

Blessed are the Dead

Introduction

Life does not go on forever. At some point we must face the reality of what comes next. That is why we spend time on the Sanctuary and Judgement: they tell you what comes next!

Future destiny. Eternal Realities. The Third Angel's Message makes this clear when it ends with this statement.

*Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, "Write: 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.' "Yes," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them."
Revelation 14:13*

Those that are under the Third Angel's Message will:

- 1) Die in the Lord
- 2) Enter the Rest
- 3) Have their works follow them

In other words, they have the faith of Jesus and the commandments of God. This is the everlasting gospel. The judgment validates that it was genuine faith and genuine works! Those are the blessed, the only blessed. This is the only way to eternal life!

The Deception

But the masses of the world have been deceived into believing that there are many ways to eternal life and types of eternal life. There is one basic lie that has validated these other eternal life falsehoods.

Herodotus, the Greek historian, tells of the origin of a strange teaching that undermines eternal life only in Christ:

"The Egyptians say that Demeter and Dionysus are the chief powers in the underworld; and they were also the first people to put forward the doctrine of the immortality of the soul...this theory has been adopted by certain Greek writers, some earlier, some later."

So there is no resting because there is no such thing as death.

This teaching has an even more ancient source than the Egyptians. In Genesis, God told Adam and Even they have dominion over everything and to be fruitful and multiply and eternity would be theirs. However, there was a condition to this eternal bliss and that was obedience.

And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; ¹⁷ but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you^{al} shall surely die." Genesis 2: 16-17

But then Satan said something different.

Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die." Genesis 3:4

So which is it?

Definition of a Soul

Life was new on Earth. Nothing had ever died before. So what is death anyways? What is a soul?

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 being. Genesis 2:7

For Adam, God created a body with all the anatomical physiology that makes life possible. Then he breathed life. It was CPR. The first breath of air that rushed into Adam's lungs fired him up and the biological mechanism came to life.

God did not put a soul into him that was hanging around in the universe waiting for a body.

Man became a soul. A living thing.

The spirit and breath and wind are all interchangeable words.

As long as my breath is in me, And the breath of God in my nostrils," Job 27:3

This is a recognition that at birth, that first gasp of air is from God.

For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also. James 2:26

Breath is a spirit-like heavenly being.

Dust + spirit = soul

The Holy Spirit is called the wind, or the breath. We had the breath of God or the spirit of God breathed into us. But nowhere does it ever say we were given a spirit of our own.

We became a living soul when a body was formed and the breath of life from the Holy Spirit came into us. Animated us and we became living beings.

1600 times in the bible the word soul is used for living being. The word for soul is Nepes "That which breathes"

"Behold, all souls are Mine; The soul of the father As well as the soul of the son is Mine; The soul who sins shall die. Ezekiel 18:4

Death and Immortality

How can this be if a soul is immortal?

The bible says that souls die and God does not want us to be unclear about what death is in case we are tempted to believe in some pagan idea of the afterlife.

What happens at death? Death is the reverse of the order of life.

Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, And the spirit will return to God who gave it. Ecclesiastes 12:7

In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread Till you return to the ground, For out of it you were taken; For dust you are, And to dust you shall return.” Genesis 3:19

This is death: it is the punishment for sin. Meaning simply, no more life because we do not want to live by the boundaries, rules or condition to have eternal life: which is obedience to God.

But wait: What if you do want eternal life and you do want to play by the rules and do not want to die but am a sinner?

And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel.” Genesis 3:15

This is our salvation story. Instead of death, God would give us the opportunity for that eternal life through Jesus Christ.

Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. Romans 6: 8-10

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 6:23

So instead of being returned to the earth as dirt forever, God made our death temporary. But Satan came along and said, “you can’t really die.” So then people believe Jesus is not the only way of eternal life and you really don’t have to obey.

The gospel and eternal life are INEXTRICABLY tied together. You can’t have one without the other.

And because God would give the world a second chance at eternal life through Jesus, he called death a sleep.

Your dead shall live; Together with my dead body they shall arise. Awake and sing, you who dwell in dust; For your dew is like the dew of herbs, And the earth shall cast out the dead. Isaiah 26:19

And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, Some to everlasting life, Some to shame and everlasting contempt. Daniel 2:12

And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit. Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split, and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many. Matthew 27: 50-53

So where did the idea that death was sleep come from? From the oldest literature known to the Hebrew people.

But man dies and is laid away; Indeed he ^[b]breathes his last And where is he? As water disappears from the sea, And a river becomes parched and dries up, So man lies down and does not rise. Till the heavens are no more, They will not awake Nor be roused from their sleep. “Oh, that You would hide me

in the grave, That You would conceal me until Your wrath is past, That You would appoint me a set time, and remember me! Job 14: 10-13

In fact, Death is called a sleep 36 times in the Old Testament.

So David slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David. 1 Kings 2: 10

“Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, ^[a]according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne, Acts 2: 29-30

Is there any consciousness in this sleep? Any awareness?

For the living know that they will die; But the dead know nothing, And they have no more reward, For the memory of them is forgotten. Ecclesiastes 9:5

The dead do not praise the LORD, Nor any who go down into silence. Psalm 115:17

For Sheol cannot thank You, Death cannot praise You; Those who go down to the pit cannot hope for Your truth. The living, the living man, he shall praise You, As I do this day; The father shall make known Your truth to the children. Isaiah 38:18-19

For in death there is no remembrance of You; In the grave who will give You thanks? Psalm 6:5

His spirit departs, he returns to his earth; In that very day his plans perish. Psalm 146:4

When are we awakened from this death sleep?

If a man dies, shall he live again? All the days of my hard service I will wait, Till my change comes. You shall call, and I will answer You; You shall desire the work of Your hands. Job 14:14-15

For I know that my Redeemer lives, And He shall stand at last on the earth; And after my skin is ^[a]destroyed, this I know, That in my flesh I shall see God, Whom I shall see for myself, And my eyes shall behold, and not another. How my ^[b]heart yearns within me! Job 19:25-27

And Paul makes it clear what the old prophet meant in 1 Corinthians.

Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed— in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory.” 1 Corinthians 51-54

So when is death swallowed up? At the resurrection on the last day. Not when we die.

But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Let's look at an object lesson about this in Jesus' time. Let's look at a person who was one of Jesus' best friends: Lazarus.

Now a certain man was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. It was that Mary who anointed the Lord with fragrant oil and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick. Therefore the sisters sent to Him, saying, "Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick." John 11:1-3

These things He said, and after that He said to them, "Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I may wake him up." Then His disciples said, "Lord, if he sleeps he will get well." However, Jesus spoke of his death, but they thought that He was speaking about taking rest in sleep. Then Jesus said to them plainly, "Lazarus is dead." John 11: 11-14

Then Jesus shows up at the funeral and tells Martha, "you will see him again. He will rise again one day."

Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day." John 11: 23-24

Martha's doesn't say, "I know my brother is in heaven. I know he is looking down." Jesus says he will rise again. Not that he is alive. Instead, Martha understands that Lazarus is dead and she knows he is sleeping in the grave until the resurrection.

But the bigger point is he will live!

Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day." Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. John 11: 24-25

When you die, you sleep in the ground until the resurrection. At that point, if you have Christ, you will be granted eternal life.

Christ is not only the power of the resurrection, but he is also the life! Life is only in Christ. If you do not have Jesus, you can't have eternal life. Not Islam, Buddha, cosmic consciousness, universal energy, wicca and nature

worship or Luciferian cult. We are NOT immortal souls. We have been given temporary life to gain eternal life by being in Christ. And if we choose to believe the lie that you are immortal, you will have a rude awakening. Literally!

Seeing Dead People

My grandmother told me of a story of her mother coming to her in the night. Who was she speaking to? When they hold a séance, Ouija board, Voices of the dead – show are people talking to?

And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs coming out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. Revelation 16: 13-14

King Saul is a prime example of why we do not communicate with demons. God stopped communicating with Saul because he was seeking a necromancer.

Then the woman said, "Whom shall I bring up for you?" And he said, "Bring up Samuel for me." When the woman saw Samuel, she cried out with a loud voice. And the woman spoke to Saul, saying, "Why have you deceived me? For you are Saul!" And the king said to her, "Do not be afraid. What did you see?" And the woman said to Saul, "I saw a spirit ascending out of the earth." So he said to her, "What is his form?" And she said, "An old man is coming up, and he is covered with a mantle." And Saul perceived that it was Samuel, and he stooped with his face to the ground and bowed down. Now Samuel said to Saul, "Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up?" And Saul answered, "I am deeply distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and God has departed from me and does not answer me anymore, neither by prophets nor by dreams. Therefore I have called you, that you may reveal to me what I should do." Then Samuel said: "So why do you ask me, seeing the LORD has departed from you and has become your enemy? And the LORD has done for ^[b]Himself as He spoke by me. For the LORD has torn the kingdom out of your hand and given it to your neighbor, David. Because you did not obey the voice of the LORD nor execute His fierce wrath upon Amalek, therefore the LORD has done this thing to you this day. Moreover the LORD will also deliver Israel with you into the hand of the Philistines. And tomorrow you and your sons will be with me. The LORD will also deliver the army of Israel into the hand of the Philistines." 1 Samuel 18: 11-19

The key word is "perceived." This is a demon telling Saul enough of the truth to convince him. But he leaves out the most important part: if you repent and turn to God, He will forgive you. He will restore you. King Saul is wicked and would not be as righteous as Samuel. Think about what happened to Eve when she listened to Satan.

Today Hollywood has glorified the practice of communicating with the dead. Made it desirable, powerful, helpful and comforting.

The real issue is that Jesus says the only way to eternal life is to die in the Lord. Lucifer and his demons imitate the dead to convince us that everybody gets an afterlife. Everybody is somewhere when you follow the pagan model of the afterlife.

But what about Jesus descending into hell and releasing all the souls of the righteous in the Old Testament?

by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, 1 Peter 3:19

Jesus did not go into hell and release them. This sounds like Pagan Greek mythology – Orpheus the gifted musician who sneaks into the underworld of Hades to rescue his dead wife.

The answer is in verse 18 – which refers to the Holy Spirit. It was the Holy Spirit that preached to the Antideluvian world about the Grace of God. Not Jesus at his death

For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring ^[a]us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit, 1 Peter 3: 18

The Thief on the Cross

*Then he said to Jesus, “Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom.” And Jesus said to him, “Assuredly, I say to **you**, today you will be with Me in Paradise.” Luke 23: 42-43*

Jesus said to her, “Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, ‘I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God.’” John 20: 17

It is about where you place that comma. In the bible, punctuation was added later by translators. So if you change where the comma is, it would read:

*Then he said ^[a]to Jesus, “Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom.” And Jesus said to him, “Assuredly, I say to you **today**, you will be with Me in Paradise.” Luke 23: 42-43*

The bigger point is that in this moment, the thief’s belief in Jesus was his assurance of eternal life.

Why is this important? Because the devil told a lie.

Then the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. ⁵ For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” Genesis 3: 4-5

But what does it mean to “be like God?”

which He will manifest in His own time, He who is the blessed and only ^[a]Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see, to whom be honor and everlasting power. Amen. 1 Timothy 6: 15-16

So, with the devil’s lie, began the lie that man is just like God: immortal beings that can’t die. And this was passed on down to the Egyptians, who gave it to the Babylonians, Persians, Greeks, Romans and the early church fathers when the church was bringing in Pagan beliefs like the immortality of the soul.

The Resurrection is Everything

This is a direct attack on the gospel. The scriptures make it clear that the resurrection of Jesus is everything in this topic.

For as the Father raises the dead and gives life to them, even so the Son gives life to whom He will. For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son, John 5: 21-22

And it is repeated again.

For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself, and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man. John 5: 26-27

Jesus is saying only the Father and the Son have life within themselves. They alone are life-givers. Nothing has life within itself but God the Father and the Son. Man does not have life within himself. And because the Father has granted all judgement to the Son, the Son will determine who has life and who does not by judging who has the Son and who does not. If you have the Son, then John 5:23-24 applies.

Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice²⁹ and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation. John 5: 28-29

The proof that He is the divine Son of God, to prove that he has life in himself like the Father.

So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory." 1 Corinthians 15:54

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. John 11: 25

Righteousness and Life

Think about what we have already learned:

- Righteousness is right-doing according to the demands of the law. Christ lived out the law perfectly righteously.
- In order for us to have eternal life, Christ must impute that perfect righteous life to the believer by faith.
- So His righteousness is the life.

For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory. Colossians 3: 3-4

You are dead but being reborn into Jesus. His righteousness, his righteousness life will be imputed to you. And in that life is the only way to have eternal life.

He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. 1 John 5: 12

If you want life, eternal life and to survive the grave - then go into the watery grave and die through baptism. So that when you are resurrected, when you wake from that death sleep, you will have eternal life.

Baptism is where you can claim life by claiming the righteousness of Jesus.

Then when your name enters that judgement, your life will be hidden in the Son and the life that is His will be granted to you.

*Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, "Write: 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.'" "Yes," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them."
Revelation 14: 13*

And you too will be called blessed.