

C & C: Statements made by Job Concerning Death

Connections and Comparisons is an ongoing weekly series that deals with many scriptures in the Bible, some of which are not commonly addressed. The purpose of this series is to examine the scriptures at hand comparing what is said and looking at the connections within.

Let me begin this topic with something important to be understood. When reading and studying the book of Job only Job should be taken as speaking the truth concerning the mysteries of God. Not any of the others who have come to counsel with Job and to speak with him. Though there words are recorded in the Bible as to what they said to Job, this in no way means that there words are correct. Always keep this in mind.

And it was so, that after the LORD had spoken these words unto Job, the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath. Therefore take unto you now seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you: for him will I accept: lest I deal with you after your folly, in that ye have not spoken of me the thing which is right, like my servant Job. So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite went, and did according as the LORD commanded them: the LORD also accepted Job. (Job 42:7-9)

Job 14:7-14

7 For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease.

8 Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground;

9 Yet through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant.

10 But man dieth, and wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?

11 As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up:

12 So man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep.

13 O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave, that thou wouldest keep me secret, until thy wrath be past, that thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me!

14 If a man die, shall he live again? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come.

Here we see a comparison being made to the “hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again” being compared to that of a man’s life. When a man dies he wastes away back to the dust of the ground of whence he came.

Genesis 3:19

19 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

Job continues and asks, “yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?” To begin to understand the statements of what Job is speaking of in many of the scriptures that he references concerning death, one must understand what is meant by giving up the ghost. Giving up the ghost is in reference to the spirit of a man, which is the breath of life given to man by God. This is not the soul.

Ecclesiastes 3:21

21 Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?

Ecclesiastes 12:5-7

5 Also when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way, and the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail: because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets:

6 Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern.

7 Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.

Luke 23:46

46 And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost.

And we know that after Jesus gave up the ghost, or the breath of life given to man by God, his soul went into hell where he “preached unto the spirits in prison”. It was the soul that went into hell which was also considered the ‘grave’ and the ‘pit’ in many passages of scriptures.

Acts 2:25-27

25 For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved:

26 Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope:

27 Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

1 Peter 3:18-20

18 For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

19 By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison;

20 Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.

In this particular verse of scripture we see the phrase, “preached unto the spirits in prison”. Sometimes the Bible uses the word ‘soul’ and ‘spirit’ interchangeably. How does one then know the difference. The answer for this is:

Isaiah 28:9-10

9 Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts.

10 For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little:

A precept would be a general rule regulating thought or behavior. Which in this case would be referring to the commandments of God.

2 Timothy 2:15

15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

It is necessary when discussing statements made by Job concerning death to understand from other Bible scriptures what is meant by Job when he is speaking. And this is the focal point of our study. So let's look at Job 14 again with this understanding.

Job 14:7-14

7 For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease.

8 Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground;

9 Yet through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant.

10 But man dieth, and wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?

11 As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up:

12 So man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep.

13 O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave, that thou wouldest keep me secret, until thy wrath be past, that thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me!

14 If a man die, shall he live again? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come.

So we learned that when man dies his natural body wastes away back into the dust or ground from whence it came. This happens to a man when he gives up the ghost, which is the spirit of man, which is the breath of life given to each one of us by God. When Job then asks the question "where is he" this is speaking of man's soul.

We then see a comparison of man dying and not rising up again "till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep" this comparison is being made to the waters that fail from the sea, and the flood that decays and is dried up and rises not again. This is a prophetic statement given here by Job concerning the resurrection of the dead.

1 Corinthians 15:42-44

42 So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption:

43 It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power:

44 It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a

spiritual body.

So Job is saying here through this passage that once man dies he will not rise again concerning the natural body, but then he makes a prophetic statement concerning the resurrection of the dead whereas he says, “till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep”.

1 Thessalonians 4:15-17

15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

16 For 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:

17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

This however is not to be confused that once a person dies there soul remains in some state of unconscious rest until the resurrection of the dead. As we have already seen that Jesus’ soul went into hell to preach unto the imprisoned spirits that were there. And the Apostle Paul told us, “We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.” (2 Cor 5:8)

And there is also the parable of the rich man and Lazarus of which becomes essential to the understanding of what Job means when he speaks about death in many of the scriptures wherein he makes reference concerning it. One of the things that we learn from the parable of the rich man and Lazarus as well as when Jesus speaks to the thief on the cross saying, “Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise”, (Lk 23:43) is that hell had two compartments. The righteous dead were in paradise which was also known as Abraham’s Bosom, while the wicked dead were in flaming fire.

Luke 16:19-26

19 There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day:

20 And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores,

21 And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.

22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried;

23 And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

24 And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.

25 But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

26 And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence.

So since we know that Jesus' soul went into hell and preached unto the imprisoned souls, and Jesus told the thief on the cross "To day shalt thou be with me in paradise", we then can conclude that paradise was also the Bosom of Abraham. And we also learn that there was a great gulf fixed between these two compartments. This understanding is essential to what Job speaks of. So let's look at the passage again with this new found information.

Job 14:7-14

7 For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease.

8 Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground;

9 Yet through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant.

10 But man dieth, and wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?

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12 So man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep.

13 O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave, that thou wouldest keep me secret, until thy wrath be past, that thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me!

14 If a man die, shall he live again? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come.

We have learned up to this point that Job says concerning the natural body that it dies and wastes away referring to it going back to the dust of the ground of whence it came. He speaks of the breath of life or ghost departing the body when this takes place and this breath of life we have learned goes back to God who gave it to man. However, this is not referring to the soul of man.

Job then states, "O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave". This word for grave here is the Hebrew word sheol.

sheh-ole'; from <H7592> (sha'al); hades or the world of the dead (as if a subterranean retreat), including its accessories and inmates —Strong's Talking Greek & Hebrew Dictionary

When Job makes this statement he is referring to his soul and wishing it to be in paradise. Job is here again speaking prophetically concerning hell which had two compartments. Job then states, "all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come." Again, a prophetic statement of the resurrection of the dead.

1 Corinthians 15:51-54

51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

52 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.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

This is the understanding of what Job speaks concerning death in Job 14:7-14.

Let us now look at:

Job 17:13-16

13 If I wait, the grave is mine house: I have made my bed in the darkness.

14 I have said to corruption, Thou art my father: to the worm, Thou art my mother, and my sister.

15 And where is now my hope? as for my hope, who shall see it?

16 They shall go down to the bars of the pit, when our rest together is in the dust.

In this passage of scripture we see that Job is speaking of the grave as for the natural body which will then be consumed in decay of which he speaks of 'corruption' and the 'worm' as likened to his family, for he has made the grave his house or rather his dwelling place.

Remember that Job is speaking this directly to those who were there with him of which he says of them in verse 2 "Are there not mockers with me? and doth not mine eye continue in their provocation?" He then again says of them in verse 10 "But as for you all, do ye return, and come now: for I cannot find one wise man among you." It is to them that he then says in verse 16 "They shall go down to the bars of the pit, when our rest together is in the dust." Here Job is speaking that upon the death of all of them "They shall go down to the bars of the pit". This is again speaking of hell.

As concerning this passage of scripture:

Job 19:23-27

23 Oh that my words were now written! oh that they were printed in a book!

24 That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever!

25 For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth:

26 And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God:

27 Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me.

Here we see Job speak and say, "my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth". This statement is either another prophetic utterance given to us by Job or the prophecy of Enoch was known to Job which reads, "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him". (Jude)

Job then continues and speaks of his natural body being destroyed by worms in the grave where the body will turn back into the dust of the ground of whence it came. He then makes another prophetic statement concerning the resurrection of the dead wherein he will receive his glorified body "yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me."

1 Corinthians 15:42-44

42 So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption:

43 It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power:

44 It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.

Let us look at:

Job 21:22-32

22 Shall any teach God knowledge? seeing he judgeth those that are high.

23 One dieth in his full strength, being wholly at ease and quiet.

24 His breasts are full of milk, and his bones are moistened with marrow.

25 And another dieth in the bitterness of his soul, and never eateth with pleasure.

26 They shall lie down alike in the dust, and the worms shall cover them.

27 Behold, I know your thoughts, and the devices which ye wrongfully imagine against me.

28 For ye say, Where is the house of the prince? and where are the dwelling places of the wicked?

29 Have ye not asked them that go by the way? and do ye not know their tokens,

30 That the wicked is reserved to the day of destruction? they shall be brought forth to the day of wrath.

31 Who shall declare his way to his face? and who shall repay him what he hath done?

32 Yet shall he be brought to the grave, and shall remain in the tomb.

Here in verse 22 Job asks “Shall any teach God knowledge?” Answering “seeing he judgeth those that are high.” This chapter was Job speaking of the wicked and how they seemingly prosper. In verse 9 Job says, “Their houses are safe from fear, neither is the rod of God upon them” and in verse 13 “They spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave.” But Job is declaring in verse 22 that God “judgeth those that are high.” Then Job explains in verses 23-26 that one dies “at ease and quiet” while another “in the bitterness of his soul” and when they die both alike will go to the ground of whence they came and the worms will consume there decaying bodies.

Job then states to his accusers in verse 27 “Behold, I know your thoughts, and the devices which ye wrongfully imagine against me.” Job then says that they will then ask him “Where is the house of the prince? and where are the dwelling places of the wicked?”

Job answers the question as to the dwelling places of the wicked with either another prophetic utterance given to us by Job or the prophecy of Enoch was known to Job which reads, “And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him”. (Jude) He speaks of the day of the Lord and the wrath of the Almighty which will be the token of the wicked when God will execute judgment upon all for their ungodly deeds and of their hard speeches that sinners have spoken against him. This resulting in their death.