

him for myself. Yes, I will see him with my own eyes. I am overwhelmed at the thought!

(Job 19:25-27)

How could Job be so confident of being raised from the dead and seeing his Redeemer? We already read how the psalmist echoed this same hope, saying “*God will redeem my life. He will snatch me from the power of death.*”

Do you have a confident hope of resurrection? Jesus the Messiah spoke these inspiring words, “*I am alive forever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and the grave.*” (Revelation 1:18) If any normal mortal said these words we might laugh at him because it is so preposterous. But coming from Jesus Christ this claim has a ring of truth about it, especially when we pause to consider that he performed many death-defying signs and wonders.

Like the psalmist, Jesus the Messiah spoke about the hereafter using riddles. He offered people ‘living water’ that would quench their longing for eternity. I encourage you to read more about this ‘homing instinct’ in the two booklets, *Is Death the End?* and *Timeless Truth Encrypted in Ancient Wisdom.*

If you want to obtain these booklets or ask questions, please contact me at starsign77@hotmail.com

Note: All Biblical quotations are taken from the New Living Translation (unless otherwise indicated).

¹ <http://injlil.org/clarke/sacrifice.pdf>




Homeward Bound

by

Roland Clarke

Insights that Inspire Hope



with our Creator and to be at home with our heavenly Father.

For many people this homeward journey creates frightening images of judgement day when everyone will be judged for the wrongs they did. There are, however, inspiring testimonies of certain people who anticipated being reunited with God. The psalmist wrote,

You will keep on guiding me with your counsel, leading me to a glorious destiny. Whom have I in heaven but you? I desire you more than anything on earth.

(Psalm 73:24,25)

The wise man, Solomon, penned a proverb that also hints at this hope of a happy hereafter. He said,

A good reputation is more valuable than costly perfume. And the day you die is better than the day you are born. Better to spend your time at funerals than at parties. After all everyone dies – so the living should take this to heart. Sorrow is better than laughter, for sadness has a refining influence on us. A wise person thinks a lot about death, while a fool thinks only about having a good time.

(Ecclesiastes 7:1-4)

Another wise man in Bible times also probed some perplexing aspects of death, saying, “*I listen carefully to many proverbs and solve riddles with inspiration from a harp.*” He continues by observing that people “...cannot redeem themselves from death by paying a ransom to God. Redemption does not come so easily, for no one can ever pay enough to live forever and never see the grave ... But as for me, God will



Homeward Bound

At the airport I eagerly anticipated welcoming a friend whom I had not seen for many years. While waiting I noticed how others arrived and were enthusiastically embraced by their relatives and friends. One reunion was particularly touching – they were so deeply moved that they cried for joy.

Later I wondered to myself, “How will it be when God welcomes us into our eternal home?” If our friendship with God is more precious than any human relationship, surely this reunion in heaven will surpass anything we can imagine on earth!

Jews, Christians and Muslims believe that humans come from God and will return to him. (Ecclesiastes 12:7; Surah 2:156) The psalmist gives us a glimpse of what it means to be welcomed home by God, “*Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.*” (Psalm 116:15 NIV)

We can appreciate the intense joy of reunion with friends when it happens after a long separation. So let’s consider, “Was there a time when humans

© Copyright 2009 Roland Clarke

Published by

AcadSA
PUBLISHING

AcadSA Publishing Tel +27 11 976 4044
PO Box 12322 Fax +27 11 976 4042
Edleen, Kempton Park Email info@acadsa.co.za
1625, Rep South Africa Web www.acadsa.co.za

© Copyright 2009 by Roland Clarke. This work is licensed under the
Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs2.5 License.
To view a copy of this license, visit:

http://ccm.org.za/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=46&Itemid=56 or send a
letter to AcadSA Publishing PO Box 12322, Edleen, Kempton Park, 1625, Rep South Africa.

redeem my life. He will snatch me from the power of death.” (Psalm 49:7,8,15)

The Qur’an seems to agree with the dilemma described in this Psalm. It says that no one can pay a ransom to God that will avert punishment. We read in Surah 6:70,

... every soul delivers itself to ruin by its own acts: it will find for itself no protector or intercessor except God: if it offered every ransom, (or reparation), none will be accepted.

Clearly there is no ransom that humans can offer to God which will satisfy his justice. But this does not rule out the possibility of God providing a ransom. In fact, there are clear indications in the Bible and also in Qur’an that God did intervene to make such a provision.

We know that **God provided a ram** as a ransom¹ so that Abraham’s son could live. We also know that Moses and his people were rescued from Egypt by sacrificing a lamb. The slaughter of Passover lambs meant that first born Israelite sons were spared from the death plague. Job was another prophet who believed that God provides a ransom (from death). His story of steadfastness in the face of extreme suffering has become legendary. When Job was at the brink of death he testified,

But as for me, I know that my Redeemer lives, and that he will stand upon the earth at last. And after my body has decayed, yet in my body I will see God. I will see

5

were with God and then experienced separation?” If we recall those earliest days when our original fore-bearers lived in the Garden of Eden, we find a clue to help us answer this question.

Adam and Eve enjoyed fellowship with God while they lived in the Garden of Eden. And then we know what happened next. Satan deceived them, causing them to fall from their state of innocence. They disobeyed God and he banished them from Paradise. Although Adam and Eve had done many good things it only took one sin to expel them from Paradise. They lived the rest of their lives in a world where there was enmity, corruption, sickness and death. (Genesis chapters 2 & 3; Surah 2:36-38)

No doubt they longed to return to their original home where they had enjoyed pure happiness. They missed the close relationship that they had experienced with God. Being banished from the garden must have caused them deep heartache and grief. But how does this event affect us now?

From the time of our first ancestors till now, people have experienced heartache from losing loved ones. Death has always caused a profound sense of separation and a feeling of loss.

Here is something worth pondering, “Is the grief we feel in our generation an echo of the pain that Adam and Eve felt at being separated from God? Is sorrow and pain intended to turn our attention to

2

God?” If we humble ourselves sorrow can sensitize us to God.

Hundreds of generations have come and gone since Adam’s fall. One would think that by now people would have learned to accept death as one of those normal facts of life. But there is a sense of heartache, a feeling of loss and bereavement that we can’t suppress or pretend is not there. It makes sense to understand this deep-seated feeling of grief as an echo of the pain that Adam and Eve experienced when they were banished from the Garden and their friendship with God was broken.

But there is more to this story than a tragic separation, there is also a feeling of wanting to return to our true home.

Homing Instinct

Solomon observed that humans have eternity implanted in their heart. We read in Ecclesiastes 3:11,

God has made everything beautiful for its own time. He has planted eternity in the human heart, but even so people cannot see the whole scope of God’s work from beginning to end.

We are familiar with homing pigeons. It amazes us to see how they can instinctively fly back to their home thousands of miles away. In a similar way, we humans have a homing instinct. We want to be reunited

3