

# WE AS FREE CHRISTIANS BELIEVE

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## GOD HAS A DIVINE PLAN

It is written; *"Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world"* (Acts 15:18). The history of mankind, as revealed in the Holy Bible, encompasses a period of some 7,000 years from the creation of Adam to end of the Millennial Kingdom under Christ's rule. Much in the Bible is now history written in advance. Redemption through the blood of Jesus is woven like a golden thread throughout the Bible from Genesis to Revelation.

Genesis reveals the fall of man into sin and death as well as the promised hope of a seed (Jesus Christ) to atone for that sin of disobedience in the Garden of Eden. Throughout the Old Testament this thread is picked up and extended to the actual giving of Jesus' life on the Cross. It further predicts the return of Christ for His Bride. At that time He will set up God's Kingdom and these will be a resurrection of all the dead, both just and unjust. At the end of these 1,000 years, Christ will turn over this perfected, sinless world to the Father so that He can be "all in all." (Please see 1 Cor. 15:28). Man will live in perfect harmony with God's divine will according to the foreknowledge of our awesome Creator, God and Father. Praise His Name! In this booklet, we will break down this plan for a more comprehensive understanding of our Scriptural belief.

## THE LORD GOD

We believe in ONE LORD God who is The Grand Architect and Designer of the Universe. He is Immortal, Divine and Self-existing, having no beginning and no end. His character is one of perfection, being All-Loving, All-Wise, All-Powerful, All-Just. His Word says He is LIGHT and LOVE. The LORD God is unchangeable. His attributes are revealed to all by way of the universal order and beauty in the *book* of nature as well as in His *written Book*, the Bible, and especially in His Son who is in His image and likeness. He is Omnipotent and Omniscient, knowing all things before they happen. He exists outside of time and space. This Awesome LORD, whose name is Jehovah, is the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Please Read: Gen. 1:1; Psa. 89:13, 14; 90:2; 83:18; 103:19; Ex. 6:3; Deut. 6:4, 5; 32:4, 1 Chron. 29:10-13; Isaiah 40:12-15; 42:9; 44:8; 46:8-11; 48:3; Mal. 3:6; Jas. 1:17; Rom. 1:19; 1 Cor. 8:5, 6; 1 Tim. 1:17; John 3:16, 5:24; 20:17; Titus 1:2; 1 John 4:16.

## JESUS CHRIST

He is the Only Begotten Son of God, existing before He became the man, Jesus Christ. He is *"the first-born over all creation."* In His pre-existence He was called the Logos, or Word of God; a most glorious Spirit Being, given the privilege, by His God and Father, to be the active agent of creating all things in heaven and earth. *"All things were created by him and for him and without him nothing was made."* In God's due time, He sent His Only Begotten Son into the world. The Logos willingly emptied Himself of all the glory He had; His life was transferred, by God's divine power, into the womb of Mary, and He was born a perfect man. This He did to become the Redeemer of Adam and all who were lost in sin and death through Adam, satisfying God's Divine Justice by dying on Calvary's Cross as the perfect Sin-offering. His faithful obedience was rewarded by His God and Father when He was raised from the dead and given all power in heaven and on earth as well as added glory and honor, and immortality, being seated at His Father's right hand. Some of the titles of the Lord Jesus Christ are: "The Only Begotten One," "David's son and Lord," "Root and Offspring of David," "Second Adam," "Lord from

heaven," "Wonderful Counselor," "Father of the age to come," "Prince of Peace," "Son of Man," "Advocate," "Mediator."

Please read: Prov. 8:22-30; Isa. 9:6; John 1:1-3, 10, 14, 34; 3:16; 8:14,23; 12:34; 17:5; Matt.13:41; 22:42-45; 24:27, 30, 25:31; Luke. 1:26-38; 2:49; 19:10; Jn. 6:35, 62; 8:42, 58; 10:36; 17:5; Acts 1:6-11; 2:24; 2 Cor. 8:9; Gal. 4:4; Phil. 2:7, 8; Col. 1:15-18; 1 Tim. 2:3-6; Heb. 2:9; 7:26; 12:24;1 John 2:1; 4:1-3, 9; 1 Cor. 15:45-47; Rev. 1:17; 2:8, 18; 3:14; 22:16.

### **THE HOLY BIBLE**

The Bible is a collection of 66 books, written by the prophets, apostles and other holy men of God, who wrote under God's divine inspiration and direction. From Genesis to Revelation, the Bible reveals His plan of redemption and Divine will for mankind which is centered in His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. "The Old Testament is in the New revealed...the New Testament is in the Old concealed," both being in perfect harmony.

Please read: Jn. 17:3, 17; Psalms 119:105; 2 Tim. 1:13; 2:15; 3:16, 17; Titus 1:9.

### **SATAN**

Originally, Satan was a beautiful, powerful and wise cherub whose name was Lucifer, meaning *light*. He was placed by God in the Garden of Eden to care for our first parents, Adam and Eve. In due time, Lucifer's heart became filled with pride, ambition and a desire to be like the Most High God. Lucifer, after sin was found in his heart, became Satan, meaning *Adversary*. He deceived mother Eve, which led to her disobedience as well as Adam's. Satan also induced a multitude of angels to follow him and do his bidding around the time of the great Flood. After the Flood they were placed "*in everlasting chains until the Judgment Day*." Satan and his host are still very active in the world today, influencing and causing fear, confusion and evil among all people. At the beginning of Christ's Kingdom on earth, he will be imprisoned in a "*bottomless abyss*" so as not to deceive the nations. At the end of the 1,000-year Kingdom of God, Satan will be loosed for one final testing of mankind and then destroyed, along with all the incorrigible.

Please read: Gen. 3:1-6; Deut. 32:4; Isa. 14:12-15; Ezek. 28:11-19; Matt. 4:1-11; Mk. 3:26, 27; Jn. 12:31; 14:30; Rom. 16:20; 2 Cor. 2:11; 4:4;11:14; Jn. 8:44;1 Pt. 5:8; 2 Pt. 2:4; Jude 6; Eph. 2:2; Heb. 2:14; Rev. 20:1-3, 7-10.

### **SIN**

The Bible declares that sin is disobedience to the expressed will of God and that the penalty for sin is DEATH, not eternal torment. God warned Adam that if he disobeyed Him he would surely die. Since Adam willfully disobeyed his Creator, he, with Eve, was sentenced to death. By heredity, all Adam's children have been born under his condemnation; therefore, no matter how or where they live, what race or nationality they are, all mankind is appointed to die.

Please read: Gen. 2:17; 3:17-19; Psalm 51:5; Ezekiel 18:4; Romans 1:18; 2:23; 3:23; 5:12; 6:23; Hebrews 9:27; James 1:15; Rev. 1:5.

### **ADAMIC DEATH SIGNIFIES SLEEP**

Adamic death is the result of sin. It has engulfed all mankind because "*all have sinned*." Death is the cessation of life, not a continuation of life somewhere else. In the Bible, death is likened to sleep; when man dies he loses all consciousness, knowledge, feeling, wisdom etc. Man is placed into the grave (*sheol*

in Hebrew; *hades* in Greek) where he rests as in a sleep. It is the place where all thoughts perish. When man dies, the spirit returns to God who gave it. It is a destruction of being and the place where both the good and wicked go until the resurrection.

Please read: Gen. 3:19; Psa. 37:10; 145:20; 146:4; Eccl. 3:19, 9:5, 10; 12:7; Isa. 35:10; Ezek. 18:4, 20; John 5:28, 29; 11:11-14; Acts 7:60; 13:36; 2 Pet. 3:4; 1 Cor. 15:13-18, 22, 51; 1 Thes. 4:14.

### **SHEOL, HADES, HELL and the GRAVE**

As noted under the topic of *Adamic death*, hell is a translation of the Hebrew word *sheol* and of the Greek word *hades*. The original meaning of these words was hole, pit, grave, tomb, or a place of silence where the living placed their dead. However, centuries after the Apostles fell asleep; a new meaning of heathen origin was introduced, believed, and adopted by the clergy.

The place called "hell" was described as a place of literal boiling and burning fire and brimstone where the immortal lost souls of sinners would be sent upon the death of their bodies. There, the devil was said to inflict pain and everlasting torture upon them. This Satanic doctrine, borrowed from heathen religions, has caused fear in the hearts of the people, thus keeping them in absolute subjection to the clergy. No such place of punishment for sinners is mentioned in the Bible, though in Revelation they have taken the *symbolic* language used in chapters 20 and 21 to indicate such a place of torment does exist. The literal interpretation of the parable of the rich man and Lazarus is also used to perpetuate this God-dishonoring teaching. In Rev. 20:14 let us carefully note that both *death* and *hell* were cast into the "lake of fire." How can hell, if it IS the lake of fire, be cast into the lake of fire? The remainder of the verse as well as Rev. 21:8 gives us the proper explanation as to what the "lake of fire" really is – "*This is the second death*" or total destruction. Thus we can truly believe what is stated in Romans 6:23: "For the wages of sin is DEATH, but the gift of God is eternal LIFE through Jesus Christ our Lord." Thank God, He is Love and would never torture any of His creatures! One day the grave itself will be defeated and abolished, for "*the last enemy to be destroyed is death*" (1 Cor. 15:26). Praise God for this promise!

### **ISRAEL'S LOSS - THE GENTILES' GAIN**

From Moses to Jesus, the nation of Israel was God's chosen people. To them the Law and the prophets were given and the promises made. The nation failed to obey God and His Law, which culminated in their rejection of the Lord Jesus Christ. As a result of this rejection, Israel was destroyed as a nation and dispersed throughout the Roman Empire. Favor then came to the Gentiles as well as individual Jews who accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Savior. God proceeded to "*take out a people for His Name*" from both Jews and Gentiles. Nevertheless, prophecies declare that God will again restore a relationship with the nation of Israel when regathered to their land and they accept Jesus Christ as their Messiah. These prophecies are meant for all mankind as well as Israel who will be blessed in God's Kingdom.

Please read: Ex. 19:5, 6; Amos 3:2; Zech. 12:10; Isa. 51:1-3; Mal. 2:1-9; Matt. 23:39; Luke 23:18-25; John 10:16; Acts 7:51-53; 15:14-17; 26:6, 7; Rom. 11:1, 2, 15-26; Ezek. 37:1-14.

### **SALVATION**

The salvation of the human race was accomplished by the death of the Lord Jesus Christ on Calvary's Cross. Since all men are under the just condemnation of sin and death, to be saved one must accept the Lord Jesus as their Savior, repent from sin and be converted or turned around from their former way of

life. Salvation is the free gift of God by way of the death of His Son, planned from the foundation of the world, for man's sin was foreknown by God.

Please read: Isa. 53:5; Heb. 9:22; Mk. 10:45; Jn. 1:29; Jn. 3:16, 36; Rom. 5:6; 1 Cor. 7:23; 15:3, 21; Heb. 2:9, 16; 5:9; 9:12; 1 Pt. 1:18, 19; Phil. 2:8; 1 John 2:2; Rev. 5:9. Eph.2:8-10

### **DISCIPLESHIP**

This step of full abandonment to the will of God is the outgrowth of our Salvation, stemming from a heart overwhelmed by the Lord's Goodness, Grace Mercy and Love. This is not mandatory for Salvation but is an *invitation* given by the Lord Jesus when he said, *"IF any man will come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me."* To any who accept this wonderful provision, devoting themselves to God through a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, the reward, if faithful, is a tremendous one. When we are born-again, we become new creatures in Jesus Christ, *"old things have passed away and all things have become new!"* There is no more intimate or personal relationship than this one, for we are *now* the children of God and are espoused to Christ as His Bride. The rewards to the faithful are: Glory, honor and immortality; becoming the Bride of Christ; given a white stone and on it a new name written, which no man knows except he that receives it; given the crown of life; given the Morning Star; clothed in white raiment; to become a pillar in the temple of God; to be like Christ and see Him as He is; to sit with Jesus in His throne; to rule the nations with a rod of iron and reign with Jesus Christ in the Kingdom of God for 1,000 years.

Please read: Matt. 16:24; Mk. 8:34; 10:21; Luke. 9:23; 12:32; Jn. 17:24; 2 Cor. 5:17; 11:2; 2 Tim. 2:12; 1 Jn. 3:2, 3; Rev. 2:7, 10, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21; 19:7-9; 21:9; 22:17.

### **BAPTISM**

Baptism by immersion was commanded by the Lord Jesus Christ. Being immersed into water signifies the believer's death to self-will, while the coming up out of the water shows his desire to live the resurrected life in Christ, i.e., an outward sign of what has already transpired in the believer's heart; an immersion of the will into the will of God. We are thus baptized into Christ's death, and now our commitment is to be *"crucified with Christ,"* so as to be *"raised to walk in newness of life."*

Please read: Matt. 3:13-15; 28:19, 20; Rom. 6:1-11; 12:1,2; 1 Cor. 12:12, 13; Gal. 2:20; 3:27; Col. 3:3; Heb. 10:7.

### **THE HOLY SPIRIT**

God's Holy Spirit was poured out on the gathered disciples at Pentecost. Ever since, it has been poured out on His disciples who have fully devoted themselves to follow Jesus. This is a precious gift of God; It is His own energy and power which gives the Christian guidance, enlightenment, comfort, wisdom, strength and joy. Without it, life for the Christian would be impossible. With it, the Christian has the power and strength to be faithful unto death. This *"spirit of power, love and a sound mind"* is also our teacher.

Please read: Luke 11:13; John 14:26; 16:13; Acts 2:1-12; Joel 2:28, 29; Romans 5:5; 8:9, 14, 16; 15:13; 1 Cor. 2:9-12; 6:19; 12:7; Eph. 1:13, 14; 5:18-20; 1 Thess. 4:8; 2 Tim. 1:7; 1 Peter 1:12; 1 John 5:4, 18.

### **THE SOUL**

The whole world has been led to believe that man has within himself something called an *immortal soul*, which at death goes off somewhere into space, be it heaven, hell, purgatory, nirvana, the happy

hunting ground, etc. This belief is not taught in the Bible, for nowhere do we find the term "*immortal soul*." Rather, we find that man IS a soul, not that he HAS one. In Genesis 2:7 the Word of God states: "God breathed into man the breath of life and man BECAME a living soul." Ezekiel 18:4, 20 states clearly, "the soul that sins, it shall die." In sentencing Adam God made no mention of Adam's soul going anywhere after death. Rather, He plainly said, "for you are dust, and unto dust shall you return" (Genesis 3:19).

This means that man IS a soul -- a conscious sentiment being, capable of thinking and feeling. When dead, he is incapable of thinking and feeling. According to Scripture, the grave awaits us all, good and evil, and there is no eternal torment awaiting any. There is not one mention of such a place to Father Adam as penalty for sin. A soul can perish, and we are clearly told that we are not to fear man who is able to destroy the body, but Him who can destroy BOTH body and soul" (Matthew 10:28)! Immortality of the soul was the thought of Satan who said to Mother Eve, "Thou shalt NOT surely die" (Genesis 3:4). The church is promised, if faithful, they will "put on" immortality which they are to "seek for." If we already had it, we would not either have to put it on or seek for it.

Please read: Genesis 2:17; Psalm 89:48; 115:17; 145:20; Eccl. 3:19, 20; Isaiah 26:19; Romans 2:6, 7; 6:23; 1 Cor. 15:53; 1 Tim. 6:16.

### **RESURRECTION**

The resurrection is held out to all. There will be a resurrection of both the just and the unjust. Those who are just or justified through the death of Christ and have done good, following the will of God in his life, will have a resurrection to eternal life and immortality. Those who have not taken this course will be resurrected to judgment here on earth. This word *judgment* signifies a trial and then a verdict. The thousand years of God's Kingdom will be a time of righteous judgment, a trial period, when the inhabitants of the land will have every advantage to learn righteousness. If they refuse to obey and live, then they will be punished with everlasting destruction, i.e., second death from which there will be no return.

Please read: 1 Chron. 16:31-34; Isa. 11:1-5; 26:9; Ezek. 16: 53-56; Jn. 5:22, 25, 28, 29; Acts 17:31; 24:15; 1 Cor. 6:2; 15:13-17; 20-23; 2 Pt. 3:7, 8; Rev. 20:6;

### **THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM and RESTITUTION**

The term *millennium* means one thousand years. It is applied to God's Kingdom here on earth. During this time, Satan will be bound that he may not deceive the people who will be resurrected. Christ Jesus and His Bride, the church, will be the absolute, world-wide rulers of this Kingdom. Each person will have an individual trial in which to decide whether or not he will accept God's righteous provisions and live forever, or reject His ways and die the second death. But each will have a full opportunity for instruction and rehabilitation by coming to a full knowledge of Truth.

Please read: Joel 2:28; Zeph. 3:8, 9; Psa. 30:5; 49:14, 15; Isa. 2:3, 4; 29:18, 19; 33:5, 6; 35:1-10; 40:5; 52:10; 65:17; Jer. 3:17-25; Haggai 2:7; Daniel 2:44; 7:27; Acts 3:19-22; Matt. 13:43; John 12:48; Rom. 14:9; Gal. 3:8; Phil. 2:9-11; 2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 15:4; 20:3, 4; 21:7, 22-26.

### **SECOND DEATH**

The Scriptures speak of a *second* death from which there will be no hope of a resurrection. This death will be for those who refuse, under the blessings of the Kingdom, to be obedient to the Lord's righteous rule. This death is vividly illustrated by the Valley of Hinnom, near Jerusalem. At the time of

Christ this valley was used as a garbage dump and incinerator for the city. Its Greek name was "gehenna." The fire in the Valley of Hinnom was always kept alive to burn and completely destroy all that was thrown into it. No living thing was ever thrown into these fires, only the bodies of animals and executed criminals and garbage. What the fire did not destroy, worms did, showing the complete annihilation of whatever was put into it. At the end of the Millennium, Adamic death and hell (the grave) will be symbolically thrown into Gehenna to be forever destroyed. This is also pictured as *"the lake burning with fire and brimstone"* where Satan and the unrepentant fallen angels will be cast, as well as death and hell, forever destroyed, thus ending all death. This is an act of God's mercy to those who have no desire to live under perfect righteousness.

Please read: Isa. 25:8; Matt. 10:28; Heb. 6:4; Rev. 20:7-10, 14; (cp. With Heb. 2:14, 15 and Psa. 145:20); 21:8.

### **GRACE and MERCY**

Grace is the unmerited gift of God to us. It is giving us what we do not deserve, even as mercy is not giving us what we do deserve! Grace shows us undeserved and abundant kindness and planned for our salvation, while God's mercy rescued out of death which was our just penalty for sin. God's Grace - justifies us; unites us with Christ; makes us members of His Body; gives us access to God through the Holy Spirit; redeems and forgives all our sins; makes us complete in Christ; frees us from all condemnation; assures us all things work together for good; hides us with Christ in God; makes us citizens of heaven; gives us the spirit of power, love and a sound mind; helps us in every time of need; makes us the salt and light of the earth; makes us a branch in the true vine that we can bear the fruit of the Holy Spirit and a channel of His life; makes us God's temple, ministers of reconciliation, co-workers with God; seats us in heavenly places; makes us God's workmanship; gives us complete strength in Christ.

Please read: Psa. 84:11; John 1:12; 15:1, 5,15,16; Acts 15:11; Rom. 5:1, 15-17; 6:23; 8:1, 2, 28, 33-35; 1 Cor. 3:16; 6:17, 20; 12:27; 2 Cor. 1:21; 5:17-20; 6:1; Eph. 1:1, 5, 8; 2:6, 8, 10, 18; 3:2; Phil. 3:20; 4:13.

**CHRISTIAN DISCIPLING MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL**  
**32 Chapel Lane, Somersworth, NH 03878**