Death and Resurrection

“So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality,
then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.
O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?” (1 Corinthians 15:54, 55).

Eileen and Jay's furlough time had passed quickly. Shortly before time to go to the airport, Eileen's sister-in-law, Edna, said, “Please come into the bedroom with me.” Standing together beside her bed, she spoke slowly. “For sometime now I've had a very strange feeling in my head. I can't explain it, but I know something is not right. Before you leave I want you to pray that God will be with our family and our children and that I shall be ready for whatever is ahead.”

They knelt together, committing the future to God. Eileen never forgot that last goodbye at the airport, as they left for Singapore 12,000 miles away.

One evening less than two months later, she opened a letter from her brother which began, “Sis, this is probably the saddest letter you have ever received from me, but there is also much for which to be thankful. The doctors just discovered a massive melanoma cancer behind Edna’s right ear, plus numerous small tumors scattered through her entire brain. Already, she is completely blind in her left eye, and the sight of the right eye comes and goes. Her breathing is becoming difficult. They can do nothing for her and doubt she can live more than another month.

“...But God is so merciful. He seems to be holding her in His arms. She understands her serious condition but rests in Jesus, knowing that everything is right between her and God. We know that when she goes into that final coma, the next voice she will hear will be her Master calling her. For this we are eternally grateful.”

When tears no longer dimmed Eileen's eyes, she went outside and looked up at the tropical night sky full of stars. The words of Jesus filled her with hope: “I am the bright and morning star. Surely, I come quickly.”

Preview

At funeral services, many sincere, honest Christians, mourning the loss of a dear one, have heard their minister say, “Our beloved one is with the Lord dwelling in blissful happiness, enjoying the beauties of heaven.”

Confused, their minds flip back to Genesis 3:4. Didn't Satan lie to the unsuspecting Eve in the Garden of Eden, when he said, “You will not surely die”? Before them is their dead friend in the casket. Could the minister be misinformed, unwittingly echoing that first lie? Somehow, Satan has twisted that divine sentence. Instead of “The soul that sinneth, it shall die,” (Ezekiel 18:20), many tend to believe “the soul, even though it sins, shall live eternally.”
Points to Ponder

Their minds whirl with inconsistencies. Why would Jesus talk so much about the resurrection of the dead, if the good people are already in heaven and the wicked in hell? Why call people from the grave, when they aren’t there? And an even more perplexing question: “If the dead are alive and in the presence of God, why could they not return to earth and communicate with the living?” Could it be that the devil and his angels have used deception to establish a channel of communication that can lead to eternal destruction? Please turn to the Bible for answers.

When King Saul turned away from serving the Lord, he could no longer ask God for help. Though He had formerly destroyed all witches, he now sought counsel from a spiritualistic medium. He requested, “Bring up Samuel for me” (1 Samuel 28:11).

Samuel, the prophet, was a righteous man. When he died, he certainly didn’t go to hell, so why did Saul ask him to be brought “up” and not “down”? During that séance the medium saw an old man “ascending out of the earth” (vs. 13). Was it really Samuel’s spirit that made that horrible prediction? Who actually spoke to Saul?

It is vitally important to you and me that we understand the subject of death, communication with the dead, and the two resurrections.

Turn to “The Difference Between” and understand clearly the meanings and differences between “mortal,” “immortality,” and “conditional immortality.”

Nuts & Bolts

1. When God created Adam and Eve, He promised them life on the condition of obedience.
   Genesis 2:17: “But of the _______________ of the _______________ of _______________ and _______________, thou shalt _______________ _______________ of it: for in the _______________ that thou _______________ there of thou shalt _______________ _______________ _______________.”

2. God created Adam and Eve with a free will—the power of choice. They could choose to obey or disobey. Their continued existence depended upon continual obedience to God. The Bible says they chose to disobey God and listen to Satan. What was the result?
   Romans 6:23: “For the _______________ of _______________ is _______________; but the _______________ of God is _______________ _______________ through _______________ _______________ our _______________.”

3. What did Adam transmit to his children?
   Romans 5:12: “Wherefore, as by one _______________ sin _______________ into the world, and _______________ by sin, and so _______________ passed upon all _______________ for that _______________ have _______________.”

4. Through Jesus Christ, God has made it possible for humans to be redeemed and have eternal life.
   Romans 5:19: “For as by one man’s _______________ many were made _______________, so by the obedience of one [Christ] shall many be made ______________.”
2 Timothy 1:10: Christ "hath abolished ____________ and hath brought __________ and ____________ to light through the gospel."

5. Those who don't accept the gospel won't receive immortality.
   1 John 5:11: "God hath ____________ to us ____________ ____________, and this life is in His Son."
   1 Corinthians 15:22: "In ____________ shall all be made ____________." 
   John 5:28, 29: "All that are in the grave shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done ____________, unto the ____________ of ____________; and they that have done evil, unto the ____________ of _____________."

6. When does the believer receive immortality?
   1 Corinthians 15:52: "In a ____________, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last ____________: for the trumpet shall ____________, and the dead shall be raised ____________, and we shall be ____________." 
   Read verses 51-55. Note that God does not give immortality to the righteous believer at death but at the time of Christ's second coming.

7. Both the Old and New Testaments speak of death as sleep. Compare death and sleep.
   a. We are unconscious. "The ____________ know not ____________." (Ecclesiastes 9:5).
   b. Our thinking process ceases. "He returns to his ____________; in that very moment his ____________ ____________." (Psalm 146:4).
   c. All our day's activities end. "There is no ____________, nor ____________, nor ____________ in the ____________, whither thou goest" (Ecclesiastes 9:10).
   d. We cannot praise the Lord. "The dead ____________ not the Lord, neither any that go ____________ into ____________." (Psalm 115:17).
   e. We wake up after sleep. "All that are in the ____________ shall hear his ____________, and shall come forth" (John 5:28, 29).

8. The Bible says that the dead, good and bad, go to one place—the grave (Genesis 37:35).

9. What is the meaning of "soul"?
   Genesis 2:7: "And the Lord God ____________ ____________ of the ____________ of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the ____________ ____________ of ____________; and man became a living soul."
At creation, God formed a body out of the dust. It was lifeless. He breathed into it the breath of life. The result was a “living soul.” Put as a formula, we have this:
Dust of the earth + Breath of life (Spirit) = A living soul.
That is—A lifeless body + Breath from God (spirit) = A living being or living person. Therefore, soul, being, and person all mean the same.

10. What happens to the soul at death?
Ecclesiastes 12:7: “Then shall the ____________ return to the _______________ as it was:
and the __________________ shall return unto God who gave it.”
The reverse of what happened at creation happens at death. Put as a formula, we have this:

Dust of the earth – Breath of life (Spirit) = A dead soul.
A living body – Breath from God (Spirit) = A dead being (person).

At death when the life-giving power of God is withdrawn, we have a lifeless body. There is no longer a living being, which is what a soul is, according to Genesis 2:7.

11. There is no consciousness in death.
This is the biblical teaching. The false belief that the dead are conscious has led many sincere Christians to accept spiritualism, a teaching that holds that the dead continue to live in another form of life and that they can communicate with the living. Such a teaching is nothing but the first lie of Satan in the Garden of Eden: “Ye shall not _______________ _______________.” (Genesis 3:4).

12. The answer to the problem of death is not another form of life after death but resurrection from the dead. This is the significance of Christ’s resurrection.
1 Corinthians 15:21, 22: “For since by man [Adam] came ______________, by man [Christ] came also the _______________ of the dead. For as in _______________ all die, even so in _______________ shall all be made alive.”

Words to Remember
Insensate: Without feeling, sense, understanding, or judgment. Lifeless.
Soul: Means the same as a person—a being. The soul is not a disembodied spirit of a dead person. We do not have a soul—we are souls.
Spirit: A spirit is not a ghost. It is the life-giving power of God.
Hades: The grave, where all the dead remain until Jesus resurrects them. The Bible also uses the word sheol for grave. At times these words also signify hell.
Spiritualism: The teaching that the dead live in a conscious state after death and communicate with the living. This is one of the final delusions that Satan will use to deceive Christians.
The Difference Between

Mortal: Subject to death. All human beings will die because of sin. Human beings are thus finite—that is, having bounds or limits.

Immortal: Not subject to death. 1 Timothy 1:7 and 6:16 state that God alone is immortal. God is thus infinite, having no bounds or limitations. He is uncreated, self-existent, and has no beginning and no ending. God is eternal.

Conditional: God gave Adam and Eve a free will or the power to choose to obey or disobey. To live forever depended on continual obedience to God.

First death: The death that comes to all humans as a result of Adam’s sin. Cessation of life and all its activities. All who have died this death will be resurrected, some to eternal life, some to eternal death.

Second death: The final punishment of unrepentant sinners, from which there is no resurrection. Forever separated from God. This will take place at the end of the thousand years or the millennium described in Revelation 20.

First resurrection: The resurrection of the righteous at the second coming of Jesus to inherit God’s kingdom.

Second resurrection: The resurrection of sinners that takes place at the end of the millennium. They will be cast into the lake of fire, or eternal death, forever separated from God, never to rise again (Revelation 20:14, 15).

I Truly Believe

Though our dear ones may sleep in death, soon they’ll hear the voice of Jesus and rise to be with Him in the clouds. Will you be there to join them? Check each statement that expresses your desire.
[ ] Knowing that God takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked, I choose to repent and live.
[ ] Christ promises that “he who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death.” (Revelation 2:11). I choose to accept His overcoming power in my life.

My Prayer

Dear Father,

I thank You for the promise of eternal life through Jesus. I thank You that I do not need to fear death, for I know that when Christ appears, the resurrected righteous and living righteous will be glorified and be caught up to be with Him. What a blessed hope! Come soon, Lord Jesus. Amen.
Death and Resurrection

Read the following Bible texts and with the help from the lesson above, answer the following questions by circling “T” if the statement is true or “F” if the statement is false. (Hint: there may not be any false answers in this lesson.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KEY TEXTS</th>
<th>Gen. 3: 4</th>
<th>Rom. 6:23</th>
<th>Eccl. 9:5</th>
<th>John 3:16</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 Cor. 15:22, 51-54</td>
<td>Phil. 3:21</td>
<td>1 Tim. 6: 16</td>
<td>2 Tim. 1: 10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. **t o r f**  God alone has immortality (see pg. 388).
2. **t o r f**  Scripture compares death to sleep (see pg. 390).
3. **t o r f**  The soul has no conscious existence apart from the body, and no scripture indicates that at death the soul survives as a conscious entity (see pg. 392).
4. **t o r f**  Careful study of scripture reveals that the consistent teaching of the Bible is that death causes the cessation of consciousness (see pg. 392).
5. **t o r f**  Belief that the dead are conscious has prepared many Christians to accept spiritualism (see pg. 393).
6. **t o r f**  If Christ has not been raised, then the Christian faith is futile and we are still in our sins (see pg. 395).
7. **t o r f**  The Second Death is the final punishment of unrepentant sinners (see pg. 395).
8. **t o r f**  One thousand years separate the two general resurrections. (see pg. 396).
9. **t o r f**  Those who are raised in the first resurrection cannot die any longer (see pg. 397).
10. **t o r f**  Those who accept Jesus will spend eternity fellowshipping with their Lord and Savior (see pg. 397).