

What About Death And Hell?

Introduction



By Philip E. Busby

Question #19 - The following was the “Step Into The Springs” segment that introduced “What About Death And Hell?” as a series in *Shaqah*, and the fact it was appearing directly following the series “A Matter Of Life And Death,” whose subject content is very related to this series.

In this issue of *Shaqah* we will begin what should be a three part series called, “What About Death And Hell?” This series is based on a question, submitted to Living Springs, asking about the subject of death and specifically about hell. This Q&A is actually older than the one just recently concluded in *Shaqah*, called “A Matter Of Life And Death.” However, while the answer to the question this new series is based on was sent to the person who submitted the question, this Q&A has never been published in *Shaqah* or on our website. To be honest, this is simply because things sometimes get lost in the shuffle. However, God works all things for our good when we are called according to His purpose, (Rom. 8:28) and I believe that is what has happened here.

The truth of the matter is, if this Q&A had not been set aside during a very busy time for this ministry, it would have been published several years ago. This, I do not believe was God's will. I believe this because it now appears clear it was/is God's will for this Q&A to be published at this point in time. This is not just because now may generally be the better time for everyone to read it, but also because there is specific benefit in this Q&A following the “A Matter Of Life And Death” series, which is based on a very related question.

To some, this may seem odd because there is much information covered in both these articles that is similar, if not the same. However, I have found in ministry that often similarity, if not downright repetitiveness, is not something to be rejected but embraced. I remember in my early days of preaching, when I was alongside a couple of other young ministers about my same age who were also just starting out. In those days, we could have multiple services in a day and/or multiple sermons preached in the same service. Often all three of us would be slated to preach on the same day or one right after the other in the same service. Now, we all have those particular things we struggle with, and I remember one of the ministers in that group had difficulty with the repetitiveness issue. It seemed it just did not matter how often he preached in these situations; if he did not preach first, he would find himself questioning the sermon God had laid upon his heart, because the minister who preach before him seemed to always preach what this young man felt he had been prepared to say.

This greatly disturbed the young man and he would doubt he had truly heard The Lord, and/or felt he had done something incorrect, and The Lord had given his sermon to someone else! However, if we calm ourselves and listen to the voice of God, what we all find in these situations is that God is working through us, and on many occasions even in spite of us. Because our thoughts are not God's thoughts, our mind is often not desirous to do what God asks or wants us to do. (Isa. 55:8) It many times just doesn't seem right to us. However, God often counters our fear or wrong thought patterns with something that gives us a clear choice.

In the case of my fellow minister, he would never have prepared his heart to preach what was right in these situations if God had made it clear he had been made a part of a series of sermons on the same subject; but as a man who had been prepared by God to simply preach what he had been prepared to preach, he sat in the pew with little choice. He could get up and preach what God had given him, or stumble through a sermon trying to preach something that had not been prepared by God in his heart. When he tried the second option it never went well, and that fact ultimately is what got him past the fear of being looked at negatively for preaching on the same subject as the preacher before him!

We simply never know what God has in store or why He works the way He does at times. With that, I have to admit I certainly would never have put this Q&A directly following or preceding “A Matter Of Life And Death,” on purpose. They seem too similar, and my first instinct would have been just like that young preacher, and I would not have presented them back to back. However, God had other plans, and He made those plans clear. Who knows, even the sharing of this short sermon on the matter may have a vital affect on someone's life, and it would never have been written if this situation had not arose. God only knows for sure. Thus, no matter what anyone may think, to God be the glory, and I hope you enjoy this issue of *Shaqah*!