**“Mortal or Immortal?” The Bible Echo 7, 22, p. 340.**

A. T. JONES

IN the thoughts of man there are a great many questions which arise concerning himself. Some of these are highly important. So important indeed are they that the Word of God itself has revealed them. Nor is that all. This Word has not only recorded the questions, but it has also recorded the answers to the questions. And when the Word of God asks a question and answers it, then in the answer we have the absolute truth on that question, and there is an end of all dispute. There is left no room for controversy; for “thus saith the Lord, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: I am the Lord thy God, which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldst go.” Isaiah 48:17. Therefore, whatever the Lord teaches is profitable teaching. Whether we believe it, or whether we like it or not, makes no difference so far as the teaching is concerned. The teaching is profitable, and everything that conflicts with it is unprofitable. The way the Lord leads is the way that we should go, and to follow any other leading is to go in the way that we should not. {BEST November 15, 1892, p. 340.1}

In the eighth psalm and the fourth verse is this question, “What is man that Thou art mindful of him?” Of course there are more ways than one in which this question can be referred to man; but the thing about man upon which we wish now to bring it to bear is that of immortality. “What is man?” is he mortal or immortal? We have not far to go for an answer. “Shall *mortal man* be more just than God?” Job 4:17. “O Lord, Thou art our God; let not *mortal man* be more just than God?” Job 4:17. “O Lord, Thou art our God; let not *mortal man* prevail against Thee.” 2 Chronicles 14:11, margin. Thus we find, in answer to the question, that the Word of God calls man mortal, and everything that the Bible says directly about immortality is consistent with this answer. {BEST November 15, 1892, p. 340.2}

Says this Word in 1 Timothy, “Now unto the King eternal, *immortal*, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.” Chap. 1:17. Here it is shown that immortality is an attribute of God, equally with eternity, wisdom, honor, glory, etc. None of these belong to man as he is. {BEST November 15, 1892, p. 340.3}

Again, speaking of the appearing of Jesus Christ, the Word says, “In his times He shall show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; *who only hath immortality*, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see.” 1 Timothy 6:15, 16. {BEST November 15, 1892, p. 340.4}

Christ has brought this immortality to light. The purpose and grace of God, says the Word, “is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished deasth, and hath brought *life* and *immortality* to light *through the gospel*.” 2 Timothy 1:10. What the gospel is is shown in a few words by 1 Corinthians 15:1-4: “I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you.... for I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, 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.” Thus, then, in the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ is summed up the gospel; and “through the gospel” it is said Christ “brought life and immortality to light.” Certainly it was not by dying nor being buried that either life or immortality was brought to light, for both these things were familiar to all men; but to rise again from the dead, and bring with Him a multitude of the dead, who also appeared unto many (Matthew 27:52, 53), that was to bring to light something that had never been seen before; that was to bring life and immortality to light indeed. Therefore it is through the resurrection that Christ has brought immortality to light. {BEST November 15, 1892, p. 340.5}

Again, the Scripture says that God will render eternal life “to them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honor *and immortality*.” Romans 2:6, 7. Now as immortality is to be sought for, and as God is the only one who has it, and as Christ is the only one who has brought it to light, it follows that immortality must be sought *of* God *through* Christ. Even so says Scripture, “The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” “This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.” Romans 6:23; 1 John 5:11, 12. {BEST November 15, 1892, p. 340.6}

Having then sought and found that immortality comes only through Christ, we ask, When is it bestowed upon us as our own? “Behold, I show you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but *we shall all be changed*, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, *at the last trump;* for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this *mortal* must *put on* immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on immortality, *then* shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.... Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” 1 Corinthians 15:51-57. {BEST November 15, 1892, p. 340.7}

Thus the story which the Word of God tells about immortality is this: Man, being mortal, has it not; God has it; Christ has brought it to light through the gospel; man is to seek for it of God, through Christ, and will obtain it at the resurrection of the dead; for *then* it is that this *mortal* puts on *immortality;* then it is that death is swallowed up in victory. This comes “at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible,” and the living shall be changed. But when is it that the last trump sounds?—It is when the Lord Jesus comes in his glory. “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 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.” 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17. {BEST November 15, 1892, p. 340.8}

Immortality is obtained of God, through Christ, at the resurrection of the dead. It is the sound of the last trump that awakes the dead. That trump is sounded at the coming of the Lord. Therefore without the second coming of the Lord Jesus, we shall never receive immortality. For this reason we long for his glorious appearing. We watch, we wait for Him, who shall change our “vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body;” for “we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.” “Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.” {BEST November 15, 1892, p. 340.9}