
If a Man Die--

Does He Still Live?

Where Are the Dead?

Why a Resurrection?

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Why a Resurrection?

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"If a man die, shall he live again? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come (Job 14:14)."

It is readily observed that the title is a parody of the text quoted from Job. But there is a wide gulf of difference between the two statements, for Job's quotation speaks plainly of the need of a resurrection, while the title infers there is an extension of life after our activity on this earth is stopped by death.

Many questions spring to mind when death takes some one close to us, especially if we are not familiar with the Scriptures. Is there a separate part of man that does not accompany the body to the grave? Does this separate part of man go to heaven, hell, purgatory or paradise? The Bible holds the answer to all such questions.

The question, "If a man die, shall he live again?" has bewildered the philosophers of the ages. But Job answered the question in a simple, reasonable, logical manner, by stating:

"...all the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come. Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee.... (Job 14:14, 15)."

What Is the Christian's Hope?

If in this life only we have hope in

Christ, we are of all men most miserable
(1 Corinthians 15:19).

The wicked is driven away in his wickedness: but the righteous hath hope in his death (Proverbs 14:32).

The Christian manifests his hope for the future by the manner in which he conducts his daily life. He declares his belief of being able to live again "beyond the river" of death, by living a Christ-like life. He tells others of his anticipation, and by relating to them the story of the resurrection of Christ he encourages them to embrace this same hope. Because Christ arose, the Christian has hope that he too shall arise from his grave and live forever.

Paul's apt statement that "if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable," causes us to look beyond this life to one which will never end. Possibly we do not appreciate the circumstances under which the apostle had to live, and consequently we do not fully comprehend the depth of his meaning. Paul did not have the privilege of enjoying freedom of religion as we have it today. He was not free from persecution, as we are, and his life was constantly in danger.

Although Paul was not one to complain easily, yet on one occasion he was found enumerating some of the persecutions he had to endure:

Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suf-

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fered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, and frostings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches (2 Corinthians 11:24-28).

He gives a reason for speaking of these tribulations, not as an occasion for boasting nor was he blaming the Lord; but rather he was showing them that those who had their genuine interest at heart suffered many things to bring the gospel to them.

With these thoughts in mind, it is a little easier to understand Paul when he said:

If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.

(1 Corinthians 15:19).

Paul's hope of a better life beyond the grave served to hold him in a straight course, though the storms of life raged around him.

That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil (Hebrews 6:18, 19).

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In speaking of the stark realities of life, the writers of the Scriptures also taught of the grim truth of death. Intertwined with their warnings of death and coming judgment, was the hope they had of gaining the victory over death, hell, and the judgment.

The Hope of Abraham and Job

Abraham looked forward to the time when he would inherit the land, for he received not so much as to set his foot on, yet he knew that God was faithful who had promised him an inheritance, and although he had to dwell in tents and tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, "the heirs with him of the same promise"; yet, he looked forward with great anticipation to the time when he would enter the city whose builder and maker is God.

Job seemingly asked an enigmatic question when he said, "If a man die, shall he live again?" This man of many sorrows did not ask this question to taunt us, nor to puzzle or bewilder us, but we see him answering his own question, which obviously was hypothetical rather than enigmatic.

Job continues by stating:

All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come. Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee; thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands (Job 14:14, 15).

Notice how beautifully Job's testimony harmonizes with that of Paul's as the apostle says:

But I would not have you to be ignor-

ant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord (1 Thessalonians 4:13-17).

These writers were men of vision, men who could look beyond the tears, the sorrows, the failings and failures, to the time when Jesus Christ their King would come. They could visualize the majestic coming of the Life-giver, and the miraculous events attendant at His appearance. The dead in Christ would awake from their sleep with no knowledge of the passing of time. Abraham, as he awakes, will have no more realization of the passing of the thousands of years than the Christian who dies the day before the coming of Christ.

Job wrote of the second coming of Christ almost in the same language as that of the apostles. Hear him now as he declares:

*For I know that my redeemer liveth,
and that he shall stand at the latter day
upon the earth: and though after my
skin worms destroy this body, yet in my
flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see
for myself, and mine eyes shall behold
and not another; though my reins be
consumed within me (Job. 19:25-27).*

The Picture of the Resurrection

Can we get the picture as these writers try to draw it for us? At the time when God says, "It is enough," and sends forth His Son from the courts of heaven with all the holy angels, then the trumpet shall sound, the Lord shall call, and those who are His will respond to that call. The dead in Christ, or the righteous dead, will be caught up from their graves, and will be granted immortality. Those living who are Christians will be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and will be fashioned like unto the glorious body of our Lord.

*For our conversation is in heaven;
from whence we look for the Saviour,
the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change
our vile body, that it may be fashioned
like unto his glorious body, according to
the working whereby he is able even to
subdue all things unto himself (Philip-
pians 3:20, 21).*

As a powerful magnet will draw to itself pieces of metal, so our Lord as He circles the earth will draw His saints to Him. But unless the Spirit of Christ is in us, we will

not respond to the call of the Life-giver, but will lie dormant in our graves until after the reign of Christ.

*If the Spirit of him that raised up
Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he
that raised up Christ from the dead shall
also quicken your mortal bodies by his
Spirit that dwelleth in you (Romans 8:
11).*

*Now if any men have not the Spirit
of Christ, he is none of his (Romans 8:
9).*

It is no wonder that Peter spoke in the following manner of this blessed hope that a Christian has:

*Blessed be the God and Father of our
Lord Jesus Christ, which according to
his abundant mercy hath begotten us
again unto a lively hope by the resurrec-
tion of Jesus Christ from the dead, to
an inheritance incorruptible, and unde-
filed, and that fadeth not away, reserved
in heaven for you, who are kept by the
power of God through faith unto salva-
tion ready to be revealed in the last time
(1 Peter 1:3-5).*

There are two more writers who harmonize beautifully on the theme of the Christian's hope. Listen to Daniel as he states:

*And many of them that sleep in the
dust of the earth shall awake, some to
everlasting life, and some to shame and
everlasting contempt (Daniel 12:2).*

John wrote of a sermon that Jesus preached,

and reported one part of it as stating:

Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves [notice where the dead are] shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation (John 5:28, 29).

And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.

And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day (John 6:39, 40).

Because Christ arose from the dead (returned again from the "Valley of the Shadow") we also have the promise given conditionally:

... every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure (1 John 3:3).

Let us live for Him now, that in the great "Wakening up Morning," we shall come forth clothed with immortality—everlasting life.

Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God (1 John 3:1).

Where Are the Dead?

In two statements Job made his belief

quite clear as to where he thought the dead would be:

But man dieth, and wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he? 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. O that thou wouldst hide me in the grave, that thou wouldst keep me secret, until thy wrath be past, that thou wouldst appoint me a set time, and remember me! (Job 14:10-13).

If you believe that Job was making a vain request of the Lord when he asked to be hidden in the grave until the resurrection, listen to him as he said:

If I wait, the grave is mine house: I have made my bed in the darkness (Job 17:13).

Let us not be satisfied with these several references from Job, but let us call several other inspired writers to testify as to where the dead are.

Sometimes it is thought that the Psalms contain nothing but poetry; however, in this beloved book there is doctrine and also prophecy. David spoke of the state of the dead by saying in Psalm 6:5:

For in death there is no remembrance of thee: in the grave who shall give thee thanks?

The dead praise not the Lord... (Psalm 115:17).

If the righteous dead went to heaven at death, they would certainly remember the Lord. Who made it possible for them to be there. However, David knew they did not go to heaven, or he would not have said, "In the grave who shall give thee thanks?"

Again in Psalm 146:4, David, speaking of the dead, said:

His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.

Let us pause for a moment as we contemplate the statements made by Job and David as to the dead being in their graves. Is this such a horrible condition that we wish to put it out of our minds? To the contrary, what is more restful than an uninterrupted night of sleep?—dreamless, restful, tranquil. So death is something that calls us from our labors to a rest of sleep in our grave, where we shall wait till the resurrection, either of the righteous or the unrighteous.

Let us go to the writings of the apostles and see what these close associates of the Master had to say about the abode of the dead. Did they differ in their teachings from those of the patriarchs and prophets? Did the writers of one age state that the dead were asleep, while those of another era declared the dead were more alive than they were? Let us turn to the Scriptures for our answer.

Paul brought comfort to those in sorrow because of the loss of their loved ones, and in his efforts to bring consolation he told them that the dead were asleep. Hear him as he said:

But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not as others which have no hope (1 Thessalonians 4:13).

At the coming of the Life-giver, those who are His will be caught up to meet Him in the air.

When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory (Colossians 3:4).

Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is (1 John 3:2).

The Promise of a Resurrection

There would be no need of a resurrection if the dead go either to heaven or hell at death, but the Bible plainly teaches of a resurrection of the just at the second coming of Christ, and a resurrection of the unjust at the completion of His one-thousand-year reign.

Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation (John 5:28, 29).

For since by man came death, by man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every

man in his own order: Christ the first-
fruits; afterward they that are Christ's
at his coming (1 Corinthians 15:21-23).

*Blessed and holy is he that hath part
in the first resurrection: on such the
second death hath no power, but they
shall be priests of God and of Christ,
and shall reign with him a thousand years
(Revelation 20:6).*

All through the Bible it is taught that
there shall be two resurrections: one of the
just and one of the unjust. But here for the
first time is brought to our attention the fact
that a thousand years will separate the two
resurrections.

*But the rest of the dead lived not again
until the thousand years were finished
(Revelation 20:5).*

Man Is Mortal

Man is a mortal being, subject to death;
therefore, he does not have immortality now,
but must wait for the resurrection of the just.
Martha recognized this great truth as she con-
versed with Jesus concerning the death of her
brother Lazarus. She knew Lazarus would
sleep in his grave until the resurrection at
the last day; then he would arise with the
rest of the righteous. She had deep sorrow,
but she did not sorrow as others who had no
hope (1 Thess. 4:13). Study carefully Mar-
tha's reply to the Master's statement, "*Thy
brother shall rise again.*" She said:

*I know that he shall rise again in the
resurrection at the last day (John 11:24).*

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This is one of the most heart-touching
scenes in the ministry of Jesus, but it was
soon to be turned into a day of rejoicing. As
the Master stood at the mouth of the grave,
He called, "Lazarus, come forth." Someone
has said that if Christ had not identified Laza-
rus by name, all of the dead would have come
forth. Be that as it may: the call was heard,
and Lazarus came forth, brought to life again
by the miraculous power of God. It was a
figure of the time when all of the dead in
Christ will come forth at His call, not to a
natural life as Lazarus, but to an immortal
life. (Lazarus had to come forth to a natural
life, otherwise he and not Jesus would have
been the "first fruits" of them that slept.)

No wonder Isaiah exclaimed:

*Thy dead men shall live, together with
my dead body shall they arise.*

Notice where the dead are at this time:

*Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the
dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs,
and the earth shall cast out the dead
(Isaiah 26:19).*

As David meditated on the resurrection
and the granting of immortality to the saints
of God, he said:

*As for me, I will behold thy face in
righteousness: I shall be satisfied when I
awake, with thy likeness (Psalm 17:15).*

Notice the word *awake*, which indicates a
previous condition of sleep.

David was very close to his Lord, yet
Peter in his sermon said, "For David is not
ascended into the heavens..." (Acts 2:34).

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David is awaiting the call of the Life-giver, and when he awakes from the sleep of death, he is going to be satisfied to be fashioned like unto the glorious body of his Lord (Philippians 3:21).

If we have this hope, or desire to have this hope, then let us prepare to meet our God while there is still time. Surely we want to live in the Kingdom of God, but we shall not enter that Kingdom unless we have met the conditions now or before death comes.

Why not let Christ come into your life, and make you a new creature, so that you will have an abundant entrance into the Kingdom of God?

Is Part of Man Immortal?

Is it true that there is a separate part of man that is immortal? Is the soul or the spirit a separate conscious entity that does not die when the body goes the way of all flesh?

The thought is sometimes advanced by those who object to the belief of the dead being asleep, that the soul or the spirit of man is immortal. Such terms as "immortality of the soul," "where the soul of man never dies," "the body dies, but the soul lives on somewhere," are quoted as if they were found in the Scriptures, but such statements are *not* in the Bible.

In order to find the truth of this matter, it would be best to find what was given to man in the beginning of his creation, and what is taken from him at death, as explained in Holy Writ.

Is the Soul Immortal?

When God created Adam out of the dust of the earth, he was lying there before Him in an unconscious condition. The body had been made, hands and arms were on it, as well as legs and feet. The blood vessels were all ready to start rushing the precious life-giving fluid through the body the moment life entered, and the blood-pump, or heart, began its efficient work. But what had to take place before this mechanism could start to work? Life had to be given it, you say. Let us take the Scriptures for our answer:

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 (Genesis 2:7).

If the only change that was made was the adding of the breath of life to the body, man must have been a dead body before the breath of life was added. The combination of the body and breath caused him to be a living soul.

Contrary to popular belief, the soul does not at the death of the body immediately fit off to heaven. David said:

God will redeem my SOUL from the power of the grave... (Psalm 49:15).

In prophesying of the death and resurrection of Jesus, David also said:

For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption (Psalm 16:10).

Peter, preaching that powerful sermon on

the day of Pentecost, speaks of David's prophecy, and tells us that it pertains to Christ's death and resurrection:

Because thou wilt not leave my SOUL in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption (Acts 2:27).

When Christ died, His soul went to the grave with His body, according to these two witnessses. Someone might say, "But what about the immortal soul that is mentioned so many times in the Bible?" That is a strange question, for the term "immortal soul" is NOT found within the lids of the Bible. It only exists in the minds of supposed ecclesiastics, and not in the Scriptures. The only beings in all creation who have immortality are the God of heaven, and His Son Jesus Christ.

The King of kings, and Lord of lords; who ONLY HATH IMMORTALITY...
(1 Timothy 6:15, 16).

Now unto the King eternal, IMMORTAL, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory for ever and ever.
Amen (1 Timothy 1:17; capitals added).

Some may object and say, "What about the souls mentioned in Revelation 6:9-11 that are able to speak and feel?" Will you please turn and read this Scripture. It is assumed from this account that these souls were in heaven. If these souls were in heaven, why were they remembering their enemies, and the persecutions that they endured, and calling for heaven's vengeance? If and when we get into the Kingdom of God, our enemies will surely not come to our mind: let alone calling

for vengeance to fall upon them. These souls under the altar were crying out to God, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" If this is the condition of redeemed saints in the kingdom of God then we have a mistaken conception of it, and have misled people by telling them that all sorrow, grief, woe, death, worry, fear and misery will be all forgotten and never come to mind again. "...the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind" (Isaiah 65:17).

What lesson then does this story teach? There is a figure of speech known as *personification* as illustrated by the thought of the blood of Abel crying from the ground:

And the Lord said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: am I my brother's keeper? And he said, What hast thou done? The VOICE of thy brother's BLOOD CRIETH unto me from the ground (Genesis 4:9, 10; capitals added).

We see another example of this in Habakkuk 2:11: "*I or the stones shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it.*" Even the HIRE of the laborers CRIED out to God in James 5:4.

The happening of Revelation 6:9, 10 occurred under the opening of the fifth seal, and as most Bible students agree, these seals were opened through the gospel age from Christ until the present time. The souls here brought to our attention are the ones that were blas-

phemed, ridiculed, and finally murdered by the Roman Powers during the Dark Ages. These terrible acts "cried out" for vengeance. Then the Reformation broke out all over the world with the light of the great doctrine—justification by faith. The expose of the corruption of this false religious system, and the fact that the ones that were martyred were the true followers of the Lamb of God, in a figure, "avenged their blood" and turned public opinion from condemnation to glorification. They were and are lauded and praised, and truly received white robes of righteousness.

Is the Spirit Immortal?

Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it (Ecclesiastes 12: 7).

When did the Creator give to man this spirit that returns to Him when the body returns to the dust? He must have given this spirit at the time of man's creation, otherwise man would not have been complete.

The Biblical record tells us that after the Lord God had formed man from the dust of the earth, He breathed into his nostrils the BREATH OF LIFE, and man became a living soul.

Now let us consider what the Bible says about what is taken from man at death:

Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled: thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust (Psalm 104: 29).

For as the body without the spirit [margin, breath] is dead, so faith without works is dead also (James 2:26).

His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish (Psalm 146:4).

The breath of life, that vital principle given to man at his creation, is the part of living man that leaves him when he dies.

In one of Paul's sermons at Athens he declared that God had made the world and all things therein, and that He gives life and breath to all. Furthermore, Paul stated in that same sermon that in God we "live, and move, and have our being" (Acts 17:24, 25, 28).

Now notice and compare these declarations by Paul with some statements made by Job:

All the while my breath is in me, and the spirit [margin: that is, the breath which God gave him] of God is in my nostrils (Job 27:3).

The spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life (Job 33:4).

So in all ages we see a harmonious message being taught that man is mortal, seeking immortality, but does not have it at this time. Immortality will be granted to the faithful at the second coming of Christ. Until Christ comes, man dies, gives up the ghost or spirit, which is the breath of life, and remains in an unconscious state called sleep in the Bible, until Christ comes the second time to this earth.

Death Is An Enemy

Death is an enemy, and it will be the last enemy destroyed. It is no respecter of persons for it lays low the king on his throne, and the peasant in his hut. It takes the old as well as the young, and will continue its relentless way until the Ruler of the universe brings it to a halt.

If we are living in Christ, and His Spirit dwells within us, we need not fear death. We have the promise that if the Spirit of God dwells in us, He shall quicken our mortal bodies and bring us again from the land of the enemy.

We also have the assurance that when we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, we need not walk that way alone. The close presence of the great Shepherd of the sheep is promised, and we may rely on the comforting strength of His rod and staff.

The Bible describes the sleep of death as a time when we shall rest from our labors, awaiting the call of the Life-giver. (See Revelation 14:13.)

"Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep, from which none ever wakes to weep;

A calm and undisturbed repose, unbroken by the blast of foes.

Asleep in Jesus, O how sweet to be for such a slumber meet;

With holy confidence to sing that death hath lost its venom'd sting.

Asleep in Jesus, peaceful rest, whose waking is supremely blest;

No fear, no woe shall dim that hour that manifests the Saviour's power."

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