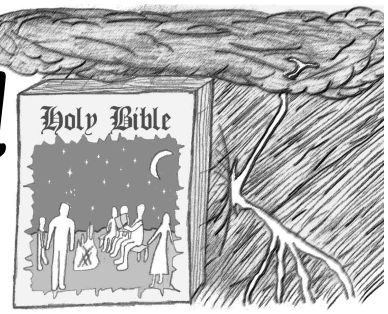
Shelter in the Word



He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty
You are my refuge and shield: I have put my hope in your Word. ***—Psalm 91:1; 119:114***

Vol. 3, No. 2 Helping you become self-sufficient in the Word—for a lasting relationship with the Almighty **Mar/Apr 2000**

Watching Over Us

by David King

Big brother is watching you!

Everywhere we go today, we are being watched. Someone is on our case, seeing where we go and what we are up to. Whatever street we walk down, in whatever town, Big Brother is keeping a close eye on you. But, we should not be afraid—for He is a loving, caring Brother, who watches over us for our own good. Jesus Christ is our Big Brother, and He and the Father can see what is happening in our lives, as well as the things that are about to happen, things we are not aware of.

One evening when on an underground train some years ago, as the train pulled into a station and various people got on, I felt an urge to get out of that carriage and into the next one along; I did not like the look of someone who was getting on. And I sensed that there would be danger if I remained in that carriage. A few stops on, the train stopped for longer than usual in another station, and I was wondering what was going on. Then there was a commotion in the carriage I had earlier left, and someone in there was stabbed. The attacker had fled, and the victim was bleeding (although I never saw him. I only heard what was happening.) God had foreseen the situation that was about to develop, and had no doubt inspired me to move to the next carriage for my own safety. God sees the things that we cannot see.

God has given visions to many of His people in the Bible, sometimes to reveal Himself, at other times to instruct someone. He can see the future and the secret things in the present. And He wants us to see things His way, to have His point of view instead of a wrong viewpoint.

> 1Cor 2:11 For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit… from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.
>
> 13 These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.
>
> 14 But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned (NKJV translation throughout this article).

God wants us to have spiritual discernment, to see things in light of His Spirit and His plan for mankind. Things do not always happen as we might expect, nor as one might logically expect. God does at times cause things to work out differently from how we would do them, as He sees far more than we do. For example, when the Israelites fled from Egypt, and they were following the cloud, the cloud moved off the main highway, taking a turn into a mountainous area, along a pathway that led only to the Red Sea. It seemed like they had been led down a dead-end, and were doomed to die, either to drown in the sea or be killed by the pursuing Egyptians. But God inspired Moses to tell them: "Do not be afraid. Stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which He will accomplish for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall see again no more forever" (Ex 14:13).

Despite the desperate situation, God saw a way out—something He had already planned. He had the foresight to ensure there was a foolproof escape route for the Israelites, so that they could cross the Red Sea

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without getting wet, and the Egyptians would try to follow and perish.

Many times when things look disastrous to us, God has a plan in mind that will work out for the best for us.

> Rom 8:28 We know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.
>
> 29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.
>
> 30 Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

> Eph 1:3 God and Father… chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will" ().

When the world began, God knew that He was going to bring people to Himself. He knew that the sacrifice of Christ would be necessary for salvation. He does not take these things lightly. We are not disposable creatures to Him, "...because God has said, 'Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you'" (Heb 13:5)

God does not allow everything to just happen to us by time and chance. "His eyes are on the ways of men; he sees their every step. There is no dark place, no deep shadow, where evildoers can hide" (Job 34:21-22). Without His vigilance, Satan and his followers would step in to cause havoc and destruction. When things do start to get out of hand, God can intervene and save us from our own troubles or the sins of others. When the mother of Moses was living in ancient Egypt, a decree was issued by Pharaoh to murder all the baby Hebrew boys. Trusting God was all that was necessary in this otherwise impossible situation.

> Heb 11:23 By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's command.

A similar thing happened at the time Christ was born. Herod wanted all baby boys at the time to be slain, so Joseph and Mary fled to Egypt for a while to ensure the safety of the baby Jesus. These things were inspired by the Father, to protect His people.

In my own family, during the second World War, my mother's father was in battle in Europe. There was an explosion, and he and his fellow soldiers were blasted, but survived, although the others at first left him for dead, thinking he was killed. But then for some reason, they came back for him and took him to safety so that he could live--and later be the father of my mother.

The main thing is that we should allow ourselves to be led by God and inspired by Him. He can see the things we cannot. We need the faith of Christ in us, to help us believe that what God says will happen will really happen, and to believe that things are working out for the best, especially when they do not work out as we might want them to. Moses had faith given to him, so that:

> Heb 11:24 when he became of age, [Moses] refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter,

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25 choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin,

26 esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward.

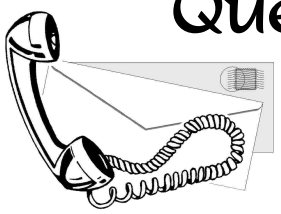
27 By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured as seeing Him who is invisible.

28 By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, lest he who destroyed the firstborn should touch them.

29 By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land, whereas the Egyptians, attempting to do so, were drowned.

When filled with the faith of Christ in us, we can then be moved by God to believe His word and seek His will rather than our own, knowing that God's will for us is in our best interests. We must believe what He says and what He is doing, and look to Him, for His vision is far greater and more powerful than our own. 🕮

Questions & Comments
from Our Readers



Is "Additional Correction" Biblical?
March 9, 2000

Greetings Norm Edwards,

In response to the chapter "Judgment for Believers Now and Later" found on pages 26 and 27 in the article titled *What the Bible says about Eternal Judgement*, you take one little parable and create a whole new doctrine. From a parable, you make assumptions, extrapolate and concoct a doctrine of the second chance. This is where believers who don't qualify to be in the first resurrection will be given "additional correction" which is actually a second chance at salvation. This is supposedly accomplished in the millennium or second resurrection.

Show me **clear** Biblical proof-texts that support this. Let's let the Bible interpret the Bible. Clear Biblical proof text is needed and it's missing. Big new doctrine needs Big Biblical proof!

Why should we "work out our own salvation with fear and trembling" if we can get an extension where one receives "additional correction" i.e. a second chance? If this false doctrine takes hold, some believers might not energetically "fight the good fight" or "run the race" to win now. This is so dangerous because it's human nature to take the easy path and accept this safety net of "additional correction" offered later, and thereby jeopardize one's salvation.

—David Martel, Oregon

Dear David,

Thank you for your letter. The Scriptures that show that people will live again and have a chance to learn are covered in the section called *Judgment After Second Resurrection Will Take Many Years,* beginning page 19. There are numerous scriptures that show that:

1. God would like to save the world.
2. God will not allow anyone to be saved who does not accept Christ and obey him.
3. God does not hold people accountable for things that they do not know.
4. The dead will be raised to physical life and judged.

Page 22 contains numerous scriptures showing how judgment will be more difficult for some people than others. Specifically, Christ tells some of the Jewish leaders that "tax collectors and harlots enter the kingdom of God **before** you" (Matt 21:31). Notice, He did not tell these people that they would *never* enter in, but that they would be *last*. The first appendix of the updated paper goes into some detail explaining other verses that talk about who will be first and who will be last in judgment.

This doctrine of God working with people in a resurrection is not a new thing. It is clearly expounded in the book of Ezekiel, which I only partially covered in the paper. Notice:

> Ezk 37:7 So I prophesied as I was commanded. And as I was prophesying, there was a noise, a rattling sound, and the bones came together, **bone to bone**.
>
> 8 I looked, and **tendons and flesh appeared on them and skin covered them**, but there was no breath in them.
>
> 9 Then he said to me, "Prophesy to the breath; prophesy, son of man, and say to it, 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe into these slain, that they may live.'"
>
> 10 So I prophesied as he commanded me, and **breath entered them**; they came to

life and stood up on their feet—a vast army.

11 Then he said to me: "Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, 'Our bones are dried up and our hope is gone; we are cut off.'

12 Therefore prophesy and say to them: 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: O my people, I am going to open your graves and bring you up from them; I will bring you back to the land of Israel.

13 Then you, my people, will know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves and bring you up from them.

14 I will **put my Spirit in you** and you will live, and I will settle you in your own land. Then you will know that I the LORD have spoken, and I have done it, declares the LORD.'"

This is probably as detailed a prophecy as one might hope to have on a physical resurrection. Some will claim these verses are a parable—a spiritual analogy to the salvation of future Israel. But if so, can anyone answer why so much detail? What spiritual thing is symbolized by bodies, bones, tendons, flesh and skin? The Scripture clearly speaks of a resurrection from the dead for the nation of Israel to a **physical** life. They will be given the breath of life as Adam was given (Gen 2:7), but they will also be given the Spirit of God (see verse 14, above). The will be given their "own land", not the Kingdom of God or eternal life.

The gift of the Holy Spirit was not generally offered in the Old Testament—it was given only to a few people whom God specially chose. In the resurrection, these people will have a chance to learn about God, to be baptized, to be forgiven through the sacrifice of Christ and to receive the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38).

I did not intend this paper to lead people to believe that they do not have to worry about this life because they will have a "second chance". The lesson of the paper is that **everything we do now matters**—that those who sin now and do not repent will suffer in proportion to their sin in the judgment. See the example of Babylon:

> Rev 18:7 **As** she [Babylon] glorified herself and lived luxuriously, **so give her a like measure of torment and grief**. Since in her heart she says, "I rule as a queen; I am no widow, and I will never see grief" (NRSV).

I do not believe that the scriptures teach the "ever-burning hell" concept that comes from mythology, but they do clearly teach punishment for the wicked (see several new appendices). Also, the scriptures are clear about those who know Christ now and reject Him. We are not free to do whatever we want now and hope for a "second chance" later:

> Heb 6:4 It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit,
>
> 5 who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age,
>
> 6 if they fall away, to be brought back to repentance, because to their loss they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace.

The encouraging part about the resurrection and additional correction and judgment is that those who have died not knowing much about God will have a chance to learn about Him and do what He asks.

But those of us who know about God now should do what He asks in His word. If we believe that "God is Love" (1Jn 4:8), then we should know that what He asks is good for us.

Thanks again for writing. Your letter prompted additional, helpful study.

—Norman Edwards

Share Your Shelter

Our Savior never argued or tried to force someone to believe in Him. We should not do that either. But if *Shelter in the Word* has helped you, you can share it with others who might be interested in it or helped by it. One of these methods might work for you.

1. Talk to them about what you have learned and encourage them to study the Bible themselves.
2. Copy your *Shelter* and give it to them (almost any office or copy store will do this for $1 to $2).
3. Give them your *Shelter* (we will send you a replacement issue if you write or call).
4. Copy just this page or write down the address or phone so they can request their own subscription.

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