



TEEN TREE OF LIFE THE NARROW OR THE WIDE GATE

Part 5

April 14, 2019

Before you begin, ask yourself a very important question: Do you believe that Jesus Christ died on The Cross for all of your sins? If you answered yes, you will need to be sure that you are filled with The Holy Spirit. How do you do this? You name your sins to God The Father in His Son's Name. This is called rebound. As a Christian, you must rebound any time you sin. This is taught in 1JOHN 1:9: *If we confess [name] our sins [directly to God], He [God] is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* Now, if you have never believed that Jesus Christ died on The Cross for all of your sins, all you have to do is say to yourself that you believe in Him and you are saved! The Bible verse which teaches us this is ACTS 16:31: *"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved."*

We are continuing to learn about the Narrow Gate which leads to Heaven and the Wide Gate which leads to hell. Before we study about hell, let's look a bit more closely at Heaven! In Hebrew the word "heaven" is "shamyim." In Greek, it's ouranos. Each translates as God's Dwelling Place. **PSA 103:19 (New International Version)** states: ***The Lord has established his throne in heaven, and his kingdom rules over all.*** Heaven may also refer to the endless planets, stars, and galaxies of the universe. King David wrote: ***When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, The moon and the stars, which You have ordained... (PSA 8:3)*** Back in **GENESIS**, God The Son created Heaven and said: ***"Sky! In the middle of the waters; separate water from water!" God made sky. He separated the water under sky from the water above sky. And there it was: he named sky the Heavens; It was evening, it was morning— Day Two. (GEN 1: 6-8)***

We learn a great deal about Heaven and hell in **REV 21:4-8**: ***...and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.*** ***And He who sits on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new."*** ***And He said, Write, for these words are faithful and true.*** ***Then He said to me, "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost. He who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son. But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and [burning sulphur] brimstone, which is the second death."*** It's important to note that ***"the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars"*** refers to unbelievers.

People prefer learning about Heaven – as you would imagine. They don't like learning about hell. It makes them nervous and scared. Now that's completely understandable because it's painful to think about anyone suffering – especially for all of eternity. But the Doctrine of Hell is Biblical. It's God's Word and as Christians (or as unbelievers), we have to learn it because it's part of the message Jesus Christ taught: **“Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it. (MATT 7:13-14)** The word **“destruction”** in its original Greek is “apóleia.” It's translated as “total ruin and loss.”

The Greek word “apóleia” is also used by the apostle John in **JOH 17:6-12**: **“I have manifested Your name to the men whom You gave Me out of the world; they were Yours and You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word. Now they have come to know that everything You have given Me is from You; for the words which You gave Me I have given to them; and they received them and truly understood that I came forth from You, and they believed that You sent Me. I ask on their behalf; I do not ask on behalf of the world, but of those whom You have given Me; for they are Yours; and all things that are Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine; and I have been glorified in them. I am no longer in the world; and yet they themselves are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep them in Your name, the name which You have given Me, that they may be one even as We are. While I was with them, I was keeping them in Your name which You have given Me; and I guarded them and not one of them perished but the son of perdition, so that the Scripture would be fulfilled.”** In this message (which is actually the true Lord's Prayer), Jesus Christ spoke these words lifting His Eyes to Heaven. The word **“perdition”** (“apóleia”) is also translated as destruction. The **“son of perdition”** is Judas Iscariot who, of course, was the apostle who betrayed Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. The wide gate leads to the wide path that leads to hell or destruction. Period!

Other Scriptures are clear that this destruction is eternal and involves suffering. John the Baptist declared it in **MATT 3:11-12 (The Message Bible)**: **“I'm baptizing you here in the river, turning your old life in for a kingdom life. The real action comes next: The main character in this drama—compared to him I'm a mere stagehand—will ignite the kingdom life within you, a fire within you, the Holy Spirit within you, changing you from the inside out. He's going to clean house—make a clean sweep of your lives. He'll place everything true in its proper place before God; everything false he'll put out with the trash to be burned.”** What a cool verse!!

Are you ready for a new word? Let's look at eschatology. It's the study of the last events in human history – events that haven't happened yet. Some of these events include the Rapture, the Second Coming of Christ and the Millennial (Our Lord Jesus Christ's 1,000-year reign on the earth). The Rapture refers to the resurrection of the Royal Family of God at the end of the Church-Age. During the Rapture, the Christians who have already died will rise from the dead to meet him in the air. Those Christians who are alive will also rise to meet Him in the air. Paul taught about the Rapture in **1TH 4:15-18 The Message Bible**: **We [Paul, Silvanus and Timothy] can tell you with complete confidence—we have the Master's [Jesus Christ's] word on it—that when the Master**

comes again to get us, those of us who are still alive will not get a jump on the dead and leave them behind. In actual fact, they'll be ahead of us. The Master himself will give the command. Archangel thunder! God's trumpet blast! He'll come down from heaven and the dead in Christ will rise—they'll go first. Then the rest of us who are still alive at the time will be caught up with them into the clouds to meet the Master. Oh, we'll be walking on air! And then there will be one huge family reunion with the Master. So reassure one another with these words.

It's extremely important to understand that the Rapture of the Church is not the Second Coming of Christ. The Rapture occurs before the Tribulation. The Second Coming (Second Advent) occurs at the end of the Tribulation. There will be a judgment for unbelievers at the end of The Tribulation called The Baptism of Fire. These unbelievers will be removed from the earth and placed in Torments, a compartment of Hades, for 1,000 years until the Last Judgment. This is taught in **MAT 3:11-12** (see above). Our Lord teaches about it **MAT 24:39-44** **The Message Bible: "The Son of Man's Arrival will be like that: Two men will be working in the field—one will be taken, one left behind; two women will be grinding at the mill—one will be taken, one left behind. So stay awake, alert. You have no idea what day your Master will show up. But you do know this: You know that if the homeowner had known what time of night the burglar would arrive, he would have been there with his dogs to prevent the break-in. Be vigilant just like that. You have no idea when the Son of Man is going to show up."**

The apostle Paul wrote about end time events in his letters to the Thessalonians. He founded the church at Thessalonica during his second missionary journey. He had taught there for only three weeks and had to leave suddenly because of the Jews' opposition to his teaching. The Thessalonians had been pagans (non-Christians who worshiped multiple gods). When Paul left them after those three short weeks, they were desperately in need of support, so Paul wrote them two letters to give them encouragement. The two letters were **1THESSALONIANS** and **2THESSALONIANS**.

Every chapter of Paul's first letter ends with him writing about the second coming of Jesus Christ. And in his second letter to them, 18 of its 47 verses deal with this subject: **We ought always to give thanks to God for you, brethren, as is only fitting, because your faith is greatly enlarged, and the love of each one of you toward one another grows ever greater; therefore, we ourselves speak proudly of you among the churches of God for your perseverance and faith in the midst of all your persecutions and afflictions which you endure. This is a plain indication of God's righteous judgment so that you will be considered worthy of the kingdom of God, for which indeed you are suffering. For after all it is only just for God to repay with affliction those who afflict you, and to give relief to you who are afflicted [along with us] and to us as well when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels [the angels of His power] in flaming fire, dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction... (2THESS 1:3-9)** Those people who haven't chosen to "know God" and "those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus" are unbelievers.

Paul also used the Greek word "apóleia" in **2THESS 2:1-3 The Message Bible**: ***Now, friends, read these next words carefully. Slow down and don't go jumping to conclusions regarding the day when our Master, Jesus Christ, will come back and we assemble to welcome him. Don't let anyone shake you up or get you excited over some breathless report or rumored letter from me that the day of the Master's arrival has come and gone. Don't fall for any line like that. Before that day comes, a couple of things have to happen. First, the Apostasy. Second, the debut of the Anarchist, a real dog of Satan. He'll defy and then take over every so-called god or altar. Having cleared away the opposition, he'll then set himself up in God's Temple as "God Almighty." Don't you remember me going over all this in detail when I was with you? Are your memories that short?***

{to be continued}