

GODLY LIVING IN A GODLESS WORLD

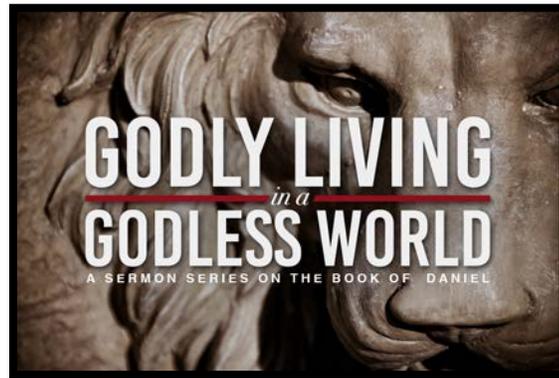
Expositional Study Of Daniel

Daniel 12:3

Written By

©Pastor Marty Baker

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Jesus is very clear about how acceptance or rejection of Him will impact you in eternity. Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it.

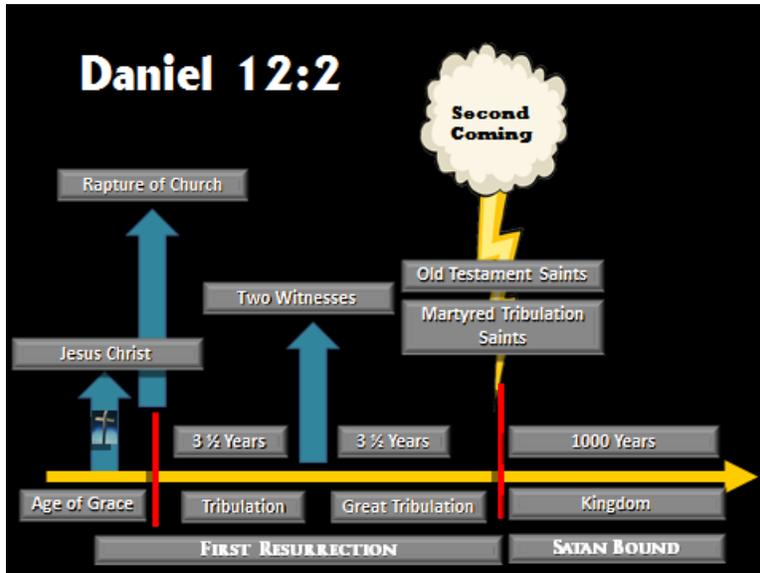
He, of course, is the narrow gate, which leads to the narrow path, which, in turn, leads to eternal life. The wide way is composed of all those who reject Him as the Savior, and its termination point is destruction.

All of this logically leads to some pragmatic, probing questions: Which path are you on? Did you know there is one right spiritual path, and a plethora of wrong ones? And what does Jesus mean about the destruction the people on the wrong path will experience?

From what we have seen in studying Daniel 12, verse 2, coupled with similar references in the writings and teachings of Jesus and John, both paths terminate at two separate bodily resurrections. Jesus echoed Daniel's prophetic announcement when He warned,

²⁸Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, ²⁹ and will come forth; those who did the good deeds to a

resurrection of life, those who committed the evil *deeds* to a resurrection of judgment (John 5).

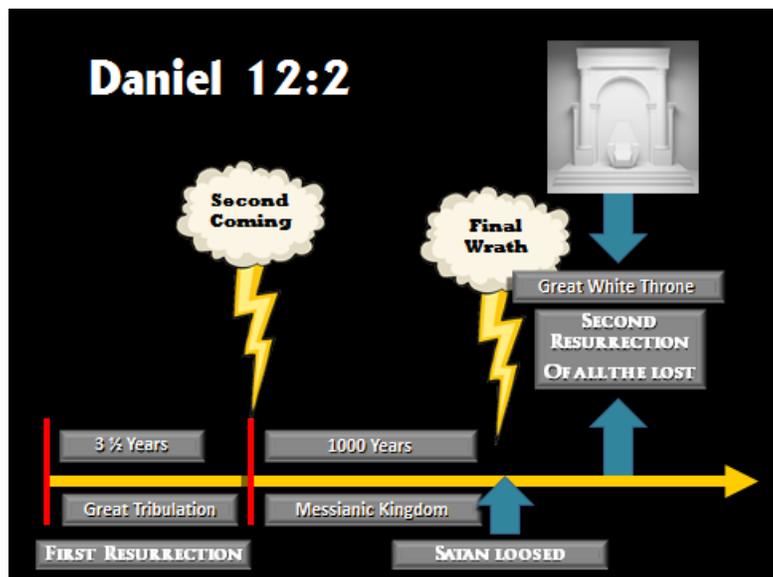


Those who do good deeds represent those who have a faith relationship with the Savior, Jesus. They are the ones who walk on the narrow path, and because of this on resurrection day their bodies will be reunited with their spirits to enjoy everything the eternal abode offers. Those who reject Jesus will be raised to judgment, as Daniel taught, as well as Jesus elsewhere in the gospels (as we shall shortly see). This judgment would not be a point in time event followed by

annihilation, but it would usher the spiritual rebel into a place of eternal punishment.

As we saw in our last study, the resurrection unto eternal life occurs at the rapture of the Church (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18), and at the Second Coming of Jesus at the close of the tribulation where He raises the martyred and Old Testament saints so they can enjoy the messianic kingdom. The second resurrection occurs at the close of the kingdom period, when the unsaved dead of all time are raised to be judged by Christ.

All of this enlightened and highly sobering theology is couched within the closing chapter of Daniel where God discloses this overarching motif:



God's Messianic Kingdom Program Can't Be Derailed, But It Will Be Hailed (Daniel 12:1-13)

The Messiah's kingdom is coming, but it will experience great opposition during the seven year tribulation as the Devil seeks **THE DESOLATION OF THE PASSENGERS** (Daniel 12:1a), or the eradication of the Jewish race who brought the Messiah to the earth originally to complete His salvific, redemptive work. The Dragon's activity will be ineffective as God will secure **THE DELIVERANCE OF THE PASSENGERS** (Daniel 12:1b) at the close of the tribulation when He appears in His Second Coming (Matthew 24). Immediately after this, God tells Daniel **THE DESTINATION OF SOULS** (Daniel 12:2) will occur with two resurrections. John tells us in Revelation 20 that 1,000 years divides these two resurrections, with the first being composed of believers, while the second one concerns all unbelievers of all time. Here's what God told Daniel in the sixth century:

²Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt (Daniel 12).

To this we need to add the next informative prophetic word:

³“Those who have insight will shine brightly like the brightness of the expanse of heaven, and those who lead the many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.

From these two texts we learn two concepts. One, the resurrection of the non-believers will be followed by eternal judgment, and, two, the resurrection of the believers will be followed by eternal glorification. The parallelistic relationship of these two events, coupled with similar wording (viz., everlasting) demonstrates unequivocally that there are two conscious eternal destinations for unbelievers and believers. Once again, it leads to the pivotal life question: Which bodily resurrection will you participate in?

The 2nd Resurrection & Eternal Condemnation (Daniel 12:2b)

Regarding this particular resurrection, let's open up its meaning, realizing, of course, there is no way we can in so short a study cover all the angles of the final abode of the lost in hell (Matthew 5:22-30; 10:28; 11:23; 13:49-50; 22:13; 23:23; 25:41; Mark 9:43-47). We know the judgment of the lost is eternal based on the words used in various Scriptures in Old and New Testaments.

First, to begin with, we realize from Daniel 12:3 and other biblical texts that the judgment of the lost is eternal. The Hebrew word for “everlasting,” *olam* (עוֹלָם), here in Daniel can denote an “age” or an “era,” however, when used of God it clearly denotes His timeless,

eternal existence: “From everlasting to everlasting you are God” (Psalm 90:2).¹ Those who argue that the lost are simply annihilated after their judgment must contend with the full range of

¹S. R. Driver and Charles A. Briggs, *The New Brown-Driver-Briggs-Gesenius Hebrew-Aramaic Lexicon*, ed. Francis Brown (Lafayette, Indiana: Associated Publishers and Authors, INC, 1981), 762. עוֹלָם S^{5769, 5865} TWOT^{1631a} GK^{6409, 6518, 439}
n.m. long duration, antiquity, futurity;—'ע Gn 9:12 + 405 times; עוֹלָם 3:22 + 19 times; עֵילוֹם 2 Ch 33:7, read prob. עוֹלָם (for other explan. v. note in Kit); sf. עֵלְמוֹ Ec 12:5; pl. עוֹלָמִים Is 26:4 + 7 times, עֵלְמִים ψ 145:13 + 2 times; cstr. עוֹלָמֵי Is 45:17;—† **1.** of past time: **a.** *ancient time*: 'ע *days of old* Is 63:9, 11 Am 9:11 Mi 5:1; 7:14 Mal 3:4; 'ע יְמוֹת Dt 32:7; 'ע Is 44:7 *ancient people*; 'ע גּוֹי Je 5:15; 'ע חֲרָבוֹת Is 58:12 61:4, cf. Ez 26:20 b; 'ע פְּתָחַי *ancient gates* ψ 24:7, 9; 'ע אֶרֶץ Jb 22:15; 'ע נִתְבוֹת Je 6:16; 'ע שְׁבִילֵי 18:15; 'ע גְּבוּל Pr 22:28; 23:10; 'ע בְּמוֹת Ez 36:2; 'ע מִן (י) *from of old* Is 64:3 Je 2:20 Jo 2:2, of the fathers Jos 24:2, the prophets Je 28:8, the ancient נְפִלִים Gn 6:4; (Ez 32:27 ט Co for מְעַרְלִים; but 1 S 27:8 read מְטָלִים for מְעוֹלִים We Dr HPS); 'ע בְּהֵם *long in them* Is 64:4 (text dub.). **b.** 'ע מֵתֵי *the long dead* ψ 143:3 La 3:6; so 'ע עַם Ez 26:20. **c.** of God, 'ע מְעַ: former acts Is 46:9; as redeemer Is 63:16; of love ψ 25:6, judgment 119:52, dominion Is 63:19; long silence 42:14; 57:11*; his wisdom personif. Pr 8:23; his existence ψ 93:2. **d.** of things: 'ע שְׁנוֹת עוֹלָמִים *ancient hills* Gn 49:26 (J), Hb 3:6 (|| הַרְרֵי־עַד, Dt 33:15 (|| הַרְרֵי קָדֵם). **e.** pl. עוֹלָמִים ψ 77:6 *years of ancient times*; עוֹלָמִים *ancient times* Ec 1:10 *in olden times*. **2.** **a.** indef. *futurity*, **c.** prep. *forever, always* (sometimes = *during the lifetime*); עֶבֶד עוֹלָם *slave for ever* Dt 15:17; 1 S 27:12; Jb 40:28; 'ע עֶבֶד לְעַד *serve for ever* Ex 21:6 (E), Lv 25:46; 'ע עַד 1 S 1:22; 'ע גְּאֻלַּת Lv 25:32 *redemption at any time*; 'ע נֶחֱמָה Je 20:17 *ever pregnant* (womb); 'ע כְּלִמָּת v 11 of persecutors of Jeremiah; 'ע חֲרַפְתָּ 23:40; 'ע שְׁלוֹי ψ 73:12 *always at ease*; 'ע יְחִי לְעַד (יְחִיָּה) *may the king live always* 1 K 1:31; Ne 2:3; cf. 'ע אֶרֶץ יְמִים עוֹלָם וְעַד ψ 21:5; 'ע יֵשֶׁב עוֹלָם לְפָנַי אֱלֹהִים 61:8; so of the pious, 'ע לֹא יִמוּט 15:5; 'ע בֵּל יִמוּט Pr 10:30, cf. ψ 30:7; other phr.: ψ 37:27, 28 41:13; 55:23; 61:8; 73:26; 121:8 Pr 10:25; 'ע אֲשִׁירָה ψ 89:2 *I will sing for ever* (as long as I live), cf. 52:10; 115:18; 145:1, 2; 'ע הוֹדָה 30:13; 44:9; 52:11; 79:13; other emotions and activities continuous through life 5:12; 31:2 = 71:1, 75:10; 86:12; 119:44, 93, 98, 111, 112 Mi 4:5, cf. 'ע לְעַד 2:9. **b.** = *continuous existence*, (1) of things: the earth, 'ע הָאָרֶץ לְעוֹלָם עַדָּת Ec 1:4; other phr.: ψ 78:69; 104:5, heavens and contents 148:6, ruined cities Is 25:2; 32:14 Ez 26:21; 27:36; 28:19, ruined lands Je 18:16; 25:9, 12; 49:13, 33; 51:26, 62 Ez 35:9 Zp 2:9; 'ע לְעַד עַד Is 30:8 *for a witness for ever*, in a book; (2) of nations: 'ע לְעוֹלָם אֱהִיָּה 47:7 (Babylon loqu.), cf. ψ 81:16 Ob 10; 'ע יֵשֶׁב of Judah Jo 4:20; (3) families ψ 49:12 Is 14:20; the dynasty of Saul 1 S 13:13; house of Eli 2:30; (4) national relations: 'ע אִיבַת *continual enmity* Ez 25:15; 35:5; of exclusion from 'ע קָהָל י' Dt 23:4 = Ne 13:1; various relations Is 32:17; 34:10; 'ע חֲרַפְתָּ *perpetual reproach* ψ 78:66, of dynasty of David 2 S 3:28; 12:10 1 K 2:33, families v 33 2 K 5:27 ψ 106:31 Je 35:6. **c.** of divine existence: 'ע אֵל עוֹלָם Gn 21:33 (J);

meaning of this Hebrew word, and they must take into account how it is parallelistically related to the eternal, conscious existence of the saved in the first portion of Daniel 12, verse 2. Jesus is quite clear in the New Testament that the judgment of the lost is eternal.

⁴⁹So it will be at the end of the age; the angels will come forth and take out the wicked from among the righteous, ⁵⁰ and will throw them into the furnace of fire; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matthew 13).

The verbiage of verse 50 clearly illustrates that punishment is conscious and perpetual (ἕσται).

“Then He will also say to those on His left, ‘Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels’ . . .” (Matthew 25:41).

The Greek word for eternal, *aionion* (αἰώνιον), means just that . . . timeless. This is how it is used in reference to God as in Romans 16:26 (“ . . . but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal (αἰώνιον) God, has been made known to all the nations, leading to obedience of faith . . .”). Paul validates this reality when he makes this sobering statement in 2 Thessalonians 1:

⁷ and to give relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, ⁸ dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. ⁹ These will pay the penalty of eternal (αἰώνιον) destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,

If the lost are simply annihilated the word eternal would not be employed in contexts like this, because annihilation is an event, not an ongoing state (Other texts which speak of the eternal nature of hell: Jude 12-13, Revelation 14:10-11; 20:10-15).

Second, those who are separated from God’s presence for all eternity will experience, as Daniel reveals, two things: disgrace/shame and everlasting contempt

ע' אלהי Is 40:28; ע' אלהי Dt 32:40; ע' ה' Dn 12:7; of divine name, ע' זה שמי לע' Ex 3:15 (E), cf. 2 Ch 33:7 (v. supr.); blessing and praise of it 2 S 7:26 = 1 Ch 17:24, ψ 72:19; 135:13; of 'I' himself 89:53; attributes, אהבה Je 31:3 1 K 10:9; חסד Is 54:8 ψ 89:2; 138:8; לע' חסדו 1 Ch 16:34, 41 2 Ch 5:13; 7:3, 6; 20:21 Ezr 3:11 ψ 100:5; 106:1; 107:1; 118:1, 2, 3, 4, 29; 136:1 + 25 times, Je 33:11; כבוד ψ 104:31; אמת 117:2; 146:6; צדק 119:142; עצה 33:11; reign Ex 15:18 (E), ψ 10:16; 66:7; 92:9; 146:10 Je 10:10 Mi 4:7; ישב ψ 9:8; 29:10; 102:13 La 5:19; presence in Zion 1 Ch 23:25; Is 33:14; 60:19, 20 Ez 37:28; 43:7, 9; his salvation Is 51:6, 8; ע' כל אשר יעשה האלהים יהיה לע' Ec 3:14.

(Daniel 12:2). Shame, *charpha* (חַרְפָּה), has several lexical nuances in Hebrew. It can denote taunting between opposing people (1 Samuel 17:26). Interestingly enough, David used this word in many of his prayers because the godless constantly taunted his godly leadership (Psalm 69:20, 21; 71:13; 89:51; 119:22). In Psalm 71:13, he prays for the taunt of the godless to one day come back on them in God's judgment. In Jeremiah 23:40, God promises the downtrodden, persecuted prophet that one day this would, in fact, occur, especially with false religious teachers:

³⁹Therefore behold, I will surely forget you and cast you away from My presence, along with the city which I gave you and your fathers. ⁴⁰I will put an everlasting (חַרְפָּה) reproach on you and an everlasting humiliation which will not be forgotten" (Jeremiah 23).

Daniel informs us this will occur after the second resurrection of the lost. For all eternity there will be a divine (audible?) taunt for their flagrant rejection of His gospel. Jesus warned of this in Matthew 7:2 when He remarked, "For in the way that you judge, you will be judged, and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you." What goes around does come around.

A second lexical nuance for this word means "to be shamed." In relation to this we must remember the words of Jesus,

³⁶ But I tell you that every careless word that people speak, they shall give an accounting for it in the day of judgment (Matthew 12).

²² For nothing is hidden, except to be revealed; nor has anything been secret, but that it would come to light (Mark 4:22).

When you stand before the judgment bar of God and He, who is omniscient, pulls back the curtain on your life to reveal your sin for all the saints and angels to see, there will be instantaneous shame for your actions, for your unbelief, for your love affair with sin you conveniently rationalized away of disguised as moral action, and for your opposition to God and God's ways. How could there not be shame as you, the sinner stand before an absolutely holy God? This shame is not momentary either, but will extend, as part of your judgment, into eternity. Hell does have some sort of fire to create torment (Matthew 13:49-50; 25:41; Mark 9:43-47; Luke 16:19-31; Revelation 19:20), but it also has a psychological dimension.

God also informed Daniel that non-believers who reject Him will experience "everlasting contempt." The Hebrew word, *dera'on* (דֵּרְאוֹן), speaks of disgrace wedded to one's actions. Now, the lost strut like arrogant peacocks with their sin, going so far as the say how proud they are of their supposedly "moral" choices. And with each new formally moral taboo redefined as acceptable behavior there is only more pride. There is also a renewed push to discredit and persecute believers for their love of morals and holy behavior. Interesting. Those who should be

disgraced, are praised, and those who should be praised are disgraced. All of this mockery will end at the judgment seat of God (Revelation 20:7ff), and for all eternity the lost will psychologically feel the crushing weight of their shameful and sinful behavior. Hell does, in fact, involve some sort of unquenchable fire (Mark 9:43-48; Luke 12:4-5). It is also the essence of darkness at the same time (Matthew 8:12). From Luke 16, we also learn those in Hell remember their lost family members on earth, and they can see into heaven. But of all these punishments, one must not overlook the psychological dimension as stated emphatically by Daniel in verse 2:

וְאֵלֶּה לְחַרְפוֹת לְדַרְאוֹן עוֹלָם

The opening coordinating conjunction wedded to a non-verb establishes the stark, emphatic contrast, and the use of two words to denote the psychological punishment of this ominous place forms a pleonasm. What is this? It is giving more words than warranted in order to create an emphatic statement.² God, obviously, wants to make sure everyone understands what the cost is for rejecting Him. Do you understand?

Many who do cognitively understand logically have questions, and rightly so. I'll field a few of those at this juncture.

- Isn't eternal judgment for temporal sin unjustified? No. Sin against an infinite, eternal, holy God, by definition, calls for eternal punishment. Our problem is we fail to recognize the magnitude of our sinful behavior to God.
- How can believers be happy in heaven when people we know will be in perpetual punishment for rejecting Christ? Believers in heaven will have the mind of Christ (1 Corinthians 2:16), and since God is happy in heaven, then it is possible for us to be happy as well. Further, God will not permit knowledge to diminish the bliss of heaven in any fashion; hence, even if this knowledge is known it will not be detrimental.
- Why did God allow people to be born He knew would wind up in this horrible place? How can we, as finite beings, possibly say that non-being is intrinsically better than being? A non-being cannot even articulate that his/her status, or lack thereof, is qualitatively better than being, so the question is moot. God does, on the other hand, give us the opportunity to freely choose Him. Such is the worldwide call of the gospel (Mark 16:16; John 3:16; 5:24-25; 10:9; Romans 10:9-13).
- How can God judge people with eternal punishment when they are born with the bent to sin? While sin might be inevitable, it is, as Dr. Geisler points out, not unavoidable.³ Every person, as we see from judgment narratives, will be held accountable for their acceptance or rejection of God's gospel.

²E. W. Bullinger, *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1968), 405.

³Dr. Norman Geisler, *Systematic Theology*, Vol. 4 (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2005), 345.

- Don't phrases like "everlasting destruction" in 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9 mean that the lost are simply annihilated instead of subjected to everlasting torment? The same word for destruction is used by Paul in 1 Corinthians 5:5 where it clearly does not mean annihilation. Destruction, by definition, does not mean annihilation, as we see from Revelation 20:7 which teaches that the Beast and False Prophet will be in the Lake of Fire for the entire 1,000 year kingdom period. There is no annihilation here. Next, if the unbeliever's resurrected body is merely annihilated this will be instantaneous, for there is no such thing as everlasting annihilation. How, then, does this square with the rest of the New Testament's teaching regarding the eternal nature of this judgment (Matthew 18:8; 25:41, 46; 2 Thessalonian 1:9)? It doesn't square with it because it can't. Additionally, if God were to annihilate man, who is created in His image (Genesis 1:27; 9:6), this would be to attack His image, which is something God could not, and would not, EVER do. Finally, Jesus is quite clear there are degrees of punishment in Hell. He emphatically warned the Galilean cities of Chorazin and Bethsaida, where He had taught and performed so many outright miracles, that it would be better for inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah on judgment day than for them (Matthew 11:21ff). The more spiritual light you receive the greater the judgment . . . for He is just. Since the judgment is in degrees, then annihilation could not occur because there are no degrees of nothing.

There is, obviously, much more we can say, but these observations help us understand that God closed out the book of Daniel with a promise and a warning. There is a promise of eternal life to those who embrace Him, and a promise of eternal punishment to those who efface Him, and it will all be realized at the first and second resurrections respectively. Again, I must ask you, Which resurrection will you participate in? Jesus is ready to save you today, but you must come to Him in repentant faith (Romans 10:9). What is holding you back?

Moving from the negative to the positive, God reveals through the angel to Daniel that the first resurrection will be literally most glorious.

The 1st Resurrection & Eternal Glorification (Daniel 12:3)

Daniel's words here are most exciting and illuminating:

³Those who have insight will shine brightly like the brightness of the expanse of heaven, and those who lead the many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.

From this concise statement many questions swirl in my theological, biblical brain.

- Will believers literally shine in the kingdom age and beyond? Good question. Note the words of Jesus later, ⁴³*Then THE RIGHTEOUS WILL SHINE FORTH AS THE SUN in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear* (Matthew 13). Yes, we will all shine, or reflect the glory of God, and because we are draped in white garments, I'm sure it will be a sight to see (Revelation 6:11; 7:9, 13, 14; 19:14).
- Will we all shine in an equal manner? No. How do I know? Because, for one, Daniel says we shall shine like the “expanse of heaven,” and since stars have different degrees of luminosity based either on their proximity to earth (their apparent brightness) or their size (intrinsic brightness), we, logically, will have different degrees of glory.
- How will the degrees of luminosity be determined? Daniel tells you if you are listening. Those who have insight into the things of God, and who use this knowledge to point people to Savior who can save them, they will shine most brightly in the kingdom age and eternity. For those of you who are attempting to turn godless people to God, in a variety of ways, you will shine as a testimony to God in eternity. For those of you who share your faith, per the Lord's command (Matthew 28:19-20), resulting in many souls populating His kingdom, you, too, will beam in your persona and presence in eternity. All will shine and reflect God's glory, but there will be differentiation based on obedience. We readily see spiritual rewards will differ for saints from the teaching of Christ (Matthew 25:15-28; Luke 19:1ff), and Paul (1 Corinthians 3:5-17; 2 Corinthians 5:6-10). Justice, of course, demands He reward us fairly for service rendered. In relation to these two motifs, you must ask yourself, How brightly will I shine before God based on this standard of measurement? Stop and think hard about this. How you live, or don't live, your Christian life will be imprinted on your for eternity. Sure, it will be wonderful to be there, but don't you want to shine as brightly as you can for God to give Him the ultimate and eternal praise every time you come before His lofty, magnificent throne? Right now you are thinking in increments of 10, 20, or 30 years. Why not think in terms of 100, 200, or 300 million years?
- How will we shine? How is this possible? Didn't Moses's face shine when he came down from Mount Sinai (Exodus 34:29)? Yes. Extrapolate, then, from the lesser to the greater. Since an earthly body can reflect God's glory, how much more so a heavenly, glorified, resurrected body suited and fitted for the wonders of heaven?

Folks. The **MESSIANIC EXPRESS** is a 'comin, and when it arrives there will be two resurrections: one for believers and one for unbelievers. Which one will you participate in? If you know you will be in the latter one, or even if you are not sure, then, I can think of no better day than right now to settle that question once and for all.