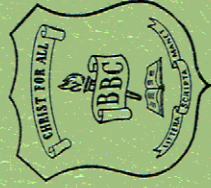


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CHALLENGE TO THE CULTS, NO. 3.

IS THERE  
A  
SECOND  
CHANCE  
?



By Rev. Cyril Hutchinson  
Principal, Berean Bible College

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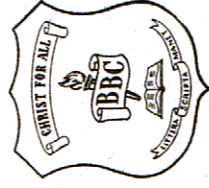
Berean Bible College

Calgary, Alberta, Canada

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# IS THERE A SECOND CHANGE ?



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Berean Bible College      —————      Calgary, Alberta, Canada

## CHALLENGE TO THE CULTS

### No. 3 "IS THERE A SECOND CHANCE?"

By C. HUTCHINSON,

Principal, Berean Bible College

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Does God ever give a man a second chance?  
Will God's door close at the Rapture?  
Can a person be saved after death?  
What about Purgatory?  
When is the matter of salvation settled?

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

These are some of the questions being asked by many today. The answers are being proposed by the advocates of every kind of false cult, — answers contrived out of either the totally inadequate imaginations of the human mind, or the distorted perversions of the Scriptures.

In this booklet we propose to submit the philosophies and suppositions of men to the keen, searching "Sword of the Spirit," the infallible declarations of the Word of God. We challenge the cults to face the unmistakable truths set forth herein.

May God make this publication a "lamp" to the path of many.

## Is There A Second Chance?

*THE QUESTION HAS ARISEN AND OUGHT TO BE FACED*

Deep in the human heart there lies a fear of finality and a desire for procrastination. How easily we "put off" matters that ought to be faced and settled! How often we like to sit on the fence, halting between two opinions! Thus in spiritual matters many people follow the steps of Felix, who waited for "a convenient season" which never came (Acts 24:25). We tend to presume on the grace of God. He has waited so long for us, and He is so kind. We feel He will wait longer and longer, and so we can put off the day of decision, and drift along the paths of life. And out of such careless thinking has grown the idea that there will always be another chance, that there is no finality about God's grace, and that even after death we shall have a time and place to come to God and settle up all the accounts to His satisfaction. The idea of a general judgment in which the good and bad of life are balanced off has arisen from such idle speculation.

It is evident that such ideas, if found to be false, can be more dangerous than any other delusion, because the victim is lulled into a false sense of security, and made to miss the greatest opportunity of life. The voice of Satan is constantly saying: "Yes, you need to be saved, but not just yet. Put it off awhile, and taste all the pleasures of sin first." Is not this teaching of a second chance after death the very same voice? May God arouse us to its subtle and deadly danger!

*THE BASIC REASONING BEHIND THE QUESTION*

A crowd stood around a group of workmen, watching their intensive efforts. They were building a boat, a huge, commodious ship, the like of which had never been seen before. They were building it on dry land! And from the lips of the chief ship-builder they heard words of ominous warning, telling of a great coming flood of water that would drown the world. They heard his earnest invitation to take shelter from the coming storm in the prepared place, this great ship, and they felt the urge of the Spirit of God as He strove with them, urging them to the place of safety. And the grace of God is so wonderful, His love so infinite, His patience so great, that the invitation continued for 120 years! Did not the people of Noah's day have a second chance, a third chance, and a multitude of chances?



Jonah ran away from God. He ran as far and as fast as he could. He paid out his hard-earned money for a boat-fare, and set sail for lands beyond the call of God. How fully God would have been justified in allowing that rebel to perish in the great storm that followed him! How right it would have been for God to let the waves roll forever over his bones on the ocean floor! How easily He could have allowed the great fish to digest his flesh! But Jonah had a second chance, a second call, a second opportunity to obey God, when he was put back on the dry land safe and sound. The grace and mercy of God are great and wonderful beyond our comprehension. He gives a second opportunity, and often many more, because He loves us all.

Let us not minimize the grace of God, in all His dealings with men. Nineveh received its second chance through the preaching of Jonah. Pharaoh was called by God not just twice, but ten times! How many chances did the people of Sodom have? Every time just Lot remonstrated with them over their evil ways, God was giving them yet another call before the fire fell. Of the city of Jerusalem, our Lord said: "How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold your house is left unto you desolate." (Matt. 23:37-38). Even a fig tree was spared for 4 years, given 4 chances. (Luke 13:6-9). Of Judah God said: "The Lord hath sent unto you all his servants the prophets, rising early and sending them; but ye have not hearkened, nor inclined your ear to hear (Jer. 25:4). Let me ask you, dear reader, how many opportunities you have had to accept Christ as Saviour. If God had only spoken to me once, and then executed judgment, I would be in hell by now! God gives many opportunities, in His matchless love and grace. We read in Romans 10:21 "But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people." God is a longsuffering God to all of us.

Now some examine all this wonderful truth, and then conclude that there will always be another chance to be saved, because His grace is so great. Our natural tendency to procrastinate rises up, and makes us think that even beyond the grave there may yet lie another chance for the salvation we neglected on earth.

#### *THE FATAL FLAW*

How easily men grasp half a truth! In making much of the wonderful patience and love of God, we forget that there comes a time when His justice over-rules all else, and calls for the account to be settled. The day came when God shut the door of the Ark. That was the accounting day.

Those who were in were shut in. Those who were outside were shut out, forever. Pharaoh gasped and drowned in the Red Sea. God called him to account. Sodom burned on that fatal night when God called time on its wickedness. Judah went into captivity, and then into global dispersion for 19 centuries. Jerusalem fell before the battering rams of Titus in 70 A.D.

This is the other half of the truth. God says: "My spirit shall not always strive with man." (Gen. 6:3). There comes that day when man is abandoned by God forever, unless he turns to God before that fatal hour strikes. Now the awe-inspiring question is squarely before us. **WHAT IS THAT HOUR?** Is it the hour of death? Is it the Judgment Day? Is it the end of the world? When will my hour strike, beyond which there is no hope, when my last chance is forever gone? Let us be wise enough to seek the answer, not in the opinions or perversions of men, but directly from the Word of God.

#### *WILL ANYONE ON EARTH BE SAVED AFTER THE RAPTURE?*

What is the Rapture? There's a good question! The word isn't in the Bible at all. But the truth it represents certainly is! Referred to in many places, we find its chief mention in I Corinthians 15:51-52, I Thessalonians 4:13-18 and Titus 2:13. It is the event called the "glorious appearing" of Christ, when He will descend from heaven with a shout, when all the dead in Christ will be raised from the graves, when in a moment of time the living believers will be changed, and then all caught up together with the risen saints to meet the Lord in the air, to be forever with Him. This catching away of ALL believers out of the world is surely imminent, but the moment of its occurrence is unpredictable. It might well take place as you read these words!

What will happen then to all those left behind, those who have failed to receive Christ as Saviour, those who have put the matter off, waiting for yet another chance? With all the believers gone, with the Holy Spirit no longer personally in the world, with every believing preacher leaving a vacant pulpit, with the unrestrained powers of evil loose and rampant on earth, will anyone have a second chance then? In those days following the Rapture of the Church, the wrath of God will be poured out upon the world that scorns His grace and despises His Son. Will those who reject His love now have another chance then?

One thing we must understand. It is very evident that many people will turn to the Lord after the Church is taken away. In Revelation 7:9, 13-14 we read of a great multitude that will come out of that time, and be

received of God. But who will these people be? Second-chance folk? This cannot be so. These people will undoubtedly be "first-chancers," those who hitherto have never heard the Gospel. There are millions living today that are in this position. But not one Christ-rejector will be in that glorious number! Their fate is expressed in II Thess. 2:8-12. Those who reject salvation now will be sent strong delusion then, that they "ALL might be damned who BELIEVED NOT the truth." Their hearing is spoken of in the past tense. They heard the truth, and believed it not. Their damnation is their present fate in those post-Rapture days. God save you, friend who has heard the truth of the Gospel, from slipping on past God's deadline, past the Rapture, and into that delusion and damnation that lies ahead. To know the truth, and yet not act upon it, puts you in the most dangerous position that you can ever occupy. The appearing of Christ for His Church will spell doom for you!

#### *CAN ANYONE BE SAVED AFTER DEATH?*

When an unsaved man wakes up in eternity, and sees how wrong he has been, can he then have another chance from God? The Bible says "NO". We challenge the cults on this vital point. False teachers would tell us that Christ did not fully redeem us, but merely bought us the privilege of having a "second chance" after death. This is simply a figment of perverted human imagination, foreign to all the teaching of God's Word. Others say that there is a Purgatory, a half-way house between heaven and hell, and that the payment of money to an earthly priest for his patented prayers can buy a person out of purgatory, giving him another chance to reach heaven! What sickening blasphemy! No wonder Peter, (claimed as the first Pope!) cried out:—"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold . . . but with the precious blood of Christ". The idea of Purgatory is not in the Bible. It came from a wicked, mercenary mind, and is totally imaginary. It has bred a false hope in the hearts of deluded millions. Nowhere in all the Bible is there an example of a man saved after death. Nowhere in all the Bible is there a hint or promise of any such thing ever taking place. The Bible says the person dying without Christ, will be without Christ through all eternity. Examine the Scriptures on two vital points:—

#### *THE SINNER WHO DIES UNSAVED HAS NO FURTHER CHANCE TO BE SAVED.*

Before such a one dies, his eternal destiny is already fixed. In Luke 16:22-23 we read the record given from the lips of our Lord Jesus Christ,

of the death of two men, and the exact truth concerning what happened to them after death. One went to Abraham's bosom, the other went to hell. The matter was settled before they died. And between them, for all eternity, there lies a "great gulf", fixed, impassable and permanent. (verse 26). There is no second chance for a man once he gets into hell. He is fast in the prison-house of the Universe. He cannot escape, and he is beyond all help forever.

But the question may be asked: "What about after the resurrection, when hell gives up its dead?" The Bible answers that very clearly for us, in Revelation 20:12-15. There will come a time when all these wicked dead will stand before God, for a final review. It will be the last judicial indictment, to vindicate God's justice, to prove to all creatures that these inhabitants of hell have never had their names written in the archives of heaven, in the Lamb's Book of Life as those who have trusted and loved the Saviour. Remember that the names of the saved are put into that Book during this present life. See Phil. 4:3. Notice too the other names given to this final resurrection of the unsaved, for they are most revealing. In Daniel 12:2 it is called the resurrection unto "everlasting contempt". In John 5:28-29 it is called "the resurrection of damnation". There is no hope for the unsaved in that hour! There will be no second chance!

The thought that any Christ-rejecting sinner can have another chance after death, at any time, is found to be false because the matter of personal salvation is forever settled in this life, and in this life alone. We read in Hebrews 2:3 this searching and unanswerable question "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" If we now neglect God's way of escape from hell, what then is there left? In Hebrews 10:26-31 we read that the person who turns against Christ, spurns His atoning blood, and rejects the great and perfect sacrifice for our sins, has no other recourse, no other way to God, no other sacrifice for sins. He can only look, not for a "second chance", but for "a certain fearful . . . judgment and fiery indignation". "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God". When God's love and grace are spurned and despised, only His wrath is left. Again in Ephesians 2:12 we read of the unsaved as "having no hope". The unsaved man has no hope whatsoever, no hope of heaven or salvation, or of a "second chance." At no time can he hope. Those dreadful words "NO HOPE" utterly wipe out all the teaching of the false cults concerning a second chance. We challenge these false teachers to face the fact! See also the unmistakable fact taught in John 3:18. "He that believeth not is condemned ALREADY". His doom is fixed, while he still lives on this earth. He has no chance at all. The matter is settled here and now. Finally, here

is the word of the Lord Jesus, as we read it in John 8:21. "Ye . . . shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come". God the Son said that. He meant it. It settles the matter forever. No sinner who dies unsaved will ever reach heaven through a "second chance". May God speak to you who read these words. If you are still without Christ, may the Spirit of God strike into your heart the terrible conviction of your awful need, and turn you to the Saviour who waits to save you TODAY, but not TOMORROW!

#### *THE PERSON WHO DIES TRUSTING IN CHRIST HAS NO FURTHER CHANCE TO BE LOST*

Here is the other side of the story, often neglected, and by some totally unknown. How many fearful folk there are on earth today, who shrink from declaring themselves as "saved", because they think this is presumption! They have a general, hazy idea that some day there will be a great general judgment of everybody, all gathered before God, and then He will decide who is to come into heaven and who is to go to hell. These folk live in constant fear, and think that nobody can really know, in this life, that they are certainly bound for heaven. What do you think?

Then the false sects have seized upon this notion, and invented the idea that Christ has not actually purchased for us full and complete salvation that we can receive and rest upon here and now, but that He has instead bought us a second chance after this life, if we find we need it at the general judgment. We challenge this as totally unscriptural, illogical and illusionary. In the first place, there is no such thing in the Scriptures as a general judgment. The Bible tells of many coming judgments. The Christians will be judged at the Judgment Seat of Christ, and there given the various rewards God has prepared for their service on earth, but the unsaved will stand before the Great White Throne, there to hear their condemnation because they have refused to rest upon the finished work of Christ in His death at Calvary. These judgments will not be to determine who is to enter heaven, and who is to be cast into hell. As we have already shown, that matter is settled here and now, in this life.

Now the Bible clearly states that we CAN KNOW, in this our life on earth, whether or not we shall enter heaven at death. Listen to this statement in I John 5:13: "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life." What could be plainer? "That ye may KNOW"! The reason that some do not know is that they do not read what God says. To everyone who believes on the Son of God, the Bible says "You HAVE (present tense) eternal life". There are too many trembling saints today! We need

to sing again: "Ye trembling saints, fresh courage take"! If you are a Christian, a believer on the Lord Jesus Christ as your own Saviour, you ought to know what will happen to you when you die. God has told us, to assure us and to comfort us. We need never fear that we shall face some "second chance", with its equal chances of being lost or saved.

Let me set out some of the great teachings of the Word of God in this regard. First, it is evident that the Christian will at once enter the presence of Christ at death. This will not happen after some probation time in an imaginary Purgatory, or after working at some equally imaginary "second chance." At death the Christian's soul goes at once to be with Christ. The proof? Here it is, plain enough in the Bible. Read it in II Corinthians 5:8: "We are CONFIDENT, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord". Thank God for this! It was Paul's earnest expectation, as he sets it forth in Philipians 1:23, "I . . . having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better". So in verse 21 we read: "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain". What grand assurance he had!

Then think what a place heaven is. It is never spoken of as a place where we shall strive to be accepted of God, but always as a prepared place for a prepared people. In Hebrews 4:9 we find that there is to be a "rest" for the people of God, not a struggle with another chance. In Luke 16:25 we read of Lazarus being "comforted", not subjected to a "second chance". In Revelation 21:4 we read that sorrow and death will be forever gone. In II Corinthians 5:1 we are promised that we shall, at death, occupy an eternal building, made by God. Death for the Christian is not a renewing of the struggle, but simply a "going home", to that prepared mansion the Lord promises to all who trust Him. He said in John 14:2, "In my Father's house are many mansions . . . I go to prepare a place for you". All this is NOW ASSURED to the Christian!

Remember too, that when we leave this life, the Christians will be at once and forever changed. In I John 3:2 we read that we shall be made like our Lord Jesus Christ, as soon as we see Him. Then at the resurrection, even these bodies will be gloriously transformed, for we read in Philipians 3:21 that our vile bodies shall be changed to "be fashioned like unto his glorious body". In I Corinthians 15:51-52 we have the promise of the Rapture of the saints, and in that "twinkling of an eye" God says "we shall all be changed". In the light of these glorious facts of Holy Scripture how utterly ridiculous is this false teaching of the "second chance"! Thank God we Christians do not have to wait for or think of any mythical probation after death or "second chance" for the matter to be settled. It is

all settled NOW! The believer already POSSESSES eternal life! Let me sum this up by repeating the words of the Lord Jesus, as found in John 5:24: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, HATH EVERLASTING LIFE, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life". The word "hath" is not in the future tense. It is present tense! It means that the believer has eternal life at this present time, and that he can KNOW IT!

What does all this mean to you, dear reader? Have you been gripped by the fear of death, and fear of what may lie beyond it? Have you not as yet put your personal faith in Christ, as your sin-bearer, as your substitute, the One who died for your sins? If not, let me lovingly beseech you to receive Him this very hour. For you there will be no chance after death. The issues of eternity are settled before death, not after. I invite you to lift your heart to God this moment, and accept Christ as your Saviour, in simple, trusting faith. Will you do it? There is a decision form at the end of this booklet, ready for your sincere and whole-hearted declaration, before God. Turn to it, and use it, right now. Write to us and tell us about it, that we may pray for you.

Christian, have you not entered fully into the peace and joy of your salvation because you have never felt you could declare yourself saved and ready for heaven? In His name, stand upon the promises. Claim them as your very own, and KNOW that you have eternal life, with no "second chance" to be faced. As you do, the fear of death will be gone, and wonderful peace will flood your soul! Thank God for all of you who will simply trust Him all the way!

**MY DECISION**

Knowing that I am a sinner condemned before God; and believing that Jesus Christ shed his blood and died for me, I NOW accept Him as my Saviour, and with His help I intend to live for Him and confess Him before men.

Signed .....

Date .....

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