

Will We See Our Loved Ones Again? - Part Two

by Charles E. Wigg

This passage also shows the uselessness of praying to 'saints'. They cannot hear your prayers, and they are powerless to help you in any way.

Abraham had a bosom, Lazarus had a finger. It seems that there was water in that place. The once rich man had his memory, because Abraham told him, 'Son remember'. The man in Hades, wanted personal relief from his torment, but he had reached a place that was fixed. Death decides forever where we will be eternally. Those that go to Hell choose to go there. They have rejected the offer of God's mercy, and their rejection of it left God with no alternative, but to let them have their chosen way! There is no release from that place of eternal punishment. It is not God's fault; He has made every provision, and offers to all men His wonderful free salvation, as a gift. But He will never compel any person to accept the gift that He offers freely to them.

The once rich man, (I say once rich, because he could not take any of his riches with him when he died); prayed that Abraham might send Lazarus to warn his five brothers not to join him in that place of torment. The sufferer reasoned that if a miracle took place, and Lazarus rose from the dead, his brothers would then repent and believe. But Abraham replied that they have Moses and the prophets, let them listen to them, and that if they would not heed the warnings of those prophets, then they would refuse to heed even the voice of one that came back from the dead.

The gospel is presented to lost men in the holy word of God, and faithful men and women preach it, all over the world. This gospel is the only message of salvation, today and the lost are expected to listen and repent, and exercise faith in Christ. There is no other way!

There are further proofs in both Old Testament and New; that we will see and recognize our loved ones that have died in Christ. Take as an example, 2 Sam. 12:23. David had the assurance that he would see his dead child again. He knew that he had gone to a place of blessing, and that he would join him there. Then in the New Testament, on the Mount of Transfiguration, Luke 9:28-36 Moses and Elijah appeared and were talking to the Transfigured Lord Jesus. Peter was able to recognize these two great saints of old, though he had never seen them, or even photographs, or drawings of them.

Paul describes his own experience in 2Cor. 12:2-4. His experience then was so vivid, that he was not able to tell whether he was in his body, or out of it. He is probably referring to what took place in Acts. 14:19-21, when he was stoned to death. He tells us that he then was caught up into Paradise, and that he heard 'unspeakable things'. I do not think that he was forbidden to tell what he heard and saw, but it was so surpassingly wonderful, that he could find no words to describe it. In writing his first letter to the Corinthians, he quotes from Isaiah, telling, "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered the heart of man, the things that God has prepared for them that love Him". 1Cor. 2:9. So see have everything to look forward to! Often people speak of the wonder of what is mentioned in Revelation about the Holy City etc. But these are only symbols of a much greater reality that no human language can describe!

This is the testimony of Holy Scripture. Whereas Lazarus was carried at death, by the angels into the bosom of Abraham, yet now that Christ has died, been buried, risen again, and ascended on high. This privilege is no longer entrusted to angels, but at the believers death the Lord Jesus comes Himself to convey His loved one to Glory. John, 14:3. Neither do we rest in the bosom of Abraham, but immediately we are "Absent from the body, and present with the Lord", and "with Christ which is far better", Phil. 1:23, & 2Cor. 5:8.

Then we may consider the testimony of departing saints, (believers). A brother translated for me a number of times in Andhra Pradesh, & he once took me to his home, on an island in the Godavari River, named Kana Kai Lanka. He told me that when he was a boy, he was alone on the island with his aged grandmother, as his mother had left the island to purchase food etc. His grandmother became violently ill, and he could see that she was about to die. He was a backslider at the time, and the prospect filled him with great fear. He wanted to say some words of comfort to his dying grandmother, but all he could do was to ask her if she was afraid. She was surprised that

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he should ask her this, and she replied; "Afraid, why should I be afraid, can you not see my Lord standing here?", and in a few moments she was gone.

Then there is the case of a brother in Sydney, (Australia), who had gone to hospital for a seemingly minor operation. He was getting on well, and his wife went to visit him on the Sunday afternoon. (He was expected to be discharged from hospital on the Monday). While his wife was talking with him, a nurse came to take his blood pressure, temperature etc. While she was recording the details on the chart that hung on the end of his bed, such a look of surpassing ecstasy passed over his face. This was noticed by the nurse, and she said to his wife, "Did you see that?", to which his wife replied, "Yes I saw that, it means that he will not be coming home now, because he has seen the face of his Lord and Master". In a few moments the brother was "absent from the body, and present with the Lord.

In Madras (India) there lived a very godly brother named Theophilus, he was an elder of the Jehovah Shamma Assembly. This brother had formed a very close relationship with Arthur, the brother of a dear sister Dr. P. Chandy. Arthur died and went to be with the Lord Jesus. Some time later, when Bro. Theophilus lay dying, and his bed was surrounded by his family, he suddenly threw his arms in the air, and called out "O Arthur, Arthur!", and with in a short time he too was with Christ.

When dear Dr Chandy had reached the end of her life, she too was very sick, but she had a very close relationship with the wife of Bro. Theophilus, (sister Rosy.) Sister Rosy went to be with the Lord Jesus, and afterwards her family went to visit Dr. Chandy. As the dear sister was so sick, it was felt that it was best not to mention the death and burial of sister Rosy. When Dr. Chandy asked about sister Rosy, her family gave evasive answers. This did not satisfy Dr. Chandy, so she asked that a chair be brought, and insisted that Brother Bobby sit down. She then asked him directly, "Is your mother here or there?". To this brother Bobby replied, "She is with the Lord, He has called her home, but we thought that as you are so sick, it was best not to tell you". To this Dr. Chandy replied, that she was glad to know, that sister Rosy's sufferings were now over. But she added that she had seen her, and that she had been calling her. Soon afterwards Dr. Chandy also joined sister Rosy, in the presence of their Lord and Master.

I will cite another case, and this is of a little girl about 11 years of age, who was dying with an inoperable brain tumor. This girl had been to an evangelical Sunday School, and had trusted the Lord Jesus as her Savior. The family was standing around her dying bed, and all were weeping, deeply grieving the fact that they were about to lose their sister and daughter. As the dying girl saw their sorrow, she said, "Please don't cry for me. I know where I am going, I have had a look inside there, and it is O so wonderful. If only you could see, you would not want to keep me here. But if you are to see me again if you are to join me there, then you will have to do what I did, you will have to repent of you sin, and put your trust in my Savior too." That dear girl soon afterwards went to be with the Lord Jesus, and her parents were saved as the result of her testimony.

The cases are endless, but I will give another, that of a dear brother in our local Assembly. He was apparently quite well, and had gone with his daughter in law and son, to visit his wife who was in hospital for a minor operation. They had said goodbye, and were leaving to go home to attend to the milking of the cows. When about to turn the corner of the hospital building, this dear brother fell down in an unconscious state. A stretcher was hurriedly called, and he was admitted to the intensive care unit of the very same hospital. He did recover, returned home and also attended some meetings. But he was of little use thereafter. Later he became sick again, and he said to his family (that he loved dearly), "If I go again, please don't bring me back again". It seems that he too had had a glimpse of the glory, and it spoiled everything for him, as far as this world is concerned. He never left the hospital again, but from there he entered into the presence of his Lord and Savior.

I hope that these few thoughts, and testimonies will serve to answer the question, "Will we see our loved ones again?" May it also serve to bring comfort and assurance to those believers that have been temporarily separated from a dear wife, husband, son, or daughter. Mother or father, brother or sister. We feel the parting, and the years

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since our loved ones left us seem to drag, but they feel no parting. For them there is no time to drag. But all is eternal joy. Even so, Come Lord Jesus!