

What Happens When You Die?

[22]

-The Mystery of Death Unveiled-

** Remember to Pray for Wisdom Before You Begin*

INTRODUCTION: Satan was the first to teach about the natural immortality of the soul. He stated to Eve in the Garden of Eden, "Ye shall not surely die." The Egyptians were probably some of the earliest to advance the doctrine that the soul of man is immortal – (*Herodotus, Greek Historian, 484-425 B.C.*). Plato in his teachings said that the human soul is uncreated, immortal and Divine and it goes through a number of incarnations (*427 -347 B.C.*). Philo, who was a mystic Jew, tried to weld together Platonic and Egyptian philosophy with the teachings of Judaism. He said that the soul is immortal and the lost experience eternal torment (*20 B.C. – 47 A.D.*). Tertullian, a Bishop of Carthage, pushed the idea of the soul being immortal and the lost suffering eternal torment (*160 A.D. - 240 A.D.*). Now these pagan teachings have infiltrated much of Christianity. As the Bible says, Satan would succeed in deceiving most of the world. Let's go to God's Word and find out what the Bible really says about this most vital subject.

- 1.) What is death? It is the opposite of life. How was life started by God in the creation of man? **Genesis 2:7** *And the LORD God formed _____ of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his _____ the breath of _____; and man _____ a living soul. Job 33:4* *The Spirit of God hath made me, and the _____ of the Almighty hath given me _____.*
NOTE: *Notice that God breathed into man His life-giving energy and man "became" a living soul. It doesn't say that He gave him a soul but that he became a living soul. When death occurs, the life from God leaves man and life is extinguished.*

- 2.) What happens at death which shows the opposite of when man was created?
Ecclesiastes 3:20 *All ___ unto one place; all are of the _____, and all turn to _____ again. Job 34:14* *If he set his heart upon man, if he gather unto himself his _____ and his _____; 15* *All flesh shall _____ together, and man shall turn again unto _____.*
Ecclesiastes 12:7 *Then shall the _____ return to the earth as it was: and the _____ shall return unto God who gave it. What is the spirit mentioned here that returns to God? Job 27:3* *All the while my _____ is in me, and the _____ of God is in my _____;*
NOTE: *Since it says the "the spirit of God is in my nostrils" and the Hebrew word for "spirit" is ruwach which means wind; by resemblance breath, exhalation. There is nothing here to even suggest any type of consciousness or anything like that.*

- 3.) Where do the dead go to? **Job 21:32** *Yet shall he be brought to the grave, and shall _____ in the _____.* **Job 17:13** *If I wait, the _____ is mine house: I have made my bed in the _____.* **NOTE:** *Notice in first scripture that it says when we die, we remain in the tomb. In other scriptures it talks about the resurrection when Jesus comes. There*

will be more about this later.

4.) What do the dead do if anything? Are they conscious or experience anything of this life?

Psalm 146:4 His _____ goeth forth, he returneth to his _____; in that _____ day his _____ perish. **Ecclesiastes 9:5** For the living know that they shall ____: but the _____ know not _____, neither have they any more a reward; for the _____ of them is _____. **6** Also their _____, and their _____, and their _____, is now _____; neither have they any more a portion for ever in _____ thing that is done under the sun. **10** Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is _____ work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the _____, whither thou goest. **Psalm 115:17** The _____ praise _____ the LORD, neither any that go down into _____. **Isaiah 38:18** For the _____ cannot _____ thee, death can not celebrate thee: they that go down into the pit _____ hope for thy truth. **19** The _____, the living, he shall _____ thee, as I do this day: the father to the children shall make known thy _____.

NOTE: If as most people believe, you go to heaven as soon as you die, then by all means you would be praising the LORD and giving Him thanks! But, not so according to the last three verses listed above. In fact, according to Ecclesiastes the dead don't know anything at all. For illustration's sake let's suppose there is a man (a born-again Christian) laying in a hospital bed in a state of coma completely unconscious of anything or anyone. Then someone comes in there with a gun and murders him. According to many popular teachings this hospital patient now killed, immediately knows everything and is instantly transported to heaven fully conscious of all this. This is not what God's Word teaches! The body, mind and soul cannot be separated. In fact, it will get much plainer as we study more from the Bible.

5.) In the book of Acts the Apostle Peter gave a powerful sermon during the time of Pentecost and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. What did he say about deceased king David and where David was. Is David in heaven now according to Peter? Acts 2:29,34 Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch _____, that he is both _____ and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto _____ day. **34 For David is not _____ into the _____: but he saith himself, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, **NOTE: This is one of the plainest statements in scripture about the fact that people don't go to heaven as soon as they die. If death is one of the penalties of sin and death is no more than a transition from this life to the next, then the results of sin is actually a benefit to gaining eternal life. That is practically blasphemous! Sin is a horrible enemy and robs us of the blessings of life! These modern deceptions are subtle and very dangerous! If David is not in heaven now, then nobody is for that matter with the exception of Elijah, Moses, Enoch and those that resurrected at the resurrection of Christ, then went to heaven when He ascended. All the rest are sleeping in the graves!****

6.) The Bible has a lot to say about the resurrection of the dead but nothing about going to heaven right at death. What are some of these verses of scripture that talk about this?

Isaiah 26:19 Thy dead men shall _____, together with my dead body _____ they _____ and sing, ye that dwell in _____: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the _____. **Luke 20:35** But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the _____ from the _____, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: **Acts 4:2** Being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the _____ from the dead. **Acts 24:15** And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a _____ of the dead, both of the _____ and _____. **Philippians 3: 10**, That I may know him, and the _____ of his _____, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; **11** If by any means I might _____ unto the _____ of the dead. **Hebrews 6:2** Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of _____ of the _____, and of eternal judgment. **NOTE: There are many other verses of scripture that mention the resurrection that can't be listed here. The Bible is so plain! There are a few confusing scriptures that at first on the surface seems to support the other viewpoint but when studied carefully and in the context of the overwhelming majority of all those that support death as an unconscious sleep, they will come into harmony with the truth. We will look at a couple of these later.**

7.) What powerful analogy does the Apostle Paul use about the resurrection of Christ and how it totally refutes the idea of people going to heaven immediately when they die? **1Corinthians 15:13** But if there be _____ of the dead, then is Christ _____ risen: **14** And _____ Christ be not _____, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. **16** For if the _____ rise _____, then is not Christ raised: **17** And _____ Christ be not raised, your faith is _____; ye are yet in your sins. **18** Then they also which are fallen _____ [died] in Christ are _____. **NOTE: Praise God -Jesus did resurrect from the dead, but Paul is saying for the purpose of illustration that if Christ was not raised, then all Christians who died would be perished. That means not only would they not be in heaven (if that were the case) but they would have no hope of a resurrection in which life of any kind wouldn't exist! How could Paul say they are perished if they were already in heaven with God?**

8.) While on the subject of the resurrection, let's look at the special resurrection of Lazarus whom Jesus Himself raised from the dead. How does this story reveal so plainly the truth about the dead? **John 11:11** These things said he: and after that he saith unto them, our friend Lazarus _____; but I go, that I may _____ him out of sleep. **12** Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do _____. **13** Howbeit Jesus spake of his _____: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of _____ in sleep. **14** Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is _____. **NOTE: Notice in verse 11 how Jesus referred to Lazarus as sleeping and when the disciples misunderstood and thought Jesus was referring to a regular sleep, Jesus said plainly that Lazarus was really dead. Now notice what Jesus promised to Martha the sister of Lazarus. John 11:23** Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall _____ again. **24** Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall _____ again in the

_____ at the last day. **25** Jesus said unto her, I am the _____, and the _____: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he _____: **Now notice what happens when Jesus and the others come to the tomb of Lazarus. John 11:39** Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he _____: for he hath been dead _____ days. **40** Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest _____, thou shouldest see the glory of God? **41** Then they took away the stone from the place where the _____ was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. **42** And I knew that thou hearest me always: but _____ of the people which stand by I said it, that they may _____ that thou hast sent me. **43** And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, _____ . **FURTHER NOTE: Jesus didn't say "Come down." He said, "Come forth." Not only that, if Lazarus had indeed been in heaven, it would have been cruel for Jesus to have called him back down to this dark sin-filled world when he would have been in a much better place. Another point is that you never read any account about Lazarus' experience of heaven if he had indeed been there. These so-called stories that are told of people who have near-death experiences (NDE) are just that – "near" death. Drugs or anesthesia can create these experiences along with the deceptive powers of demons. The fact that these people are always revived and brought back is evidence that they weren't really dead to begin with. This marvelous story is given us to illustrate the power of the resurrection and that Jesus Himself has the "keys" to death and the grave [see Rev. 1:18] – a wonderful and blessed hope for the Christian!**

9.) In the above account of Lazarus, Jesus called death a sleep. All through God's Word death is called a sleep. What are some of these verses that talk about this? **1Kings 2:10** So David slept with his fathers,. . . **1Ki 11:43** And Solomon slept with his fathers,. . . **1Ki 14:31** And Rehoboam slept with his fathers,. . . **1Ki 15:8** And Abijam slept with his fathers,. . . **1Ki 15:24** And Asa slept with his fathers,. . . **And the list goes on and on. . . Daniel 12:2** And many of them that _____ in the _____ of the earth shall _____, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. **Matthew 9:24** He said unto them, Give place: for the maid is not dead, but _____. And they laughed him to scorn. **27:52** And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the _____ which _____ arose. **Acts 7:59** And they _____ Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit [**breath of life & identity**]. **60** And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this _____ to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell _____. **1Thessalonians 4:13** But I would not have you to be _____, brethren, concerning them which are _____, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. **14** For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which _____ in Jesus will God bring with him. **15** For this we say unto you by the _____ of the Lord, that we which are _____ and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are _____. **NOTE: One of the reasons why God inspired the Bible writers to consistently use the term "sleep" for death is not only because death is an unconscious condition for the dead, but for the saved Christian, the first death is but a temporary lull**

before the resurrection. In fact, to the person who dies, it will seem like a moment when awaiting the resurrection. In this way it is just like a dreamless sleep.

10.) Doesn't the Bible teach that the soul is immortal and only the body dies? Ezekiel 18:20a The _____ that sinneth, it shall _____. **Matthew 10:28** And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather _____ him which is able to _____ both _____ and body in hell. **In this context here, it says nobody can take away our spiritual experience with the LORD. But, if we rebel against God and don't repent, He can ultimately destroy our soul. Revelation 16:3** And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man: and every living _____ in the sea. **NOTE: The word "mortal" means subject to death. "immortal" means -not subject to death. Job 4:17** Shall _____ man be more just than God? shall a man be more pure than his maker? **1Timothy 6:15** Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; **16a** Who only hath _____, **NOTE: The Bible says souls can die and that man is mortal not immortal. The Bible uses the word soul 1,600 times, but not even in one instance does it ever talk about an immortal soul. As the above text says "God only hath immortality"**

11.) When do God's people receive immortality? 1Corinthians 15:51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all _____, but we shall all be _____, **52** In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the _____ trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised _____, and we shall be changed. **53** For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this _____ must put on _____. **54a** So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this _____ shall have put on _____, **1Thessalonians 4:15** For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the _____ of the Lord shall not prevent them which are _____. **16** For the Lord himself shall _____ from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the _____ of God: and the _____ in Christ shall _____ first: **NOTE: It is only at the 2nd coming of Jesus that we receive the gift of immortality and new bodies when we will get rid of our sinful flesh and corruption will receive incorruption. SPECIAL NOTE: If everyone received their reward at death or went to heaven immediately, what would be the purpose for the resurrection that the Bible talks about so much? If the saved dead are already in heaven, what sense would it make for them to come back down into their dead bodies, then go back with Jesus into heaven again? This doesn't make any sense nor is this to be found anywhere in God's Word.**

12.) Where are all the saved people who died when Jesus comes the 2nd time? John 5:28 Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which _____ that are _____ the _____ shall hear his voice, **29** And shall come _____; they that have done good, unto the _____ of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. **NOTE: Again, they are in the graves and they hear His voice from the grave.**

13.) How does Jesus' promise to His people in John 14:1-3 prove that His deceased children are not in heaven now? John 14:1 *Let not your _____ be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. 2 In my Father's house are many _____: if it were not so, I would have told you. I _____ to prepare a _____ for you. 3 And if I _____ and prepare a place for you, I will _____ again, and _____ you unto myself; that _____ I am, there ye _____ also.* **NOTE: In verse 3 above why would Jesus say He would come back and receive us unto Himself and then take us to the place He'd gone to prepare if we were already in heaven?**

14.) Back in the days of ancient Israel what was a death penalty for those who were supposedly involved in communicating with the dead? Leviticus 20:27 *A man also or woman that hath a _____ spirit, or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to _____: they shall _____ them with stones: their blood shall be upon them. Exodus 22:18 Thou shalt not suffer a _____ to live. 1Samuel 28:9 And the woman said unto him, Behold, thou knowest what Saul hath done, how he hath _____ those that have familiar _____, and the _____, out of the land: wherefore then layest thou a snare for my life, to cause me to _____?* **NOTE: Claiming to be able to communicate with the departed dead brought swift punishment. God strictly forbade this because it wasn't the dead they were communing with but evil spirits or demon entities masquerading as dead loved ones. In this way evil angels could bewitch and deceive unsuspecting humans. One of the main reasons why the truth about the state of man at death is so important is so that as Christians we won't be deceived by demonic powers posing as dead relatives in the end times. These evil spirits can cast a spell and then say things that contradict God's Word and through this prepare multitudes for reception of the Mark of the Beast. Satan has certain goals and purposes in mind with each of these deadly deceptions.**

15.) Let's look at a couple of the confusing passages (there are more than two) that seem to support the immortality of the soul. Some might ask about the thief on the cross. Didn't Jesus say he would go to heaven or paradise that very day? Luke 23:42 *And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me _____ thou comest into thy _____.* 43 *And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, _____ shalt thou be with me in _____.* **NOTE: First of all, the Bible says that Jesus didn't go to heaven that day. Notice this verse about Mary approaching Jesus right after His resurrection. John 20:17 Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet _____ to my _____: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God. So, what's the problem here? Does the Bible contradict itself or is there an explanation for this? Keep in mind that when the Bible was being translated into the common languages there was no punctuation in the original Greek. So, when the early translators added punctuation they put it where they thought it should go. When the comma is placed in a different spot it makes all the difference in the world. Notice this verse 42 in Luke re-punctuated. "Verily I say unto thee today, shalt thou be with me in paradise." So what Jesus was really saying was, I'm giving you the assurance today, when**

everything looks hopeless while we're hanging on the cross, in all these discouraging circumstances, I'm giving you the assurance today(now), you will be with me in paradise.

16.) What about the strange parable of "The Rich Man and Lazarus"? Doesn't this support the immortality of the soul? Luke 16:19 There was a _____ rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: 20 And there was a _____ beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, 21 And desiring to be fed with the _____ which fell from the rich man's table: moreover, the dogs came and licked his sores. 22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's _____: the rich man also died, and was _____; 23 And in hell, he lift up his _____, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. 24 And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the _____ of his finger in water, and _____ my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. 25 But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy _____ receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. 26 And beside all this, _____ us and you there is a great gulf _____: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence. 27 Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest _____ him to my father's house: 28 For I have five _____; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. 29 Abraham saith unto him, they have _____ and the _____; let them hear them. 30 And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them _____ the dead, they will repent. 31 And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, _____ will they be persuaded, though one _____ from the dead. **NOTE: Keep in mind this is just a parable to teach certain spiritual lessons. The imagery used in this parable is so unrealistic to real life that there is no way it can be taken literal. Many parables are symbolic representations. First of all, those who believe the theory that the dead go straight to heaven believe that your "spirit" or "soul" goes there, but not your physical body. In this parable Lazarus had fingers, the rich man had eyes and a tongue and Abraham had a bosom. Who would believe that a tiny bit of water on the tip of a finger being brought through the flames would actually bring relief? Another point is who really believes that the bosom of Abraham is the abode of the saved? Also, who believes that the saved in heaven can communicate with the lost in hell? It is not meant to be taken literal.**

This parable was actually designed to teach several important lessons. The Pharisees were covetous and they thought riches were a sign of God's favor and that poverty was a sign of God's displeasure. They were so steeped in deception that even when the real Lazarus was raised from the dead, they were still entrenched in unbelief just like the latter part of this parable states. It also teaches that there is no second chance for salvation. If we don't accept salvation and God's grace to transform us into being loving and kind to those less fortunate, this lifetime is all we got to get it right! No changes in our destiny can be made once we're in hell.

17.) In closing what important truth do we see from all the Bible champions of faith listed in Hebrews ch. 11, who were looking forward to their eternal reward? Hebrews 11:13 *These all _____ in faith, _____ having received the _____, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the _____.* 39 *And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received _____ the promise: **Notice what Paul's parting words were before his life ended.*** 2Timothy 4:7 *I have fought a _____ fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: 8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me _____ that _____: and not to me only, but unto _____ them also that love his _____.* **NOTE: All these Champions of Faith including the Apostle Paul fought a good fight in this rough sinful world; but they were victorious! It says they received NOT the promise. Why? Because as Paul says he wouldn't receive it until the appearing of Jesus Christ. If he went to heaven immediately upon death, he would then and there have received his reward. Revelation says Jesus has the keys of the grave and of death. If you have received Jesus into your heart and you are faithful unto death, then, not until His second coming will you then receive that wonderful reward! May God bless you, as you place yourself into the hands of your Creator and Redeemer.**

Brief Quiz

Circle One

- 1.) True/False – Man is naturally immortal.
- 2.) True/False – Death is just a transition from one life to another life.
- 3.) True/False – Except for the few who are already in heaven, saved people receive their reward only when Jesus comes back.
- 4.) True/False – The repentant thief went to paradise that very day Jesus spoke to him.
- 5.) True/False – The parable of the rich man and Lazarus is just a parable to teach important morals and lessons and is not to be taken literally.
- 6.) True/False – The dead know nothing and are in an unconscious state.
- 7.) True/False – Trying to communicate with the dead is good because they can share important information that we need to know for these last days.
- 8.) True/False – The Bible from beginning to end consistently calls death a sleep.

My Response

The Bible's description of what truly happens to people at death is now clear to me. I see now that when a person dies, they rest quietly in the grave until the resurrection. I embrace this special Bible truth because I do not want to be deceived in these last days by miracle-working demons. I surrender to Jesus who holds the key to death and the grave.

Signed _____