

# Life



Past, Present  
& Future

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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*And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent His Son to be the Saviour of the world. 1 John 4:14*

## LIFE

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If what we see, hear and experience in the world around us today is all there is to life, then it's hardly surprising that there is so much despondency and emptiness in people's lives. Whichever way we look we see unrest, power struggles and wars. The rich and powerful are taking control for their own ends. Injustice, corruption and crime are getting out of control, and the majority find very little to be optimistic about.

I am writing this little booklet to let you know that there really is more to life than this. It is genuinely possible to enjoy a full and meaningful life even now, as well as having real hope for the future.

## TRUTH

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What I write here is true and reliable. How do I know that? I know because I have used the Bible as my source of information. The Bible is God's word for us, written by him through reliable and trustworthy men in days gone by.

*All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness. 2 Tim 3:16*

Over the years people have attempted to discredit or disprove the Bible, but they have all failed. Others have simply chosen not to believe it, but that still doesn't mean it's not true. Some have gone to extraordinary lengths in their attempt to find out what the future holds. Any source of information about the future, other than God's word, will only be unreliable at best, or even dangerous, and should be avoided at all times.

*Do not turn to mediums or seek out spiritists, for you will be defiled by them. I am the LORD your God. Leviticus 19:31*

The Bible contains many prophecies (predictions) about the future and all of them to date have been shown to be 100% accurate. There are others that still relate to the future from now onwards, and I will refer to them later.

*I have told you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe. John 14:29*

## **FROM BEGINNING TO END**

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The Bible has a number of purposes and functions, one of them being a kind of history book, setting out God's detailed account – past, present and future – of his plans and purposes for man, the world and the universe.

*For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope. Romans 15:4*

## **PAST**

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The creation of the world, the universe and all human, animal and plant life, all living happily together with each other, and in a loving relationship with God himself.

*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.  
Genesis 1:1*

*So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them*

*and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground."*

*Genesis 1:27, 28*

The first people used their freedom of choice to disobey God, and this brought what we know as "sin" into the world. This sin caused their relationship with God to break down.

*Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned. Romans 5:12*

This sin affected the whole world, as the sinful nature it produced was passed on down through every subsequent generation.

*There is no one righteous, not even one. Romans 3:10*

God's unique plan to restore the right relationship between every person and himself that sin has broken down.

*For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.*

*John 3:16*

## **PRESENT**

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The sinful nature we are all born with still keeps us separated from God.

*For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. Romans 3:23*

*For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Psalm 51:3*

Our sinful nature and independence from God have led to the dreadful state the world is in today. It's not God's doing, it's ours.

*Furthermore, just as they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, so God gave them over to a depraved mind, so that they do what ought not to be done. They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; they have no understanding, no fidelity, no love, no mercy. Romans 1:28-31*

*The nations have fallen into the pit they have dug; their feet are caught in the net they have hidden. The LORD is known by his acts of justice; the wicked are ensnared by the work of their hands.*

*Psalms 9:15, 16*

Our independence and separation from God have serious consequences both now, and more especially for the future, if not resolved.

*But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed. Romans 2:5*

## **FUTURE**

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God's plan for the world, the universe and all human life all told in graphic detail so we can know about it and prepare for it.

*But the plans of the LORD stand firm forever; the purposes of his heart through all generations. Psalm 33:11*

God has a unique plan and purpose for every one of us. Finding and following it will bring meaning and purpose to our lives here and now, and, more importantly, for the future.

*Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight. Proverbs 3:5, 6*

## **THE PROBLEM**

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As we've already seen, we are all born with a sinful nature. We don't become sinners by doing wrong things. We do wrong things because it's already in our nature to do them. We've been born that way. As sinners we cannot have a right relationship with God because he is "holy", and cannot have anything to do with sin.

*For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. Romans 3:23*  
*Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me. Psalm 51:5*

## **LOOKING AHEAD**

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When this life is over, we all die, but that is not the absolute end. It's just the end of our time on this earth. It's God's plan that we all live for eternity. The Bible describes two different places where eternity will be spent.

## **ETERNITY WITHOUT GOD**

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One is called, "The Lake of Fire". This will be the eternal destiny for every person whose sin still separates them from God when their life on this earth is over.

God has a very important book which the Bible calls, "The Book of Life". In it are the names of all those people who have had their relationship with him restored. When this world as we know it comes to an end, every person whose sin continues to separate them from God will be called to stand before him. This includes every person still alive at that time and every person who has died up till that time. This is known as God's "Great White Throne of Judgement". It is his final judgement, and he will determine the eternal destiny of every person whose name is not written in his Book of Life.

*Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. The earth and the heavens fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what they had done. Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire. Revelation 20:11-15*

*He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might. 2 Thessalonians 1:8, 9*



The Lake of Fire will be a place of never ending torment of body and soul, worse than actual death itself because it will last forever, with no further opportunity of restoring our relationship with God.

## **ETERNITY WITH GOD**

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The second everlasting place is called “The New Heaven and Earth” and is where every person whose relationship with God has been restored, while still living on this earth, will spend eternity with God himself. By contrast with The Lake of Fire, this will be a place of everlasting joy and peace with no more death, sickness, pain or suffering, and no more oppression, corruption or crime of any kind. It will be just as God originally intended.

*Then I saw “a new heaven and a new earth,” for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. ‘He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death’ or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.” Revelation 21:1-4*

## **TILL THEN**

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However, after death, and before we all enter eternity, either The Lake of Fire or The New Heaven and Earth, there are two places of temporary confinement till the end of time for the souls of all who

have died. These two places are known to most people as “Heaven” and “Hell”. The first is the place of temporary confinement for the souls of those who have had their relationship with God restored before they died.

*My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? John 14:2*

The latter is the place of temporary confinement for the souls of those whose relationship with God was not restored before they died.

In both cases the physical body of each person is either buried or cremated. But the “soul” lives on and at the end of time is given a new body which will last for eternity in either The New Heaven and Earth or The Lake of Fire.

*Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt.*

*Daniel 12:2*

## **WHAT NOW?**

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So what we need to look at now is how we have our relationship with God restored. Sin is the issue here, and it stands in the way. Sin can be forgiven, and its consequences can be cancelled out. When this is done the way is open for our relationship with God to be restored. But how does it work?

## SHORT TERM

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In the past it was done by every person making animal sacrifices. The animal itself took the consequences – its blood was shed, and its life taken.

*In fact, the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness. Hebrews 9:22*

The problem with this was that the person making the sacrifice remained unchanged in regard to their sin. The consequences of their sins were cancelled out, but only for a year. The process had to be repeated every year.

*Moses said to Aaron, "Come to the altar and sacrifice your sin offering and your burnt offering and make atonement for yourself and the people; sacrifice the offering that is for the people and make atonement for them, as the LORD has commanded." Leviticus 9:7*

## LONG TERM

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But God really wanted every person to change inwardly towards their sin, not just outwardly as before, so he did something very special. It happened only once. He provided a sacrifice that was not only on behalf of every individual person, but was so powerful and effective that it never needed to be repeated.

*But he has appeared once for all at the culmination of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself. Hebrews 9:26*

*"This is the covenant I will make with them after that time, says the*

*Lord. I will put my laws in their hearts, and I will write them on their minds." Hebrews 10:16*

## **GOD'S PLAN**

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That very special sacrifice took place over 2,000 years ago. I am talking here about the sacrifice of the life of Jesus, God's own son, on the cross. It was for that purpose that he came to this earth, to sacrifice his own life for the sins of the whole world. His blood was shed and his life given as a once-for-all-time sacrifice. That was God's solution for the consequences of sin for the whole world. Three days later, God raised him back to life again, and not long afterwards he returned to heaven where he remains to this day.

*For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures. 1 Corinthians 15:3, 4*

*After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, he was taken up into heaven and he sat at the right hand of God. Mark 16:19*

## **WHAT CAN I DO?**

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For that same sacrifice to be applied to our own lives, we are required by God himself to respond personally and sincerely. How do we do that?

Firstly we need to acknowledge that we are a sinner, and have been living our lives independently from God and going our own way. Everyone is born that way, but we need to begin by acknowledging it before God.

*For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. Romans 3:23*

Secondly, we need to turn away from all known sin in our lives (the Bible calls this repentance), ask God to forgive us, and have our relationship with him restored.

*Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord. Acts 3:19*

Thirdly, we need to believe that Jesus is the Son of God, that the sacrifice of his own life that he made on the cross was made for us personally for the consequences of sin in our lives, that God raised him to life again, and make him Lord of our lives.

*But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name. John 20:31*

*He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world. 1 John 2:2*

*If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved. Romans 10:9, 10.*

And finally we need, by faith, to place our lives, without reservation, into God's hands for him to lead, guide and care for us. He will give us an entirely new set of values and priorities which will enable his plans and purposes for our lives to be fulfilled in this present time and for the future.

*Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in a*

*ll your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight. Proverbs 3:5, 6*

*“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.*

*Matthew 28:29*

## **COME AS YOU ARE**

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You may believe you are not good enough or worthy to be part of God’s family. You may feel you need to better yourself first in some way. Please understand that Jesus came to save you from the consequences of your sins, no matter what kind of life you have led or what condition you believe yourself to be in. God calls you to, “Come as you are”. Jesus came to die for sinners, not those who already believe they are good – no-one is.

*There is no one righteous, not even one. Romans 3:10*

*For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. Romans 3:23*

## **BE READY**

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When you are ready to take these simple (but very profound) steps, and take your rightful place in God’s order of things, then I would encourage you to follow this short prayer and speak it out openly to God himself. He will hear you and receive you into his Church, which is the family of God.

## MY PRAYER

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Dear God, I know I am a sinner and have been living my life independently of you and going my own way. Right now I turn away from all the sin in my life that I know about, and from living this way, and place my life into your hands. I thank you for sending Jesus, your son, to sacrifice his life and take upon himself the consequences of my sin, and right now I want Him to be the Lord and Saviour of my life. I ask you to take me and help me to live the life you have prepared for me. Amen.

## BE ASSURED

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If you prayed this prayer to God sincerely, you can be certain that you are now a child of God, part of his family, the Church. You may not feel any different right now, but you can accept it and believe it. Saying this prayer is not a single isolated step, but rather the first step on a journey that will continue for the rest of your life on this earth and into eternity beyond.

*Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God. John 1:12*

*For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.*

*John 3:16*

*“Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life. John 5:24*

## LOOK FORWARD

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You will begin to enjoy a new life with new purpose and meaning here and now with God at the centre of everything. He will lead you and guide you, and give you the strength to live as he wants you to. You will go on to find that you enjoy meeting with other Christians who are also members of God's family, the Church, and to begin to worship God and get to know him.

You will learn more about God and living a Christian life by reading the Bible, and living by what it says. You will also begin to enjoy spending time alone with God in prayer, and together with others at times too. In time your life will change in many ways as God equips you to live the full and meaningful life he has prepared for you.

*Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is - his good, pleasing and perfect will.*

*Romans 12:2*

*Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Saviour, and my hope is in you all day long. Psalm 25:5*

You will begin to understand and experience the love of God, and to find real peace which comes from the assurance that your life and future are now safe in his hands.

*May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Romans 15:13*



*And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:7*

## **THE TURNING POINT**

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Responding to God will be the turning point in your life – turning from being your own master in all things, from trusting in your own abilities and ingenuity, and from relying on fragile and unreliable worldly resources.

*Those who trust in their riches will fall, but the righteous will thrive like a green leaf. Proverbs 11:28*

*You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you. Isaiah 26:3*

## **TAKE CARE**

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You may already attend a church. You may already pray and read your Bible. You may do good deeds and lead an honest life. Whilst these are all good and commendable in themselves, on their own they play no part in restoring the relationship God wants us to have with him. Once we have responded to God in the way he has set out, as I've previously explained, then all of these will become a natural part of everyday life.

*For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith - and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - not by works, so that no one can boast. Ephesians 2:8, 9*

## NEW LIFE

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A very warm welcome awaits you in your new family, the Church, when you become a Christian, a child of God. As soon as possible, it will be good for you to find a church where you can make good friends, worship God, learn about prayer (talking with God), learn to understand and live out God's word (the Bible) and also learn what it means to be baptised as a believer. It will also be good to tell others about this "new life" you have found.

*Blessed are those who keep his statutes and seek him with all their heart. Psalm 119:2*

*Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path. Psalm 119:105*

*Direct my footsteps according to your word; let no sin rule over me. Psalm 119:133*

*Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" Matthew 4:4*

*He replied, "Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and obey it." Luke 11:28*

*Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Acts 2:38*

## DON'T DELAY

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Our response to God must be made during our lifetime on this earth. He doesn't hold us responsible for being born with a sinful nature, but if we ignore or reject what he has done to set us free from it and

its consequences, we will remain in danger of spending eternity in The Lake of Fire. Who knows when his life on this earth will end, leaving no further opportunity to respond to God? Please don't ignore or reject this message, your eternal future depends on it.

*For he says, "In the time of my favour I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you." I tell you, now is the time of God's favour, now is the day of salvation. 2 Corinthians 6:2*

*Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. James 4:14*

## CHECK IT OUT

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The Bible warns us clearly that this world as we know it will not exist forever. It also explains how we can recognise the signs that its time is drawing to an end.

*But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God. 2 Timothy 3:1-4*

As we look around at the world today, it's not difficult to see this Bible prophecy coming true.

## THE REAL THING

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I want to encourage you to consider carefully what you have just read, particularly the passages taken from the Bible. The message contained here in these few pages is the very one Jesus himself instructed his disciples to take to the world just before he returned back to heaven almost 2,000 years ago.

*He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. Mark 16:15, 16*

That small number of very ordinary faithful men dramatically impacted the world around them and beyond, and established the Church in the years that followed.

*After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, he was taken up into heaven and he sat at the right hand of God. Then the disciples went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and confirmed his word by the signs that accompanied it.*

*Mark 16:19, 20*

From that time on, and up to this present time, the Church has continued to take this same message to an ever-increasing global population. The time is coming when this mission will be complete and the next stage of God's plan will begin to unfold.

*And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.*

*Matthew 24:14*

## **FREEDOM TO CHOOSE**

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You're not just "a small cog in a big wheel", nor are you "just another brick in the wall". To God himself you are precious, deeply loved and created in his image. He has a clear plan and purpose for your life. The only thing that stands in the way is sin.

Just like the first people God created, we too have freedom to choose. You can choose to ignore or reject what you have just read. I've explained the consequences of that. Or, you can embrace God's plan and purpose for your life.

Refer back to page 13 and take the first steps by restoring the relationship God wants you to have with him.

If you would like to talk about this with someone, the person who gave you this booklet will be more than happy to help. You will find their details below. Alternatively you can contact us directly at **[hedleysonamission@gmail.com](mailto:hedleysonamission@gmail.com)**







