

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE DIE?

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TEXT: 2 Cor. 5:1-8.

INTRODUCTION:

A. Lazarus died; and was raised to life again- Jn. 11:1-44.

1. Did he remember anything?
2. Paul was forbidden to reveal- 2 Cor. 12:3-4 And I know such a man--whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows-- how he was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.

B. Have you ever wondered what happens when we die?

1. Do we go directly to heaven or hell?
2. Do we sleep?
3. Do we cease to exist?
4. Do we go to an intermediate state to await the resurrection?

C. We must not go beyond what is written- Deut. 29:29 "The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.

D. We want to answer from the Bible these questions:

1. What is death?
2. Where does the spirit go?
3. Are we conscious after death?
4. Why have a judgment?

BODY:

I. WHAT IS DEATH?

A. Man is body, soul and spirit.

1. 1 Thess. 5:23 Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord

Jesus Christ.

2. Heb. 4:12 For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

B. Our spirits come from God.

1. Zech. 12:1 **The burden of the word of the Lord against Israel. Thus says the Lord, who stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him:.**

2. Heb. 12:9b ...Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live?

C. Death is a separation of the body and the spirit.

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

2. Gen. 35:18 **And so it was, as her soul was departing (for she died), that she called his name Ben-Oni; but his father called him Benjamin..**

3. 1 Kings 17:21-22 **And he stretched himself out on the child three times, and cried out to the Lord and said, "O Lord my God, I pray, let this child's soul come back to him." Then the Lord heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came back to him, and he revived.**

4. Lk. 23:46 And when Jesus had cried out with a loud voice, He said, "Father, `into Your hands I commit My spirit.'" Having said this, He breathed His last.

5. Acts 7:59 And they stoned Stephen as he was calling on God and saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

II. WHERE DOES THE SPIRIT GO AT DEATH?

A. "Sheol" and "Hades" = the unseen, the realm of the dead.

B. Christ was in Paradise not HELL as KJV.

1. Acts 2:31 "he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption.

2. Lk. 23:42-43 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."

C. Christ ascended to Heaven AFTER His resurrection.

1. Jn. 20:17 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.'
2. Acts 1:9 Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.
3. Acts 2:34-36 "For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he says himself: 'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.'" ' Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.

D. Wicked angels are held in "Hell" (tartarus) until the judgment.

1. 2 Pet. 2:4 For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment;
2. Matt. 25:46 "And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.

E. Christ was in Paradise but not Heaven; wicked angles were in Punishment but not Hell.

F. The Rich man and Lazarus- Lk. 16:19-31 There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day. But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate, desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. Then he cried and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.' "But Abraham said, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented. And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.' Then he said, 'I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father's house, for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment. Abraham said to him, 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.' And he said, 'No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.' But he said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.'

1. Not called a parable but even if it is so what.
2. Before the judgment because men were still living on the earth- Lk. 16:27-31.
3. Rich man in "Hell" in KJV should be Hades (not tartarus).

4. Lazarus in Abraham's bosom (Paradise).
5. A great gulf is fixed between the two- Lk. 16:26.

G. Hades will be cast into Hell at the judgment- Rev. 20:13-14 The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

III. ARE WE CONSCIOUS FOLLOWING DEATH?

A. We are said to sleep.

1. Sleep is a metaphor to describe death.
2. It is also Euphuism

B. Rich man and Lazarus- Lk. 16:19-31.

1. Rich man recognized Lazarus- Lk. 16:23.
2. He was reminded of life on earth- Lk. 16:25.
3. He remembered his brothers on earth- Lk. 16:27-28.

IV. WHY HAVE A JUDGMENT DAY?

A. A Day of Judgment is clearly taught.

1. Heb. 9:27 And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment,
2. Acts 17:31 "because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead."
3. Matt. 25:31-32 When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats
4. 2 Pet. 2:4-9 For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment; and did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah, one of eight people, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly; and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them to destruction, making them an example to those who afterward would live ungodly; and delivered righteous

Lot, who was oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked (for that righteous man, dwelling among them, tormented his righteous soul from day to day by seeing and hearing their lawless deeds)-- then the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment,

B. All will be judged.

1. Rom. 14:12. **So then each of us shall give account of himself to God.**
2. 2 Cor. 5:10 **For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.**
3. Matt. 12:41-42 "The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here. The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed a greater than Solomon is here.

C. We will receive a reward then- 2 Tim. 4:7-8 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.

D. Rewards cannot be reckoned till the end of time.

1. Paul's influence still bears fruit.
2. Abel still speaks- Heb. 11:4 By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks.
3. Our works follow us- Rev. 14:13 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."
4. . The converse is also true.

E. The wicked are being held for sentencing- 2 Pet. 2:4 For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment;

F. There is no second chance.

REVIEW:

1. All who ever lived will die

2. After death and before the resurrection we all go to Hades
Hades has two places- one of anguish, one of comfort.
3. At the end of time is the judgment when all will be assigned to either heaven or hell for eternity.

CONCLUSION:

A. All must die and face the judgment.

B. Are you prepared?

1. Heb. 5:8-9 though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him,

2. Acts 2:38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

C. Come obey the Gospel today.