the Kingdom is not granted until Christ’s return. Matt. 25:31
 - DIAGLOTT: “*Giving thanks at the same time to that Father who called and **qualified** us for the portion of the Saints inheritance in the Light. Who delivered us from the DOMINION of Darkness, and **changed us for** the Kingdom of the Son of His love.*”
 - The word “into” is again from the Greek word “eis”. The same word is translated “for” in verse 16. So we are “translated” (or changed) FOR the kingdom.
 - How are we CHANGED? This represents a change out of ADAM into CHRIST first, from aliens to joint heirs (Eph. 2) that takes place at baptism. The only way we can be prepared or qualified to receive the Promises is by such a change. 1st. Thess. 2:12
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VIII. WILL THE EARTH BE BURNED UP BEFORE A KINGDOM CAN BE ESTABLISHED ON IT?

Read: 2nd **Peter 3:7-13** – *This is put forward as “proof” that instead of there being a future Kingdom on earth, that the earth will in fact burn up – “the end of the world” – destroying all the wicked, while the righteous reside in heaven.*

ANSWER:

- What the Bible states regarding the destiny of the earth → Ecc. 1:4; Is. 45:18; Ps. 104:1-5
- For those who try to prove that the “earth” is to be burned up it has to be noticed that “the heavens” are destroyed as well. If taken literally, are we to believe that God’s dwelling place is to be destroyed? (Notice that “heavens” is plural.)
- Use of symbolic language in the scriptures:
 1. The heavens are governments and leaders: Luke 21:26; 10:15; The fall of the king of Babylon – Is. 14:12; The Burden of Babylon - Is. 13:10,13; The condition of Israel at one time due to their wickedness – Jer. 4:23-27; Future status of the righteous – Dan. 12:3
 2. Deut. 32:1 – Can the heavens and earth literally hear?
 3. Joseph’s Dream – Gen. 37:5-10
 4. Who is Isaiah talking to here – Is. 1:1,2
- Fire, rather than water, will be used to cleanse the earth of the wicked. (Ezek. 38:22; Rev. 14:9,10). But, the earth itself will not be destroyed.

LESSON #2

Questions regarding Eternal Life and Immortality

FOUNDATION PRINCIPLES:

1. *Eternal Life/Immortality – The condition of living forever in incorruptible bodies.*
2. *Both words essentially mean the same thing → Romans 2:6,7*
3. *The original word for “eternal life/life eternal” (zoe ainos) appears some 30 times in the NT, while the two original words that are rendered “immortality” or “incorruption” a total of 9 times.*
4. *It is a matter of future reward and not present possession.*
 - *Galatians 6:8 → still future*
 - *Colossians 3:3,4 → still future.....Where is the life spoken of now?*
 - *1st Tim. 6:12 → still future*
 - *2nd Tim. 1:1 → still future...Where is the life spoken of now?*
 - *Titus 1:2 → Hope is not hope if you already have what you are hoping for. (Rom. 8:24)*
 - *1st John 2:25 → still future...a matter of “promise”.*

I. “HATH EVERLASTING LIFE”

Read: John 3:36; John 6:54; 1st John 5:13 – *Used by the world to prove that we already possess eternal life (or an “immortal soul”) and that their eternal salvation is secured.. Also used by some to say that we “spiritually” have eternal life after baptism, and then we later get immortality when Christ returns.*

ANSWER:

- This kind of use of the term “eternal life” as a present possession is exclusive to the Apostle John’s writings.
 - We are able to understand more difficult passages by those scriptural passages that speak in plainer, unmistakable terms.
 - **Romans 4:17**
 - We have already provided (above) a list of verses that prove that everlasting life is not to be given until Christ returns to the earth. Additional passages: Matt. 25:46; Rom. 13:11; Heb. 1:14; 1st Thess. 5:8.
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II. “LET THIS CHILD’S SOUL COME INTO HIM AGAIN”

Read 1st Kings 17:21,22 – *Used to support the idea of immortal soul that leaves the body at death.*

- “Soul” is from the Hebrew word “nephesh”, translated “life” in Gen. 9:4; Lev. 17:11; Deut. 12:23. (“Soul” in N.T. is from the Greek word psuche and is translated “life” in Matt. 2:20; Matt. 6:25).
- What was the problem with the child? _____
- What caused him to become dead? _____ (vs. 17)
- How might he be made alive again? _____
- What did Elijah do? _____ (vs. 23)
- If the child had an “immortal soul” which was freed by death, did Elijah really do him a favor?

III. “HER SOUL WAS IN DEPARTING”

Read: **Gen. 35:18**

ANSWER:

- Notice in parenthesis – “she died”.
 - Those who believe in an immortal soul insist that the life and the body are two separate things, but this cannot be done. They believe that when the life “has gone” or “departed” they think it must go somewhere. What about, “losing your hearing”, “losing your eyesight” or a light has “gone out” – where does it go?
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IV. “LOSE HIS OWN SOUL”

Read: **Matt. 16:26** – *This is supposed to be conclusive evidence of the immortality of the soul.*

ANSWER:

- Try inserting the phrase “immortal soul” into the passage. How can one lose a “soul” that is already immortal?
 - The Greek word here is “psuche”, so insert the word “life”.
 - Look at verse 25. The word “life” is from “psuche”. One verse translated “LIFE” and in the very next translated as “SOUL”.
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V. “CANNOT KILL THE SOUL”

Read: **Matt. 10:28**

ANSWER:

- Read it in context (vv. 16-32) – Preaching of the word and the persecution that would follow.
 - If we insert “immortal soul” it still does not make sense. If God is going to destroy it (in “hell”) how can it be immortal?
 - Inserting “life” for soul does not completely satisfy the context, though we could think in terms of the hope of eternal life. Diaglott: “Be not afraid of those who kill the body, but cannot destroy the [future] LIFE; but rather fear Him who can utterly destroy both Life and Body in Gehenna.
 - “Psuche” is sometimes translated “mind” – Acts 14:2; Phil. 1:27; Heb. 12:3
 - The Apostles and disciples were not to fear the torture and beatings of those that would persecute them. Their MIND or attitude could not be affected. They were calm, composed and cheerful through their trials – Acts 5:41; 1st Pet. 2:19,20. The persecutors could torture them, but if the individuals were faithful, the persecutors had no control over their inheritance of eternal life – BUT GOD DOES.
 - “kill” (Gr. apokteeno) – to torment or torture
 - “destroy (Gr. apollumi) – to destroy
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VI. ““I WILL SAY TO MY SOUL”. THIS NIGHT THY SOUL SHALL BE REQUIRED OF THEE.”

Read: **Luke 12:19,20**

ANSWER:

Verse 19

- If the “soul” is the real man, then how can one part of a person talk to the “soul” part of a person? Are there two parts to a human being in which one part can talk to another part?

- Consider the context provided in verse 17. Quite simply, as a figure of speech for “myself”, a man is talking to himself or considering an idea within his own mind.

Verse 20

- It must be understood that “soul” is used in various ways (nephesh/psuche) – the context being the guide. Sometimes for the person, other times for the **LIFE** of the person.
 - For the person or being: Num. 31:28; Gen. 46:18
 - For the life of a person: Job 12:10; Ex. 4:19; Matt. 2:20
 - Clearly the context in verse 20 is that of the man’s life. Some translate this as “thy life”.
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VII. THE “SOULS UNDER THE ALTAR”

Read: Rev. 6:9,10

ANSWER:

- “souls that were slain” → How can a “soul” be killed if it is immortal?
- Why do “souls” cry out if they are blissfully in heaven?

SYMBOLIC LANGUAGE – Revelation a book of symbols.

- A symbolic representation of the persecution of the Believers under the Romans (301-311 A.D.)
 - It might be asked, “How can those dead souls speak if they are not immortal?” Answer: This is a symbolic representation, just as...
 - blood can speak, Gen. 4:10; Heb. 12:24
 - the natural creation can sing & rejoice Isaiah; 14:7-10
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VIII. “THE SPIRIT SHALL RETURN TO GOD”

Read: **Ecclesiastes 12:7** - Also referred to as “proof” that the body and the “spirit” or immortal soul are two different things.

Spirit – Hebrew word *ruach*

Is translated “wind” – Gen. 8:1; Ps. 1:4 / “breath” – Gen. 6:17; Ps. 104:29; 146:3,4 / “mind” – Gen. 26:35; Prov. 29:11 / “smell” – Gen. 8:21; 27:27 / “blast” – Ex. 15:8; 2nd Kings 19:7 / can refer to “animals” – Gen. 6:17; Ecc. 3:19.

Queen of Sheba had no more “spirit” left in her (1st Kings 10:5). Does this mean she had no more “immortal soul” left in her?

- No distinction made in this verse between good and bad men.
 - This leads to some questions → What happens to those are evil if we are speaking of an immortal soul? Do they go to heaven as well? We are clearly not talking about an immortal soul here.
 - Notice that the “spirit” is referred to as an “it” and not the person himself. The “breath” (it) goes back to God who gave it in the first place (Gen. 3:19).
 - What is man?
 - So what did God give man from the beginning? Breath – the breath of life. When we die the ability to breathe is taken away.
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IX. “LORD JESUS RECEIVE MY SPIRIT”

Read: Acts. 7:59

ANSWER:

- The previous consideration helps to explain this verse.
 - If we suppose that this passage is speaking of an “immortal soul” then we run into a problem with what is found in verse 60 → “he fell asleep”. If the “spirit” is the real man, then which is it – Did his “immortal soul or spirit” go to Jesus or did he “fall asleep”? Scripture cannot contradict itself.
 - This connects with what we read in **Luke 23:46**
 - We know that Jesus “poured out his soul unto death.” That he was buried and rose again the third day.
 - Christ commended or “entrusted” his life to God. Though he died, what happened? God brought him up from the dead.
 - “gave up the ghost” – the Bible commentator Bullinger translates this as “expired, or breathed his last.” Defined by lexicographers to “breathe out.”
 - Summary – The gift of life comes from God, energized by the breath of life. When one dies this gift is given back to God.
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X. “HAVING A DESIRE TO DEPART”

Read: **Phil 1:21-23** *It is thought here by many in the church world that Paul was wanting to die so that he could go to heaven to be with Christ.*

ANSWER:

- 2nd Timothy 4:6 might be used to support this passage – “the time of my departure is at hand.” The word “departure” = “dissolution” or in other words “death”.
 - Kept in balance with other scriptures, Paul’s desire was not for his “immortal soul” to go to heaven but for the return of Christ, and the resurrection from the dead. Read: 2nd Tim. 4:18; Phil. 3:10,11,20,21; Acts 23:6; Coll. 3:3,4. So, whatever “depart” means here there is no supporting evidence that he was to die and go to heaven to be with Christ.
 - “to depart” actually means “for the return”.
 - There are three things that Paul is considering here:
 1. To live and continue to preach and be a help to the brotherhood
 2. To die and be freed from his sufferings.
 3. Something in which he considered to be far better – and that was “for the return”.
 - What was “far better” was the return of Christ. If he were to die, the next thing he would be aware of would be the return of Christ.
 - DIAGLOTT: “I am, indeed, hard-pressed by the two things (I have a desire for the returning, and being with Christ, since it is very much preferred); but to remain in the flesh is more needful for you. “
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XI. “ABSENT FROM THE BODY AND PRESENT WITH THE LORD”

Read: 2nd Cor. 5:1-9

ANSWER:

- This ties in closely with the previous passage.
 - The context of the passage found in verse 4, “that mortality might be swallowed up of life.”
 - This cannot be accomplished until Christ returns → Rev. 22:12; 2nd Tim. 4:7,8; 1st Pet. 5:4; Coll. 3:4; 1st Pet. 1:7, etc.
 - Absent from the body is to be free of mortality.
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XII. THE THIEF ON THE CROSS

Read: Luke 23:42,43

ANSWER:

- Several questions to ask first:
 1. What was the request of the thief?
 2. Did the thief and Christ both go to heaven?
 3. If they both went to “paradise” that very day, how do we explain the fact that Christ’s “soul” went to hell (or the grave)?
 - What was the request of the thief? “Remember me when thou **comest** into thy Kingdom.” This is in complete harmony with what Christ had taught his disciples. Luke 19:11-13; Matt. 25:31
 - What is this “paradise”? Isaiah 51:3
 - Did Christ (and the thief) go to heaven that very day?
 - Christ “pored out his soul unto death” Is. 53:12
 - He was buried and rose from the dead. 1st Cor. 15:3,4
 - We are told that his soul was in “hell” or the grave. Acts 2:31
 - Three days later we are informed that he had not yet ascended to his Father. John 20:17
 - The placement of the word “TO DAY”. There is no evidence that this is meant as that very day, but it is an emphasis of the surety of what Christ was saying. It is what is known as a “Hebraism” or a figure of speech.
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XIII. THE RICH MAN & LAZARUS

Read: Luke 16:19-31

ANSWER:

- The account is a **parable** and is not to be taken literally! Jesus did not speak to the Jews without parables → Matt. 13:34
- If it is demanded by those who point to this as proof of the “immortality of the soul” and that this is to be taken literally, point out how ridiculous the account becomes.
 - Did the beggar die? How do we reconcile his conscious state with Ps. 146:4; Eccles. 9:5
 - One is carried off to “Abraham’s bosom” and the other dies and is “buried”.
 - How can the two talk with each other?
 - What use for water does the Rich Man have if he is dead and buried?
- Being that this is in fact a parable, Christ would sometimes speak to them using their own traditions against them to prove a point. The Pharisees taught of three places when talking of death – “Abraham’s bosom”, “under the throne of glory”, and “in the Garden of Eden”. When speaking of death they would say, “this day he sits in Abraham’s bosom.” They also taught that in life two men may be coupled together and in death conversation can take place between them.
- The Pharisees did not come to learn from Christ but to trap him in his words. This is why he spoke to them in parables, while he would tell the real meaning to his disciples in private (Matt. 13:11, 14,15). This is why Christ would sometimes draw from their foolish traditions when giving the parable. Jesus openly recognized that the Pharisees had departed from the Truth (John 8:44,45), therefore he spent no time reasoning with them (like when they accused him of being “Beelzebub – lord of the flies”). What was “the lie”? – the immortality of the soul, the “lie of the serpent”, a lie that the Pharisees had embraced.

WHAT IT MEANS

- **The Rich Man**
 - The Pharisees & the nation they then represented

- They viewed all others (Gentiles) as “dogs”.
- Symbolized as wearing “purple and fine linen”. This being the priestly robe of the nation they represented. (Ex. 39:27-29).
- “they fared sumptuously” – God had provided for them in both natural and spiritual blessings. They were blessed above all other nations.
- He is a son of Abraham and is proud to be so.
- **The Beggar**
 - Outside of the gate, just as the Gentiles. Herod’s temple had an “outer court” specially made for the Gentiles.
 - Catching the crumbs falling from the rich man’s table → Mark 7:25-28. The Hope of Israel was first given to the Jews.
 - The Gentiles are “dogs” and unhealthy compared to how the Pharisees viewed themselves.
 - Christ shows that their days of feasting and life (the end of the national existence would come in 70 A.D.) was about over.
 - The “rich man” goes to a reward of torment – which is an accurate description of the Jews during their dispersion.
 - Lazarus goes to Abraham’s bosom – the way of life was opened up to the Gentiles and adoption into the “seed of Abraham” was made available (Gal. 3:7; 29).
 - To be in Abraham’s bosom represented a reclining position that in Eastern tradition represented a favored position (John 1:18).
- **The Five Brethren**
 - Since king Jeroboam, Israel had been divided. Since the return of the Babylonian captivity, only Judah and Benjamin existed in the land. These only are represented by the “rich man”. Both tribes considered as “one” when they returned from the captivity (Ezrah 3:1).
 - Since “one” = two tribes, then “five” = the other ten tribes who were still scattered.
 - The Jews had the writings of Moses and the prophets, and the witness of Jesus himself. This was all the information that they needed. “One” did rise from the dead but they did not comprehend the clear message and reality of Christ’s resurrection – most rejected it. The Apostles attempted to convert the Jews (both in Israel and abroad) after Christ’s ascension, but they still would not hear their testimony. The Apostles took their message to the Gentiles. The Jews (after centuries of persecution and torment) still do not accept the witness of Christ’s resurrection.
 - The “great gulf” is the gulf of unbelief. This is due to their “blindness” (Rom. 11:25). Once this blindness is removed (at Christ’s return), then comes the promised restoration.

XIV. OTHER PASSAGES (skipped for sake of time)

- **1st Peter 3:18-20** – The Spirits in Prison. Misunderstood in two ways: the existence of disembodied spirits; the pre-existence of Christ. Quick answer: This was Noah preaching to those around him before the flood.
- **2nd Corinthians 12:1-4** – “in or out of the body”. This was the apostle Paul speaking about a “vision” that he had seen regarding the 3rd heaven. This implies a 1st and 2nd heaven as well → 1) the world before the flood; 2) the time period after the flood; 3) the Kingdom Age. The Apostle was given a special vision of the Kingdom Age in which was to confirm his authority to the believers as an Apostle sent by Christ to teach and lead them.