

# ETERNITY AND MAN LESSON 5

By Jon Quinn

The fulfillment of God's plan will occur after this universe ceases to be. It is to be replaced by a new system, which God calls "the new heavens and the new earth". It promises to be a wonderful place.

We are here only a short time. Even a lifetime of 100 years is not long when compared to eternity. The Bible describes the brevity of life as *a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away* James 4:14. The question follows: "What will eternity be like for me?".

## TEMPORARY OR ETERNAL?

The Bible teaches that some things are temporary. They exist for a time and then cease to be. Other things are eternal and will always be. But many people give the things, which are destined to pass away priority. They trade what would have given them eternal joy for that which lasts for a moment. What a foolish and fateful decision!

*2 Corinthians 4:16-18-Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. 17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, 18 while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.*

For example, there are two kinds of wealth. Material wealth lasts for only a time; "You cannot take it with you." Then there are spiritual treasures, which will never fade away but only grow more precious, even after this world has ceased to be!

*Matthew 16:19-21-And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." 20 Then He commanded His disciples that they should tell no one that He was Jesus the Christ. 21 From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day.*

*1 Timothy 6:17-19-Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy. 18 Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share, 19 storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.*

Also, there is the universe in which we live. It is an amazing place with its countless galaxies. But it is temporary. On the other hand, there is a new heavens and earth to come, an unending spiritual realm, which will far outshine this present system.

Hebrews 13:14-*For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come.*

1 Peter 1:4-*to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you,*

2 Peter 3:12-*looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat?*

Revelation 21:1-*Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also, there was no more sea.*

We see the marvelous works of humanity. There are works of art, machines and buildings. But none of these, last forever. Then there are God's eternal works, such as the eternal city and His eternal Word.

2 Peter 3:10-*But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.*

1 Peter 1:23-*having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever,*

Hebrews 11:20-*By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.*

We see people anxious to reverse or at least slow down the aging process as time takes its toll on their bodies. We also read about spiritual bodies, which God will prepare for us in eternity. These will never wear out or die.

2 Corinthians 5:1-*For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.*

1 Corinthians 15:50-53-*Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. 51 Behold, I tell 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 trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. 53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.*

## THE HUMAN SPIRIT

The human creature has both a physical and a spiritual side. The body is only the temporary abode of the soul, or spirit. The words "soul" and "spirit" each have several different uses in the Bible, and it must be determined from the context as to their meaning. We shall consider examples where these words are

used to refer to that very real part of each one of us that will never cease to exist.

God created man as a dual being: body and spirit.

*Genesis 2:7-And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.*

*Zechariah 12:1-The burden of the word of the LORD against Israel. Thus says the LORD, who stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him:*

*1 Corinthians 6:20-For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.*

The spiritual part of man survives death and continues to have consciousness and identity.

*Matthew 22:32-I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living."*

*Luke 16:19-31-"There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day. 20 But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate, 21 desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. 22 So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. 23 And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. 24 Then 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 in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented. 26 And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.' 27 Then he said, 'I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father's house, 28 for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment.' 29 Abraham said to him, 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.' 30 And he said, 'No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.' 31 But he said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.' "*

*Luke 23:43-And Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise."*

*Philippians 1:20-24-according to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ will be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death. 21 For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain. 22 But if I live on in the flesh, this will mean fruit from*

*my labor; yet what I shall choose I cannot tell. 23 For I am hard pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. 24 Nevertheless to remain in the flesh is more needful for you.*

The place where our spirits go to await the resurrection is referred to as "Sheol" or "Hades"

*Psalm 16:10-For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.*

*Luke 16:23-And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.*

*1 Corinthians 15:42-44-So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. 43 It is sown in dishonor, 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.*

## JUDGMENT

Following the resurrection there will be a final judgment of all. This judgment is not for the purpose of determining guilt or innocence; this will have already been determined. Rather, it is for the pronouncing of reward or punishment. It is final; there is no higher court to which to appeal.

*Hebrews 9:27- And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment,*

*John 12:48-He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him--the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day.*

It will be just...

*Romans 2:5-8-But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, 6 who "will render to each one according to his deeds": 7 eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality; 8 but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness--indignation and wrath,*

...and according to one's life's deeds

*2 Corinthians 5:10-For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.*

Tragically, many will be unprepared.

*Hebrews 10:27-but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries.*

By God's grace some will be ready for judgment and eternity to follow

*1 John 4:17-Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world.*

## HEAVEN

With newly fashioned, incorruptible bodies like Jesus' own glorified body, the redeemed of the ages will enter into heaven.

*1 John 3:2-Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.*

Christians live in anticipation of Heaven, where they are enrolled as citizens

*Philippians 3:20-For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,*

Heaven is described as an eternal place where the saved dwell with Christ and the Father

*Matthew 25:46-"And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."*

*John 14:1-3-"Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. 2 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. 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.*

*Revelation 21:3-And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God.*

It is a place of rest, which does not mean that there will be little activity, but that the activity will be refreshing and enjoyable, not burdensome and tiresome

*Hebrews 4:1-Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it.*

It is the inheritance of the faithful and the home of the victorious

*1 Peter 1:3-5-Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*

*Revelation 21:7-He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.*

There is no death or sorrow there, but rather it is filled with light and glory

*Revelation 21:4-And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."*

*Revelation 21:23-25-The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light. 24 And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it. 25 Its gates shall not be shut at all by day there shall be no night there.*

In its' midst stands the tree of life.

*Revelation 22:14-Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city.*

Small wonder that it is called a "better" place

*Hebrews 11:10-for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.*

*Hebrews 11:16-But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.*

## HELL

All will be raised:

*John 5:28-29-Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice 29 and come forth--those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.*

Those who have rejected God's grace and light have chosen eternal darkness for themselves. They will reap what they have sown

*Galatians 6:7-8-Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. 8 For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.*

Jesus tells us that hell is everlasting.

*Matthew 25:46-"And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."*

It is a dark place far from God and all that is good.

*Matthew 25:30-And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'*

*2 Thessalonians 1:7-9-and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, 8 in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 These shall be punished with*

*everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,*

Jesus described it as a place of fire and plainly warned of sorrow there.

*Matthew 13:42-and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.*

*Matthew 25:30-And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'*

*Romans 2:8-9-but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness--indignation and wrath, 9 tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek;*

It is a place of hopelessness where there is no rest.

*Ephesians 2:12-that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.*

*Revelation 14:11-And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name."*

*Revelation 20:10-The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.*

It is described as the second death.

*Revelation 20:14-Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.*

We do not enjoy thinking of such a place, but that does not change the facts. We do rejoice that Jesus was willing to save us from this by His own suffering. Hell can be avoided by loving and trusting in Jesus!

## CONCLUSION

It is by God's grace that there is hope. He has already done more for us than we could ever hope to deserve. Each one of us are in the position of choosing for ourselves heaven over hell; life over death and victory over defeat. God will abide by our choice. The faithful Christian has made heaven his choice by his obedient trust in the gospel of Jesus Christ, and on that basis lives in hope

*Colossians 1:5-because of the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, of which you heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel,*

*Colossians 1:23-if indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister.*

LESSON #6 is entitled "WHAT MUST WE DO?". We will examine what it really means to be "born again" and how this new birth is absolutely necessary. We will learn what it means to "call upon the name of the Lord" to be saved.

## QUESTIONS FOR LESSON FIVE

### TEMPORARY OR ETERNAL?

What does the Bible say about the things we can see? \_\_\_\_\_

2. The things we cannot see 2 Corinthians 4:16-18? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Briefly tell what will happen to the present heavens and earth 2 Peter 3:10-13; \_\_\_\_\_ Revelation 21:1?

### THE HUMAN SPIRIT

What does the Lord form within us Zechariah 12:1? \_\_\_\_\_

Does Jesus teach that the dead are conscious following death Luke 16:19-31?

### JUDGMENT

What will be the standard of judgment John 12:48? \_\_\_\_\_

2. What else will be considered 2 Corinthians 5:10? \_\_\_\_\_

### HEAVEN

How is the Christian's inheritance described 1 Peter 1:4? \_\_\_\_\_

Name some things which will not be in Heaven Revelation 21:4. \_\_\_\_\_

List some of the things which will keep those who practice them outside the Kingdom of God 1 Corinthians 6:9-11. \_\_\_\_\_

### HELL

What word does Jesus use to describe the duration of punishment Matthew 25:46? \_\_\_\_\_

How does Jesus describe hell Matthew 13:42? \_\_\_\_\_