

## Going the Way of All the Earth

*John Isaac Edwards*

**T**wo outstanding men of God talked about going the way of all the earth. Joshua told Israel, “And, behold, this day I am going the way of all the earth...” (Joshua 23:14). King David charged Solomon his son saying, “I go the way of all the earth...” (1 Kings 2:2). “Going the way of all the earth” is an expression of physical death, and there are six (6) things I want to call to our attention about it.

***We Are Sure to Go.*** The words spoken by Joshua and David can be said by each of us. Death is sure! It is recorded concerning the generations of Adam, “And he died...” (Genesis 5:5, 8, 11, 14, 17, 20, 27, 32). Job said, “For I know that thou wilt bring me to death, and to the house appointed for all living” (Job 30:23). The Psalmist asked, “What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death?” (Psalm 89:48). Ecclesiastes 9:5 states, “For the living know that they shall die...” Paul informed the Corinthians, “For as in Adam all die...” (1 Corinthians 15:22). Hebrews 9:27 says, “...it is appointed unto men once to die...”

***It Won't Be Very Long Till We Go.*** We sometimes sing, “It won't be very long till this short life shall end...It won't be very long till here we cease to roam...” The Psalmist declared, “Remember how short my time is...” (Psalm 89:47). The shortness of life is expressed many different ways in the Scriptures: as the life of a flower (Job 14:1-2; Psalm

103:15-16), as a shadow (Job 14:2; 1 Chronicles 29:15), as a wind (Job 7:7; Psalm 78:39), as a post (Job 9:25), as the swift ships (Job 9:26), as the eagle (Job 9:26), as a tale that is told (Psalm 90:9), as a weaver's shuttle (Job 7:6), and as a vapour (James 4:14). Psalm 90 records, “The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away...So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom” (vv. 10, 12).

***What Happens When We Go.*** Man is composed of “spirit and soul and body” (1 Thessalonians 5:23). Genesis 2:7 affirms, “And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.” To Adam God said, “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return” (Genesis 3:19). From a physical standpoint, we are as Abraham said, “but dust and ashes” (Genesis 18:27). Man has a spirit within him formed by the Lord, which is sometimes referred to as the soul (Zechariah 12:1). All that happens when we go the way of all the earth is our soul or spirit will depart our body. The body will go back to the dust from whence it came, and the spirit unto God who gave it. “For as

the body without the spirit is dead...” (James 2:26). Ecclesiastes 12:7 expresses death this way: “Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.” It was said of Rachel, “And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing, (for she died)...” (Genesis 35:18). Thus, we read of those who “gave up the ghost” (Genesis 25:8; 35:29; 49:33; Matthew 27:50).

***How We Can Go.*** Did you know we can and will choose how we will go the way of all the earth? We can’t choose how we will die physically, whether by some accident or disease, but we decide how we will die spiritually. We will either go in our sins (John 8:24) or in Christ (Revelation 14:13). If you die in your sins, you cannot go where Christ is (John 8:21). The only death that is called blessed is the death of those who die “in the Lord” (Revelation 14:13). To die in the Lord, one must be in the Lord, and we get in the Lord as we are “baptized into Christ” (Galatians 3:27). Then, we must “abide” in Him (John 15:4). What will be your spiritual condition, when you go the way of all the earth?

***Once We Go, There’s No Return.*** Death will bring an end to our earthly existence. There is no coming back to this life. “For we must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again...”

(2 Samuel 14:14). “As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up: So man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep” (Job 14:11-12). “When a few years are come, then I shall go the way whence I shall not return” (Job 16:22). David recognized this as he said of his dead child, “...I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me” (2 Samuel 12:23). The rich man learned there’s no returning from the dead to this life (Luke 16:19-31). So whatever it is that you need to do, you better get it done! Death seals one’s destiny.

***We Know Not When We Will Go.*** When do you plan to die? We have no way of knowing what tomorrow’s obituary list will be! “For man also knoweth not his time: as the fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds that are caught in the snare; so are the sons of men snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon them” (Ecclesiastes 9:12). Remember Proverbs 27:1 which says, “Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.” The rich man had plans for many years, but did not live another day (Luke 12:19-20).

As the Lord said to Hezekiah, king of Judah, “Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live” (2 Kings 20:1).

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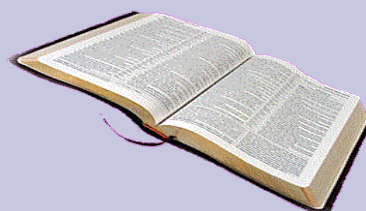
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