

Fundamentals of Belief
#16I: Our Eternal Home and Reward

Edited Sermon Transcript
Jon W. Brisby; 4-20-2002

Finally, this afternoon, brethren, we are going to complete Fundamental of Belief number sixteen of the Church of God, The Eternal on the subject of the promises to Israel, or if you want to call it "British Israelism." Over the last eight sermons, we have fulfilled all that I had hoped to accomplish concerning the description of the promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; the promises to David; and the twofold promises of the covenant that God made with Abraham—the Birthright promises as well as the Scepter promises that were given through Jesus Christ. We've accomplished an overview, even in the course of eight sermons, and covered a lot of material to go through that original understanding of what we were taught that gave us the answers to the question about how God did fulfill His promises to Abraham. We certainly have come to find out that God did bind Himself inexorably when He made promises to Abraham. We can have absolute confidence that He did fulfill those promises. So, we've seen the answers to how it is that God has, and is continuing, even today, to fulfill the promises of the blessings of the Birthright among those descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and Ephraim and Manasseh in these last days.

Last time, we focused entirely on the second covenant promise—that of the one seed, Jesus Christ, and the fact that the best and greatest promise that was given to mankind was part of that promise to Abraham. Through Jesus Christ, who was that one seed, all nations of the earth would be blessed. We went through and saw what it is to be spiritual Israelites, those that are going to partake of that Kingdom.

Well, today, in order to fulfill and finally answer the one remaining piece, I want to focus on one loose end, if you want to call it that, within the writing of Mr. Armstrong concerning this fundamental. Let me read through fundamental number sixteen again very quickly in order to get to the point that we want to cover today.

We believe the PROMISES were made to Abraham and his "seed," Christ, and that the Covenants (including the New Covenant), and the promises pertain alone to ISRAEL. That our white, English-speaking peoples of today are enjoying the national phases of the promises—that of MATERIAL blessings—called the "Birthright," which was handed down thru the sons of Joseph, Ephraim and Manasseh, whose descendants we are; but that the "Scepter"—the promise of kings, and the SPIRITUAL phase of the promises, including Christ and salvation thru Him—was given to and shall not depart from Judah of whom are the race we know today as the Jews. [Here's what we want to focus on today.] We believe eternal life is God's gift resting upon the promises made to Abraham and his "seed," Christ, designating this earth (made new), not heaven, as our eternal home and reward. That salvation is thru Christ alone, and not inherited thru the Birthright (right of birth) and that salvation is freely open to Gentiles, who, thru Christ, become Abraham's children and are adopted into the family of Israel and become heirs according to the promises.

So, we want to answer this question today, what is the eternal home and reward? What is our eternal home and reward? Mr. Armstrong taught us that it was the earth, and not heaven. The majority of those on this earth who claim to be Christians absolutely believe that their hope of salvation is that when they die, they're going to go to heaven. They believe that they have an immortal soul now. They believe they already have eternal life within them, encased within a physical flesh body; and that when the body dies, it's just a matter of whether their immortal soul is going to go up to heaven to be with God for eternity, or whether it's going to go down in the middle of the earth with Satan the Devil to be tortured for all eternity. That's the false concept of this world. One of the incredible blessings that we received through the gift of the Truth by the preaching of Mr. Armstrong was an understanding of what the Bible really says about heaven and hell. We understand that it is not man's hope to go to heaven, the third heaven as we call it, at the throne of God. No, that is not what was promised to mankind at all. We're going to go through those scriptures to cover this very fundamental teaching.

Let's begin by noting the fact that Christians are to inherit whatever it was that was promised to Abraham. Did you realize that? Whatever it is that Christians are to inherit is precisely what was promised to Abraham. Let's begin in Galatians 3 and verse 16, and we'll begin to see it. "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises

made." So God made promises to Abraham, which we have been going through in quite a lot of detail. "He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." Christ was that singular seed which was being referred to in that prophecy and in that covenant that God made with Abraham. He had Christ in mind.

Then, notice verse 29: "And if ye be Christ's . . ." Here, the Apostle Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, is speaking to those of the Church at Galatia who were Gentiles. He's preaching this to a Gentile church—those who had been made a part of the very Body of Christ. Notice what he said: "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." What was Paul confirming here? As we saw last time, the Gentiles were added and made a part of Israel. Salvation is not offered to Gentiles. Now, a way for Gentiles to become Israelites *was* the plan of God. That's the thing that most people do not understand at all. A Gentile will never inherit the Kingdom of God, but Gentiles have been offered a way to change from Gentiles into spiritual Israelites. That is the key that the peoples of this world who claim to be Christians do not understand at all. They think that salvation was offered to Gentiles. Well, salvation was, in a way, offered to Gentiles, but only as they are changed into spiritual Israelites. As we saw last time, it is to Israel only that salvation is offered.

"And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Who can be an heir except for one who is a son, who is an offspring, of the one who gives the testament? These Gentiles now, who were not part of the family of Israel, spiritually, then, became part of that family and became heirs "according to the promise." What promise are we talking about? Were those who became a part of the New Testament Church when it was raised up on that first keeping of the Day of Pentecost after the resurrection of Jesus Christ, offered a separate set of promises and rewards that were different from what was offered to Israel? That's what the churches of the world would have you believe—that those who become part of Christ are offered heaven as a reward. Is that what God offered the Church? Not at all. As we just read, the Apostle Paul said that those of the Gentiles who become part of Israel become heirs "according to the promise." What promise are we talking about? The promise that was made to Abraham all the way back at the very beginning.

Notice Romans 15 and verse 8: "Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God . . ." What was Christ's purpose? He was a

minister of the Truth, and it says He was "a minister of the circumcision," which means of those that were set apart—Israel. So Christ was a minister to Israel. He ". . . was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm [What?] the promises made unto the fathers." Did Christ come with a whole new set of promises to give to those who would embrace Christ and become Christians? Did Christ offer a brand new set of promises—an offering for reward, for salvation—or did He come, as it says here, to confirm the promises that were already given hundreds and thousands of years before? That's precisely what He did. ". . . to confirm the promises made unto the fathers." What fathers? Who were these fathers that Paul is referring to here in Romans 15?

Well, notice Acts 3 and verse 13, and we'll see very quickly. "The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers . . ." That tells us very clearly who those fathers are, doesn't it?

The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go.

Here, Peter confirms the definition of the fathers. Those fathers, those patriarchs of old, were none other than Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. So, when Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, said in Romans 15 that Jesus came "to confirm the promises made unto the fathers," he's saying that the hope of salvation, the reward offered to true Christians, is none other than the very promises given to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Pretty straight forward, isn't it?

Then, we must ask the question, what were those promises? What promise are we speaking of that was first offered to Abraham, which then became the promise that passed to all of those who became a part of Christ, and who are considered Abraham's seed? Well, let's notice Genesis 12:6—a scripture that we've already read a few times now, as we've gone through the promises that God made in covenant with Abraham.

And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land. And the [Eternal] appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give [heaven] . . .

Is that what He said? We're defining the very promise that is at issue here, the one that ultimately was fulfilled through Christ and offered to all of those who become a part of the very Body of Christ. What was it? "Unto thy seed will I give this land . . ." What was the promise to those that would become part of Christ? It was land. It was property. It has to do with that which is part of the earth.

. . . Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the [Eternal], who appeared unto him.

Notice Genesis 13 and verse 14:

And the [Eternal] said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.

What was it that God actually promised Abraham, who was Abram at this time? What was it that He promised to that patriarch and to all who would become a part of the Church through Jesus Christ, that one seed? Those who would become heirs of Abraham were going to receive, what? Were they going to receive a place in heaven? No, ". . . all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever."

Genesis 15 and verse 18. What was the expanse of that land, specifically to Israel?

In the same day the [Eternal] made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land [What was the extent?], from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates.

We find out that God was very specific about the boundaries of this property that would become the eternal inheritance of Israel. And what was it? All the way to the Nile River in Egypt to the south, and all the way to the north of Palestine, the Euphrates River. Now, some will say, "Well, that prophecy is not referring to the Church or to Israelites of the future; this was fulfilled at the time of Solomon." And it is true. I even have a map in the back of my Bible that shows the limits of the kingdom of Israel during the height of the reign of Solomon, at the time when Israel was its most blessed and prosperous under God. And it does show that the kingdom

of Solomon did go all the way to the Nile River in the south and to the Euphrates River in the north. At least, these were areas over which he had certain influence. He did not have total domination in every case, but he certainly had a strong influence in the area between those two major rivers. So that was certainly one fulfillment of this prophecy. Was that the total fulfillment? Not at all, as we're going to see.

The Gentiles, you see, become heirs to the Abrahamic promises by becoming spiritual Israelites, even as we saw last time, but let's notice again another example in Ephesians 2 and verse 11. "Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles . . ." Now, right off the bat here, we find out that Paul is showing that a transition took place among those who were called. God commenced this great work among non-Israelites in Asia Minor. He opened up that calling and gave the opportunity for a transition to occur in the lives of Gentiles. What was it? "Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles . . ." Now, wait a minute; so, they didn't continue to be Gentiles? Not at all—not spiritually.

. . . that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands.

So, yes, when we're speaking in the flesh, physically, there are those who were born Israelites—the physical progeny of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Then, there is the rest of the world, the majority of humankind, who did not come out of Jacob, who were not one of the twelve sons, who were not the offspring of one of those patriarchs and, therefore, are Gentiles. Yet, here, we're not talking about the flesh; we're talking about something much more significant. Verse 12: "That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel . . ." What's the topic here? We're talking about the nation of Israel, the commonwealth of Israel; and according to the flesh, all of those who weren't born with that DNA as descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel.

. . . and strangers from the covenants of promise [because the promises that God gave are only to Israelites], having no hope, and without God in the world: But now [Here we find the real topic of what Paul is emphasizing.] in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

Here we have those who were not born Israelites at all, and yet are offered an opportunity to become part of the very Body of Christ. It's a transition for someone who is a physical Gentile to become a spiritual Israelite. Then, notice verse 19:

Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners [They once were. They began by birth as strangers and foreigners—aliens—from the commonwealth of Israel.], but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God.

That means that one who was not an Israelite by birth became an Israelite by conversion, a spiritual Israelite. And as we saw last time, there is no advantage to being a physical-born Israelite when it comes to conversion. If God does not call a physical Israelite, they are a spiritual Gentile. Without a calling and the knowledge of the Truth of God and the gift of the Holy Spirit through baptism, we are all—no matter what our birth—spiritual Gentiles. It required a calling for both physical Israelites and physical Gentiles to come into the body of the Church, the Body of Christ. That is the means by which we become "fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God"—spiritual Israelites.

Galatians 6 and verse 15:

"For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision . . ." No, according to the flesh, whether you were born a fleshly Israelite or a fleshly Gentile, it doesn't make any difference. We're all separated from God without that calling.

For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new [creation]. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon *the Israel of God*.

Was God's dealing with the Israelites done away with the coming of Jesus Christ? Absolutely not. What we have here is a transition to that which is defined as spiritual Israel. It's still a nation; it's still a people; it's still a commonwealth. Now it's a spiritual entity; it's the actual Body of Christ—those that are called, who accept that calling through baptism, who receive the down payment of the Holy Spirit, and therefore become part of the very Body of Christ. That, then, is the nation of spiritual Israel. It is those Israelites of the Spirit, then, that are offered the fulfillment of all of those promises first given to Abraham—the promise of land.

Notice that Abraham did not receive his own reward. Notice John 8 and verse 52: "Then said the Jews unto him, Now we know that thou hast a devil." Here was one of those confrontations that Jesus had with the Jews and the Pharisees.

Then said the Jews unto him, Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death. Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? and the prophets are dead: whom makest thou thyself?

Why is it important to use this scripture today on this topic about the reward of the saved not being heaven? Well, according to this idea that we all have immortal souls that either go up to heaven or down to hell when we die, you would think that if anybody were in heaven, it would certainly be someone as righteous and faithful as Abraham, wouldn't it? If that is true, then why was he still dead at the time of Jesus Christ hundreds of years after his own physical life ended? Here we find that Abraham is dead, and Christ did not refute that. Christ did not contend with the Jews and the Pharisees and say, "Oh no, you're wrong. Abraham is not dead. He died in the flesh, but then his immortal soul wafted right up to heaven, and he's sitting up there on a cloud playing a harp." Is that what Christ said? No, Christ didn't contend with the Jews at all about the fact that Abraham was dead at the time of His own ministry in the first century. Abraham died hundreds of years before; and at the very time of Christ, he was still dead in the grave.

Hebrews 11 and verse 8:

By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.

No, he just obeyed God. He did what God said, even though he couldn't see how it was going to work out. "By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country . . ." It was the land of promise. It was the very possession which God offered as a great reward, and yet to Abraham, it didn't feel like home at all.

By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: [Then, verse 13.] These all [Who? Abraham, Isaac, and

Jacob.] died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

How phenomenal was the faith that these men had? They took so much comfort in the promises that God gave even though they knew they would never see the fulfillment of them in their own lifetimes. God made these long-range promises that would be fulfilled hundreds and even thousands of years down the road, and yet these men were willing to change their lives and follow and serve that God when they knew they were not going to see the fulfillment of those things in their own lives. To them, the Promised Land was not home. God sent Abraham to that area of the world, but it was ruled by the Canaanites. He never felt safe there. He lived in tabernacles. He lived in temporary dwellings. To Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, that Promised Land was never really their home turf. They sojourned in the Promised Land, but it was never home to them. How phenomenal was the orientation of those men who were willing to sacrifice so much, believing in the promises of that which God was going to do hundreds and thousands of years after their death? So, God made the promise to give Abraham and his progeny the land. He never saw it fulfilled at all. He didn't receive that reward. And I can tell you, if Abraham were sitting up in heaven right now, he still wouldn't have received it. But Abraham isn't up in heaven; he's still dead. He was dead at the time of Christ, and guess what? He's still dead today—still in the grave.

The resurrection from the dead, my dear brethren, is man's only hope for salvation. Man does not have an immortal soul. We've been through that in earlier fundamentals, so I don't want to go into great detail, but so many of these Fundamentals of Belief do overlap. You can't help but cover some of the same ground in the course of putting all of these pieces together.

Let's notice 1 Corinthians 15 and verse 12. The resurrection from the dead is man's only hope for salvation.

Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?

So, obviously, there was a contingent within the Corinthian church, and people were beginning to second-guess Christ's resurrection, even a few years after His death. People began to rewrite history. Isn't that just what human beings do? There

were those that crept in who didn't really believe that Christ had walked among them, had died and was resurrected, and became our High Priest. They were already teaching against the doctrine of the resurrection from the dead and against Jesus Christ's own resurrection. ". . . how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?" Paul is having to contend with this false doctrine which crept in. "But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen." He's saying, if there's no resurrection for the saints—for those faithful members who die in Christ—if there's no resurrection of the dead, if that's not how God is going to save, then you're saying there was no resurrection for Jesus Christ either, because He was the first of the firstfruits. Christ was the forerunner. That which happened to Him tells us precisely, then, the path that is going to be walked by all who are a part of the firstfruits harvest. Christ is the first of the firstfruits. We understand that in the keeping of Pentecost.

But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen [Paul was challenging their logic.]: And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.

That's right. If Christ was not risen from the dead, then there was no hope of salvation for mankind. It was not the death of Jesus Christ that gave mankind hope for salvation; it was his resurrection from the dead. It wasn't just that Christ lived a perfect life, was put in the grave, and died for our sins, never having committed sin. If He had not been resurrected from that grave, what good would it have been for all of us? The real hope of salvation was in Christ's resurrection from the dead. It was a picture of that which would be experienced by all mankind—a resurrection of the just and the unjust. We've got an entire fundamental coming up on the resurrections—fundamental number nineteen—so I'm not going to go into great detail on that, but just an overview for that which we need today for this topic. "And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain." Yes, the pillars of Christianity stand on the resurrection of the dead, beginning with Jesus Christ.

Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ . . .

Oh yes, if it's not true that there's a resurrection from the dead and that Christ was risen, then it means that Paul and all of the other apostles were liars because that's precisely what they were claiming to have known by personal witness. So, if

these people who were standing up in the church and saying that there is no resurrection from the dead were right, that means that all of the apostles, including Paul, were absolute liars.

. . . because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. [And then, verse 18.] Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are . . . [up in heaven, playing their harp, sitting on a cloud, preening their wings. Is that what it says here? No.] Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ *are perished*.

If there's no resurrection from the dead, those that died in Christ are perished. Without the resurrection, brethren, we do not have immortal souls that are either up in heaven or down in hell; we have beings that have perished. If there is no resurrection from the dead, there is no life after death for humanity. It was the first and greatest lie ever told by Satan to Eve and Adam in the garden, when he said, "Has God told you that you're not going to die? Don't pay any attention to God, because He knows that you are already immortal." That was the lie that Satan told. He told Eve and Adam that they already had immortal souls. They were in control of their own destiny. They already possessed everlasting life. It was the great lie that humanity continues to buy into, and which is a part of almost all, if not every, religious belief around the world. "Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." No, if there's no resurrection from the dead, my dear brethren, we don't have a lot of immortal souls floating around; what we have is a lot of eternally dead people in the grave. Without a resurrection from the dead, there is no life.

Matthew 22 and verse 31: "But as touching the resurrection of the dead . . ." Now, here that's the very topic of what Christ is going to address.

But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying [So, Christ even refers back to the Old Testament, which were the scriptures that they had at the time.], I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? [What is Christ saying, then? Why is He bringing up this example?] God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.

Why would God, hundreds of years after the death of the patriarchs, claim to be their God if He had no intent of granting life after death in the flesh? Why would He still identify Himself, one of His titles, as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—dead guys that were in the grave—unless there is a hope of life after death? Those three men and hundreds and thousands of others are going to be alive again, but not because they had an immortal soul that wafted up to heaven when they drew their last breath in the flesh thousands of years ago. No, it's because they're still in the grave, waiting for the promise of a resurrection from the dead—the very example of that which Christ fulfilled first. He was the first resurrected from the dead, but He will not be the only one.

1 Thessalonians 4 and verse 16: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven . . ." This tells you exactly how God is going to bring it about and gives us an indication of when the first resurrection, as we call it, is going to occur. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout . . ." Now, first we find out that Jesus Christ is going to be leaving heaven, and He's coming to the earth, which is very significant.

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.

The dead in Christ shall rise first. Now, we believe and accept at face value what the Bible says, which tells you that the dead in Christ—including those patriarchs—were still in the grave, have still been in the grave, are still in the grave, and will be in the grave until this fulfillment. Not until Christ comes from heaven with those mighty angels, will that first resurrection from the dead occur, from which, for the first time, a human being other than Jesus Christ will experience life after death in the Spirit. Now, there were some in antiquity who were resurrected to the flesh. Lazarus was one of them, but they lived out however many more years—the Bible doesn't tell us—and they died, and they're back in the grave again, awaiting also the resurrections that were promised, that to spirit life, to everlasting life.

"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: Then we which are alive and remain . . ."—those that are still alive on the earth and who are in Christ, who have received and have been guided by that Holy Spirit, who haven't quenched it in their lives, but have been faithful.

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.

Now, if you believe the concepts of most Christian churches, or those that claim to be Christian, and especially the rapture theory, they will quote this passage here and say, "See, Christ is coming down out of heaven. There's going to be this rapture and all of the saints who've done good are going to be resurrected, they're going to meet Christ in the air, and then they're all going to go back to heaven together." Is that what it says? Actually, you see, this passage in 1 Thessalonians doesn't tell us where they go after they meet Christ in the air. We have to look to other passages in the Bible to find out where they go. Why would Christ come down, gather up these resurrected beings, and then turn around and go back to heaven? Well, I guess He could if that's what the plan was, but that is not what God had in mind; and it's certainly not the fulfillment of the promises made to Abraham—that those in Christ are going to inherit land. There is no land, no physical earth, up in heaven. It's a spiritual domain. It's the very throne of God, and it's not what was promised to the saints.

No, once we meet Christ in the clouds, do we all go up to heaven, or is it someplace else? Well, let's first begin by reading John 3 and verse 13. That will tell us very precisely that when Christ does come down in His Second Coming and gather those of the first resurrection—those that have either died in Christ or have been changed in the twinkling of an eye—they're going to go up, yes, into this atmosphere of the earth, which is called the first heaven. But then where are they going to go? First, we find out that John 3:13 says, "And no man hath ascended up to heaven . . ." Jesus Christ said, at least at the very time of His ministry when He walked in the flesh on this earth, ". . . no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven." Yes, Christ was the only one because He came from the throne of His heavenly Father. He was the God of the second part. He divested Himself of His glory and became born of flesh and blood. He was the only being, in the flesh, who had ever seen or been in heaven, and He returned to the very throne of His Father after His resurrection; but no other human being has ever experienced that opportunity. ". . . no man hath ascended up to heaven . . ."

Minimally, at the time of Christ, we can say that none of those patriarchs who had been faithful to God—including Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and David—had

ascended up to heaven. Either that, or Christ was a liar right here. But now, some might say, "Well, maybe they stayed in the grave until Christ came and was resurrected, but then after that, all of these other patriarchs who had died as saints got to go to heaven with Him." Is that what we believe? Well, I'm going to give you a scripture in just a moment, but let me finish something else here.

. . . no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up [And so He was, on that stake. Verse 15.]: That whosoever believeth in him . . .

We're talking about the faithful. Those that ultimately become the saints, are those who believe. ". . . whosoever believeth in him should not [go to hell and writhe in torment forever and ever and ever] . . ." Is that what it says? No, ". . . whosoever believeth in him *should not perish, but have eternal life.*" What do we find out here? Guess what? Those who don't believe are not going to have eternal life. Pretty simple, isn't it? We don't all possess eternal life now. Eternal life is a gift that's going to be given only to those who pass muster in the judgment and who prove that they are going to honor God, obey His laws, and never become a rebellious being like Satan the Devil was. Eternal life is going to be given only to those who pass the tests. Those who don't pass the tests will not receive eternal life. They're going to receive eternal death. They're going to be dead—no memory of them left. That's part of the very mercy of God. Verse 16:

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.

And I think it's amazing that the single, probably most-quoted scripture of all of these that are a part of "churchianity," or those that are professing Christians, is John 3:16. If you watch any sports on television, you see these people that are doing their ministries or trying to do their work for the Lord, holding up their signs so that they can get on the TV cameras. How many times do you see "John 3:16" up in the stands in a stadium? They're trying to spread the gospel of the Messiah, and they don't even believe what it says.

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.

If they believed that very scripture that they quote so often, they would understand that they do not now have an immortal soul—they do not now possess everlasting life—and they will not have everlasting life, a spirit body, unless they're faithful. Those who are not, those who fail the test, are mercifully going to be extinguished. So the idea that we have an immortal soul that either goes down to hell or wafts up to heaven is a total misnomer. More than that, brethren, it's the outright lie that Satan first told to mankind in the Garden of Eden.

Now, Acts 2 and verse 32. Here, Peter speaking:

This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. [So, Peter confirms here that he was a witness.] Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the Promise of the Holy [Spirit], he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. For *David is not ascended into the heavens . . .*

What does this tell us? Now, this wasn't even while Christ was still alive. Christ was crucified; He was buried; He was resurrected. He was sitting at the right hand of God Almighty, the Father, as our High Priest and Advocate. If the idea is that, "Well, Abraham, David, Isaac, and Jacob stayed in the grave until Christ was resurrected, but then they went up to heaven," why is it that Peter, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, this many months or years down the road after the resurrection of Christ, is still saying that David was not in heaven? I thought David was a man after God's own heart. Yes, he was guilty of a lot of heinous things in his lifetime. God forgave him because David repented from the heart. So, certainly, if there was anyone who was eligible to be a saint, to receive the reward of the saved, it should be David, shouldn't it? But here, months after the resurrection of Jesus Christ, Peter says, ". . . David is not ascended into the heavens." What's wrong? Maybe God just messed up. Maybe He overlooked it and forgot to bring him up. Or, is it true that David is still waiting in the physical grave for his resurrection which is yet to come? Yes, brethren, that's precisely what it is. Human beings do not have immortal souls. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, and all of the holy prophets and those men that God used who are going to be there, are yet awaiting their opportunity for eternal life. They do not now have it. They are in the grave, and they're waiting.

The Kingdom of God, my dear brethren, will be on the earth, and not in heaven. Let's notice Revelation 19 and verse 11. Again, we're going to cover a lot of this in much more detail when I get to fundamental number twenty, which is on the

subject of the return of Christ and the Kingdom of God. Today, I just want to cover that which we need for the purpose of verifying our assertion, as Mr. Armstrong gave us, that the home and the reward of the saved is going to be earth, and not heaven. Let's look at Revelation 19:11:

And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him . . .

Now, wait a minute. We've got an entourage that's starting up at the very throne of God in heaven, but they're not staying there. They're leaving heaven, and they're going somewhere else.

. . . the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite [What?] the nations . . .

Where are the nations? He's talking about the nations of men who live, dwell, and rule on this earth. Christ, with His army of angels, is going to leave heaven and come to the earth. This is a prophecy for the future, the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

. . . that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them [Who? The nations.] with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

As we're going to see when we get to fundamental number twenty, He does carry both titles—King of Kings and Lord of Lords. He currently holds, and is exercising, the capacity of Lord of Lords—our Great High Priest. That is a religious office, the office of High Priest. That, He now possesses and is exercising. What He does not yet exercise is His title of King, because He has not yet come into possession of His Kingdom; but I don't want to get off on that.

Zechariah 14 and verse 3: "Then shall the [Eternal] go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle." Now, here, we're going to answer the question, what happens to Christ and those resurrected saints after they rise and meet Christ in the air? Do they turn around and go up to heaven together? Zechariah 14 tells us.

Then shall the [Eternal] go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. [This is talking about that which we call the Day of the Lord.] And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives . . .

Do we accept that at face value, or not? Christ is coming down with these hosts of angels. At that very moment when He reaches this atmosphere, the first resurrection occurs and those that have died in Christ, along with those who are changed in a twinkling of an eye, rise with new spirit bodies to meet Him in the air. But then what happens? Well, if Christ then turns around and goes up to heaven, how is He going to stand with His feet on the Mount of Olives? No, the saints are resurrected, they join Him in the atmosphere, and then together, as a huge, incredible, collective entourage, they're going to descend into Jerusalem on the Mount of Olives.

. . . his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.

Then, notice Revelation 11 and verse 15—more detail about this specific event, the literal Day of the Lord, the return of Christ.

And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.

You see, it's only at this point in time that Christ will become the ruling King of the earth. Right now, it is still ruled by Satan the Devil, whom God has left in that office for reason, until the time of His choosing. The Father is the only one who knows when the call for that change in power, of transition of that authority—of that throne—is going to take place. Christ is even yet waiting for the Father to give Him

that Kingdom. ". . . The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord . . ." Where is Christ going to be ruling, then? Up in heaven? Some might say, "Well, He's going to be ruling over the kingdoms of the world, but He's going to be doing it from afar, up in heaven." Is that true? First, we find that it is the kingdoms of this world over which He is going to be the King, the Sovereign. ". . . and he shall reign for ever and ever." Sounds like that's a kingdom that's not going to end. It's not just a temporary assignment that Christ is going to be over the kingdoms of the world on this earth, but then, after a few months, He gets to go back to heaven.

Luke 1 and verse 31. This was a scripture we read several sermons back, in relation to that promise of the very throne of David.

And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him [What?] the throne of his father David.

Where is the throne of David? Where was it before? Was it not on the earth? David, as king of Israel, ruled on this earth. Christ is going to possess that very throne. He's going to exercise His authority as the Sovereign of the entire earth, sitting upon the very throne of David. As we said before, brethren, that is a throne that is still in existence today. It's not a vacant throne, as Mr. Armstrong said. God did not leave that throne of David empty. Christ is not going to come back and take it out of mothballs and wipe away cobwebs. No, it's an active throne today, and He is going to take possession of that throne away from whatever human being sits on it today, or will be sitting on it at the time of His return. He will consolidate the authority, not only as King of Israel, but as King of all nations of the earth. It will be with the throne of David in Jerusalem from where He will rule.

. . . the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever [He is the King of Israel. He will be the King of Israel.]; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

That's a kingdom, brethren, that's going to exist on this earth, not up in heaven at the throne of God. It's going to be here, and Christ is going to be here reigning.

Notice also, the righteous were not promised heaven, but the earth. Notice Proverbs 10 and verse 30: "The righteous shall never be removed . . ." So, we're

having a comparison made here between the righteous and the wicked. "The righteous shall never be removed: but the wicked shall not inhabit the earth." Now, what does that tell us? If the wicked shall not inhabit the earth, then by contrast, the righteous *will* inhabit the earth. If the hope and the reward of the saved, of those who are righteous—those who do their best to live a righteous life, obey God and live up to His requirements—is to inherit the earth, then what about all of this talk about going to heaven? Has God preserved the best reward for somebody special, and the righteous aren't even good enough to receive it and go to heaven? Or, was it never His intent to offer a home in heaven to the saved? That's precisely it.

Psalm 37 and verse 10:

For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be. But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.

We're talking about a reward, brethren, not in heaven, but on earth, for those who manifest the fruits of the Holy Spirit. Meekness is one of the fruits of God's Holy Spirit. One cannot manifest true meekness unless they are led by that Spirit, the very mind of Jesus Christ. So, how is it that one who is truly manifesting a fruit of the Holy Spirit in the way that he lives, is going to miss out on the great reward of having a home in heaven, and be relegated to being on this earth? Unless the home of the saints was intended by God all along to be the earth, and never in heaven. Matthew 5 and verse 5 is a repeat of that which we find in Psalm 37, for Christ Himself said, "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." You see, the words of Jesus Christ and of God focus human beings on their reward as being the earth. God is going to do something phenomenal in remaking this earth through a thousand-year reign of Jesus Christ. It is going to be a paradise. It is going to be a place where human beings can find, for the first time, the fullness of every reward they ever could have imagined. Unity, oneness, peace, prosperity, and every good thing are going to be a part of that Kingdom.

Revelation 5 and verse 9. What about this idea that, "Well, God can rule the earth from heaven, and the saints are really going to be with Him. So, yes, there's going to be a rulership over people on the earth, over the nations, but we're going to do it from afar, from our 'home' in heaven"? Well, what does it say here in Revelation 5, verse 9?

And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; And hast made us [Who are we talking about? The saints—those who receive their eternal reward, eternal life.] unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign . . .

From heaven, over the earth. Is that what it says? No, ". . . we shall reign *on the earth*." Where will Jesus Christ and those who are going to be part of that God-Family—given eternal life, holding offices as kings and priests under Jesus Christ—going to be? They're going to be reigning. ". . . and we shall reign on the earth." That's where all the action is going to be. It's going to be on the earth. It's where Christ and His family of rulers are going to be exercising that dominion over the paradise of God, which is going to be created under the very auspices of that High Priest and King. He is going to bring about an incredible revitalization and a recovery of the surface of the earth, and all are going to be governed by the perfect Law of God, not the defective, criminal laws of men.

Revelation 21 and verse 1. As Mr. Armstrong said in that fundamental, "We believe eternal life is God's gift resting upon the promises made to Abraham and his 'seed,' Christ, designating this earth (made new) . . ." So where do we get the idea that the earth is going to be made new? Well, right here in Revelation 21. "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away . . ." What heaven are we speaking of? Are we talking about the throne of God? Is God remaking His throne from where He sits and rules all of the universe? No.

You see, there are three different manifestations of the word "heaven" in the Bible. We don't have time to look up all of those, but there are many examples that show that heaven is first referred to as the atmosphere around this earth in which the birds fly and the kites fly and the 747s fly. That's one heaven. Then, there is a heaven outside of the atmosphere of this earth where the moon, the stars and the other astrobodies are. That is what we refer to as the "second heaven." Then, there is the very throne of God, which we refer to as the "third heaven"—very distinct and unreachable by man.

Man has been able to get out of the realm in which God has placed him and venture into the second heaven. We just had the return of another space shuttle from

the second heaven, back to earth yesterday. We now have a space station up there in the second heaven. It's out of the realm of where God intended man to be. Because there's no oxygen, there's no way for man to survive there. Yet, man is very ingenious and has been able to do all kinds of things, including going to the moon, and now attempting to establish a permanent station in the second heaven; but man will never reach the throne of God. Man will never be able to penetrate that which God has preserved for Himself, His throne, which is totally out of the reach of humankind.

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth . . ." So, we're talking about that atmosphere around the earth, which gives us our oxygen to breath.

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 . . .

This new city, new Jerusalem, is it going to be in heaven? Is that where the saints are going to be forever with God, in perfect harmony and unity? No, we're talking about a new city that, yes, is going to be created at the throne of God, but it's going to come down from God out of heaven. It's going to leave heaven and come down to the earth.

. . . 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.

Yes, a time in which Christ will have fulfilled His purpose, His responsibility, of the salvation of humanity, and then it's all going to be turned back over to the Father. Then, for the first time, the Father Himself, out of His throne in heaven, is going to come down and dwell with the saints—the expansive Family of God which has been created.

That, brethren, is what is going to be kept. That is what is going to be taught to all humanity when God does it Himself. For those, then, who have been called to be a part of the Church, the very Body of Christ now, they understand that our eternal reward is to be with Christ as spirit beings to rule this earth and all of those that will live in the flesh in that Millennial reign.

Now, what about some of these misunderstood texts that will always be turned to by those who want to support the idea that humankind goes to heaven? Let's look at one of them quickly here. John 14 and verse 1:

Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.

So, those of the "immortal soul doctrine" and the "heaven and hell belief" will tell you, "Well, see, this proves that God is creating all of these great estates at His throne in heaven to be received by all who die in Christ. They're going to go up to heaven as spirit beings and have their great mansion. They're going to be with God because Christ said, 'I go to prepare a place for you.' We knew He was going to heaven, so obviously, He's preparing a place for us in heaven to be with Him." Is that what this text is saying? Well, let's ask the question, where is the Father's house? Do we assume automatically that the Father's house is in heaven? That's what a lot of human beings do. They say, "Well, God the Father lives in heaven. The house represents His abode, so it must be that the Father's house is in heaven, right?"

Well, let's look at John 2 and verse 16, and see. What do we read? "And said unto them that sold doves . . ." Now here, Christ was confronting the money changers. What did He say, what did He do, and where was He? "And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise." Where was Christ when He made this statement? He was in the temple. What was it that Jesus Christ referred to as "my Father's house"? It was not His throne in the third heaven at all. No, it was the temple. Heaven is nowhere called "the Father's house." Look through the Bible. You're not going to find it. There is no example anywhere in the Bible where heaven is called "the Father's house," but there are a lot of other places where the Father's house is called "the temple on earth," which was a reflection of the very throne of God. Heaven is nowhere called "the Father's house." It was the temple on earth that had many rooms.

What were those rooms reflective of? Offices, responsibilities, authorities that would be given to the saints. That's what those mansions are—offices. The

Kingdom of God is being prepared for our High Priest in heaven. Yes, when He told them that He was going to prepare a place for them, He was going back to heaven after the resurrection to receive His Kingdom and to prepare it. But then, as we've already seen, that New Jerusalem is going to be brought down to earth out of heaven. So, Christ is coming to establish His Kingdom on the earth. That's where Christ is going to be. So when He says, "I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also", what's He talking about? Where is Christ going to be? He's going to be reigning on earth, and the saints who are part of that God-Family are also going to be reigning with Him on earth, not up in heaven. The Kingdom of God is being prepared by our High Priest in heaven, but it will be brought to this earth where He will rule.

Notice also Luke 23 and verse 39:

And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss.

Now here, verse 42—the other scripture that will be pointed to as a justification of human beings going to heaven.

And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.

"See," we'll be told," there's the confirmation that this malefactor, this thief on the cross next to Christ, was promised by Christ that, after they both died on the stake that day, they were both going to be together in heaven." Isn't that what Christ said? He said, "Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise." So after he died, his immortal soul was going to go with Christ, and they were going to be in heaven together. Is that what it says? Did the thief really go to heaven that very day when he died? Now, you know the story. The Roman soldiers came by and broke the legs of those two thieves on the stake. Christ was already dead. He had been thrust in the side with a spear, but the other two were still alive. So they broke their legs so that they would die faster, but all three of them died that day. Before sundown on that day, they were all dead. Now, did that thief go to heaven that very

day? Well, he could have only gone to heaven if Christ went to heaven. Certainly, he didn't go without Christ, did he? Do you think if there was ever a hope for man to go to heaven, that the thief on the stake would have beaten Christ there?

Let's answer this and put this one to bed by virtue of finding out what happened to Jesus Christ. You see, Christ didn't even go to heaven that day. If this is a correct translation, when He said, "Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise", and if that "paradise" is heaven, and if it's true that what Christ is saying is, that very day when they all died, that one thief was going to be with Christ—they were both going to go up to heaven with their immortal souls—it rules out the understanding that Christ did not even go to heaven that day. What happened to Jesus Christ? He was three days and three nights in the grave. Christ did not go to heaven as soon as He died on the stake.

Notice 1 Corinthians 15 and verse 3:

For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received [the Apostle Paul speaking], how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he *rose again the third day* according to the scriptures.

What scriptures? Those from the Old Testament that prophesied of His resurrection, confirmed even by the gospel accounts of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. He was dead in the grave according to the sign of Jonah, three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. So Christ didn't go to heaven on the day that He was crucified. If Christ didn't go to heaven, how could the thief have beaten Him there? It just didn't happen.

And this is one that gets people. Did you actually realize that Christ was in hell? Jesus Christ went to hell. Did you know that? That's probably not a good one to teach your kids to tell at their parochial schools, but it's true. Let's notice Acts 2, verse 31:

He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.

Now, what does this tell us? Peter says that Christ's soul was not left in hell. You can't be left there unless you were there first, at least for some given period of time. So Christ was in hell, but what is this hell? It's the Greek word that means "grave." It is the term that's used most frequently and interpreted by the *King James* translators as "hell," but it simply means "the grave." Christ went to the grave—not just a physical body with an immortal soul that went up to heaven while His body went into the ground. No, Christ was in the ground three days and three nights; and He was not raised, His eternal life was not restored to Him, until seventy-two hours after the time He was put in the tomb—sundown. This term "soul" is the same as "the body." It was in the grave three days and three nights.

The true explanation, then, of Luke 23 and verse 43 is the correct comma placement. "And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise." That is not a proper rendering from the original Greek. The original Greek reads literally, "Verily I say to you today, with me shalt thou be in the paradise." What was Christ telling this thief on the stake next to Him? He was certifying that he was going to be there. He had the attitude, the orientation, that was going to make him worthy of salvation. He was going to be in the paradise of God with Christ, but He didn't say that it was going to be that very day. Christ Himself didn't even go to heaven that very day. No, it's the comma placement. In the *King James* translation, if you just move the comma, it all makes sense. "Verily I say unto thee To day [comma], shalt thou be with me in paradise." And actually, just change that around. ". . . thou shalt be with me in paradise." It makes it consistent with the original Greek. That can all be verified; just get a Greek lexicon. "Verily I say unto thee To day . . ." Christ was saying it to him that day, but speaking of an event that was going to be fulfilled years later in the future. "Verily I say unto thee To day, thou shalt be with me in paradise." That's what Christ was saying to this thief on the stake. So that answers the other major contention that is brought up to try and justify human beings going to heaven.

In closing, brethren, we don't have time to go through other examples, but some of the other ones that are brought up are the assertions that Enoch and Elijah were two men who went to heaven. Well, we already saw, did we not, that Christ said no man has ascended up to heaven. So, obviously, that tells us right there, Enoch and Elijah did not go to heaven. Either that, or we believe that Christ was a liar. What's the explanation? It's part of that which I already gave you. Let's notice the example of Elijah very quickly.

2 Kings 2 and verse 11:

And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

Now, is this where God took Elijah? Is this where he died, and then his immortal soul was taken on this chariot of fire up into heaven to the throne of God? No, if you'll remember, as I already mentioned to you, a good number of the uses of the word "heaven" as translated in the *King James*, refer not to the throne of God at all, but to the atmosphere that surrounds this earth. That's precisely what happened. God moved, He translated, Elijah. Elijah did not even die at this time. If we had time to go through it, I could show you the scriptures where Elijah still showed up on the scene alive in the flesh after this event happened. All that occurred here was that God moved him. This was the end of Elijah's commission. In essence, God sent him into retirement, but he wasn't even dead at this time. He created this incredible, miraculous manifestation. He took Elijah on this fiery chariot up into the skies, and moved him to another place on the earth where he lived out the rest of his life. That's what happened. This is no proof whatsoever that Elijah went to the throne of God with an immortal soul. Otherwise, Jesus Christ Himself, who said that no man has ascended up to heaven, is an absolute liar and we're not going to call Jesus Christ a liar. So is it true of the example of Enoch, whom God translated. It simply means that He moved him. It doesn't have anything to do with him dying and going to heaven. Not at all.

What about the example of Lazarus and the rich man in Luke 16, verse 19? We are not going to go through that this afternoon. I did two detailed sermons on that very topic on the Last Great Day three years ago in Townsend, Tennessee—the Feast of Tabernacles of '99. Anybody who is interested in a detailed explanation of this parable of Lazarus and the rich man, which many attempt to use as an explanation for the heaven and hell fallacy, certainly feel free to order those tapes from the church office. I'm also going to cover this, however, in some of the future fundamentals about the Kingdom of God and Jesus Christ's return. So that, brethren, does finally complete this very long topic that we've been covering on fundamental number sixteen regarding the promises to Israel.