

THE CELESTIAL RAILROAD

June 9th, 2019 – The Celestial Railroad

Part 17 – The Delectable Mountains and the By-Way to Hell

Please [click on this link](#) and scroll down to read ‘The Delectable Mountains and the By-Way to Hell’. If you’d like to review this part in Pilgrim’s Progress, please [click on this link](#) and read Chapter 26.

In the Celestial Railroad we read; *“The road now plunged into a gorge of the Delectable Mountains, and traversed the field where, in former ages, the blind men wandered and stumbled among the tombs. One of these ancient tombstones had been thrust across the track by some malicious person, and gave the train of cars a terrible jolt. Far up the rugged side of a mountain I perceived a rusty iron door, half-overgrown with bushes and creeping plants, but with some smoke issuing from its crevices.”*

To help this part of the story make more sense, let’s read what it’s referencing in Pilgrims Progress; *“Then I saw that they (the Shepherds) had them to the top of another mountain, and the name of that is Caution, and bid them look afar off; which, when they did, they perceived, as they thought, several men walking up and down among the tombs that were there; and they perceived that the men were blind, because they stumbled sometimes upon the tombs, and because they could not get out from among them. Then said Christian, What does this mean?”*

The Shepherds then answered, Did you not see a little below these mountains a stile, that led into a meadow, on the left hand of this way? They answered, Yes. Then said the Shepherds, From that stile there goes a path that leads directly to Doubting Castle, which is kept by Giant Despair, and these, pointing to them among the tombs, came once on pilgrimage, as you do now, even till they came to that same stile; and because the right way was rough in that place, they chose to go out of it into that meadow, and there were taken by Giant Despair, and cast into Doubting Castle; where, after they had been a while kept in the dungeon, he at last did put out their eyes, and led them among those tombs, where he has left them to wander to this very day, that the saying of the wise man might be fulfilled, “He that wanders out of the way of understanding, shall remain in the congregation of the dead.” Then Christian and Hopeful looked upon one another, with tears gushing out, but yet said nothing to the Shepherds.”

How many Christians today have taken the easy path instead of staying on the difficult straight and narrow road and have ended up not able to see in the Spirit, wandering in the congregation of a dead Church? The Giant of Despair has taken them out by blinding them spiritually.

Proverbs 21:16 says; *“A man who wanders from the way of understanding (godly wisdom) will remain in the assembly of the dead.”* This applies to men and women alike.

When you turn away from understanding, which is in God’s word, you’re also turning away from the Holy Spirit who has been sent to comfort you. Why do you need a Comforter? Because of Giant Despair! This despair wants to persecute you to take you out by killing, stealing and destroying, but the Holy Spirit will comfort, build you up and edify you.

In [Revelation 3:1-3](#), Jesus is addressing the dead church of Sardis by saying; *“...I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead... 3 Remember therefore how you have received and heard; hold fast and **repent**. Therefore if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you.”* How sad is that, they have the name that they’re alive, but they’re dead.

In Pilgrim’s Progress it says this about the By-Way to Hell; *“Then I saw in my dream that the Shepherds took them to another place located in a valley where there was a door in the side of a hill; so they opened the door and invited the pilgrims to look in. Therefore on looking inside they saw that it was very dark and smoky; they*

THE CELESTIAL RAILROAD

also thought that they heard there a rumbling sound like a fire, as well as the crying of some tormented souls, and in addition they smelt the stench of brimstone. Then Christian said, "What does this mean?" The Shepherds told them in reply, "This is a By-way to Hell where hypocrites are able to enter, that is those like Esau who would sell his birthright, or like Judas who would sell his Master, or like Alexander who would blaspheme the gospel, or like Ananias and Sapphira who would lie and dissemble [deceive]." HOPEFUL: I notice that every one of these, at one time or another, put on a display of going on pilgrimage even as we are now doing. Is that not true? SHEPHERDS: Yes, and they traveled for quite a great distance as well. HOPEFUL: Exactly how far was it possible for pilgrims such as these to travel in their day, that is while appreciating the fact that they were miserably cast aside? SHEPHERDS: Some can go even further, while others cannot reach as far as these Mountains. Then the pilgrims spoke to each other, "We certainly have a need to cry to the Strong [One] for strength." SHEPHERDS: Yes, and you will need to use it when it is given to you."

Those putting on the display of Christian pilgrimage probably had the right clothes and image, the right 'christian-eezz', what to say and what not to say, had their favorite scriptures and Bible verses, had their favourite place to congregate. Sound familiar? You will need the Holy Spirit to give you the strength to overcome the doubts, fears and persecutions in this life.

BunyanMinistries.org gives this commentary; "*In a valley against an unnamed hill, the pilgrims have their attention directed toward a formidable door that is yet opened to them by the Shepherds. Evidently Bunyan believed that pastoral exhortation for the saints ought to include warnings about the doctrine of hell. Why? Because true children of God will only all the more "gird up the loins of their minds [and] . . . keep sober" (I Pet. 1:13) while, as we shall soon see, apostates will be suitably warned (Jude 4-13).*"

Let's look at the definition of hypocrite in Webster's Revised Unabridged Dictionary; "(n.) One who professes beliefs he is not willing to uphold; one who plays a part; especially, one who, for the purpose of winning approbation of favor, puts on a fair outside seeming; one who feigns to be other and better than he is; a false pretender to virtue or piety; one who simulates virtue or piety"

The main theme of this message today is that hypocrisy is unacceptable in the life of the Christian, in the life of the non-Christian and in the life of the 'Bible believer' who is not born again.

In The Celestial Railroad we read; "*Is that," inquired I, "the very door in the hillside which the shepherds assured Christian was a by-way to hell?" "That was a 'joke' on the part of the shepherds," said Mr. Smooth-it-away, with a smile. "It is neither more nor less than the door of a cavern, which they use for a smoke house for the preparation of mutton hams."*

Such deception! The By-Way to Hell was the place where hypocrites enter hell, and our adversary, the devil, calls it a joke saying that it's ok to be a hypocrite as a Christian. In essence saying that you won't go to hell being a hypocrite. Mr. Smooth-it-away is a perfect example of the hypercritical apostates described in [Jude 4-13](#), and here he is attempting to smooth away the existence of Hell and the judgement of hypocrites as was read in Pilgrims Progress, By-Way to Hell.

Jesus says these strong profound words in [Mark 9:42-48](#) showing that whatever stands in the way of your relationship and obedience to Him, must go, whether it's your hands, your feet, your eyes etc., because if not, judgement will come and He says three times; "*into the fire that shall never be quenched— 44 where 'Their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched.'*"

Jesus makes it very clear that hell is real and it's a place of eternal torment for those who reject His plan of salvation obtained by being born again of the Holy Spirit. This scripture throws a wet blanket on the preaching of annihilation which believes hell is not eternal and that if you end up there, you're consumed like a branch and nothing remains; you never see God after the Great White Throne Judgement and it's just 'over'. The devil

THE CELESTIAL RAILROAD

would love people to believe that lie wouldn't be. You'd lose a burden for souls – because after all there is no consequence for sin – and ultimately it may even affect your own salvation because it gives you a license to dabble in sin knowing that hell isn't eternal, which is contradictory to what Jesus just said above.

These two scriptures show clearly that you must be born again. **John 3:3**; “*Jesus answered and said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”*” **1 Peter 1:22-23** “*22 Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart, 23 having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever,”*”

Those riding on The Celestial Railroad are Bible believers that are not born again, therefore, hypocrisy is just the norm for them because they don't have the Holy Spirit living inside of them. So, it's just a religious smoke and mirrors show that will ultimately lead to an eternal fire, smoke and brimstone show in hell.

Jesus again talks about the eternal reality of hell in **Matthew 25:31-46** where He will judge the nations; “*...41 “Then He will also say to those on the left hand, ‘Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: 42 for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; 43 I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.’ 44 “Then they also will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?’ 45 Then He will answer them, saying, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.’ 46 And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”*”

The Apostle Paul talks about God's final judgment and glory in **2 Thessalonians 1:3-10**; “*6 since it is a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who trouble you, ... 9 These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,”*”

The Apostle John in **Revelation 20:11-15** says this about the great white throne of judgment; “*...15 And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.”*”

It's pretty clear that those unbelievers who reject Jesus and His salvation plan of becoming born again, and those who are Bible believing hypocrites, will be under the same judgement. Unless you're born again, your name is not in the Book of Life, and if you are born again and are living the life of a hypocrite, you fall under the same judgement and unless you repent of your hypocrisy, you will be cast into the same lake of fire.

We're dealing with the spirit of hypocrisy in this message. You can be born again but choose to disobey Jesus and live the lifestyle of a hypocrite. Isn't God in His justice going to do right in His judgment? One of main excuses that people make in not going to church is that believe there are just a bunch of hypocrites in there. They build excuse after excuse after excuse to not go to church and yet they may be just as hypocritical as the hypocrite that they are judging.

What it comes down to is this; God does not send anyone to hell, they send themselves by rejecting His salvation plan, and no matter how much they smooth hell's existence away, it still burns for eternity.

Repent of hypocrisy if you're a Christian so God's judgment doesn't fall on you.

Repent if you're not born again and receive God's free gift of salvation for your name to be in the Book of Life. Repent, if you're on the Celestial Railroad, believing in the Bible but are not born again.

Revelation 20:15; “And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.””