

State of the Dead

Revealed Truths

When people die, they sleep in the grave until Jesus returns.

There are a few exceptions to this recorded in the Bible.

Some key verses:

Job 14:10-15, Ps 13:3, Ps 115:17, Ps 146:4, Da 12:2, Mt 27:52,53, 1Co 15:51-54, 1Th 4:13-18

Exposed Falsehoods

It is false to think that we can communicate with the dead.

It is false to think that there are "saints" who hear and answer prayers.

It is false to think that the dead are currently "looking down" on us from heaven.

It is false to think that some of the dead are now burning in "hell fire".

It is false to think that people are reincarnated across multiple lives.

Some key verses:

Ge 3:4, Lev 20:6,27, Dt 18:10-12, Job 14:1,2, Isa 8:19,20, 1Ti 2:5, Heb 9:27

The Dead Sleep

The dead sleep.

They sleep in the grave. (**Mt 9:24, Jn 11:11-15**)

They perform no activities. (**Ecc 9:10**)

They do not praise God. (**Ps 6:4,5, Ps 115:17, Isa 38:18,19**)

They have no thoughts. (**Ps 146:4, Ecc 9:5**)

They do not go to heaven yet. (**Ps 143:3, Ac 2:29,34**)

They are not aware of the living. (**Job 14:21**)

A few of many verses referring to death as sleep (**2Sa 7:12, Job 17:13, Ps 13:3, Ps 17:15, Mt 27:52,53, 1Co 15:17,18, 1Th 4:13-15, 2Pe 3:3,4**)

Moses (**Dt 31:16**)

David (**1Ki 2:10**)

Solomon (**1Ki 11:43**)

Daniel (**Da 12:2,13**)

Lazarus (**Jn 11:11-15**)

Stephen (**Ac 7:59,60**)

Soul = Body + Spirit

Soul (living creature) = physical body + breath of life (spirit) (**Ge 2:7, 1Co 7:34** note body and spirit)

Breath of life = spirit (**Job 27:3**, compare **Ps 104:29** and **Ecc 12:7**)

The dry bones became living beings when they received the breath of life (spirit).

(**Eze 37:1-14**)

Adam became a living being when his body and spirit were united by God.

The spirit is not the same as the soul. (**Heb 4:12**)

Our Souls are Not Immortal

Immortal - "Having no principle of alteration or corruption; exempt from death;" (Webster's Dictionary 1828)

At this time, only God is immortal. (**Job 4:17, 1Ti 6:15,16**)

There is no reference in the entire Bible to an immortal soul or spirit.

The soul can (and does) die. (first death, **Eze 18:4,20**) (second death, **Mt 10:28, Rev 21:8**)
When we die, our spirit returns to God. (**Ps 104:29, Ecc 12:7, Lk 8:53-55, Lk 23:46, Ac 7:59, Jas 2:26**)

Dead creature (corpse) = physical body - breath of life (taken back by God)
When we die, our being ceases. (**Job 14:10-15, Ps 146:2-4**)

The Dead Awaken at the First/Second Resurrection

The dead awaken at the first/second resurrection (**Isa 26:19, Da 12:2,13, Jn 5:28,29, Jn 6:54, Jn 14:1-3, Ac 24:15, 1Co 15:13-18, 1Co 15:20-24, 1Co 15:51-54, 1Th 4:13-18, Heb 11:39,40, Rev 20:4-6,13**)

A Popular Deception

Satan began this deception about the realities of death in the garden of Eden.

"And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:" (**Ge 3:4**)

Pagan cultures are typified by a belief in the natural immortality of the soul. (e.g., Egypt, Pharaohs, and pyramids)

Many churches teach that people go to heaven or hell immediately when they die.

This deception contradicts the Biblical teachings on the state of the dead.

This deception contradicts the resurrection of the righteous at the second coming of Christ.

The righteous dead are not put back in their graves so they can be resurrected twice.

This deception contradicts the resurrection of the wicked at the end of the Millennium.

The wicked dead are not put back in their graves so they can be resurrected twice.

This deception contradicts the Biblical accounts of end-time judgments. (See the Judgment (2 of 2) prophecy topic)

Sentencing (executive judgments) do not precede the trials (investigative judgments).

This deception opens the door for spiritism, which is a pillar of the "new age" occult movement.

Contacts with supposed dead (**1Sa 28:6-8,16** compare **1Ch 10:13,14** and **Jer 29:13**)

In **1Sa 28:16**, the demon depicts God as the enemy of man.

In **1Sa 28:17-19**, the demon influences the outcome of the battle by totally demoralizing Saul.

This deception opens the door for reincarnation, which is often a pillar of false religious systems. (**2Ki 20:1, Job 7:9,10, Job 14:1,2, Ecc 9:5,6, Heb 9:27**)

This deception opens the door for great apostasies that obscure the intercessory ministry of Jesus. (**1Ti 2:5**)

Praying for the dead (Purgatory)

Praying to "saints"

These deceptions are sustained through demonic activities. (**2Th 2:9-12, Mt 24:24, 2Co 11:14,15, Rev 16:13,14**)

God gave severe warnings against these deceptions. (**Lev 20:6,27, Dt 18:10-12, Isa 8:19,20**)

Note on Dt 18:11: necromancy - "The art of revealing future events by means of a pretended communication with the dead. This imposture is prohibited. Deut. xviii" (Webster's Dictionary 1828)

Notes

A few people have already been taken to heaven. They are a sign of what is to come.

Types of the righteous dead who will be raised at the second advent

Moses (**Lk 9:30, Jude 1:9**)

At Christ's resurrection, many were raised and taken to heaven (**Mt 27:51-53, Eph 4:8**) (compare **Isa 26:19**)

Types of the righteous living who will be translated at the second advent

Enoch (**Ge 5:24, Heb 11:5**)

Elijah, (**2Ki 2:11**, **Lk 9:30**)

Difficult

Are the spirit and the breath two distinct entities? (**Job 34:14**) (No)

First, note that this verse records the opinion of Elihu, which cannot be considered as inspired.

This passage employs a parallel use of both words for poetic effect.

Compare the previous verse (**Job 34:13**) where "earth" and "whole world" are used in parallel.

God is the God of the living, not of the dead. Does this mean no one is ever dead? (**Mt 22:31,32**) (No)

The context is a discussion about the future resurrection.

God foresees a future event and discusses it as though it were already accomplished. (see **Ro 4:17**)

Does the story of the rich man and Lazarus show that people go to Heaven or hell when they die? (**Lk 16:19-31**) (No)

It is a prophetic parable that shows the danger of rejecting the truth revealed in the scriptures.

Those who reject God's powerful word, will also reject all evidence that points to the same truth.

Jesus' choice of the name "Lazarus" was prophetic of the future event when He raised Lazarus from the dead.

After raising Lazarus, the Pharisees continued to reject the truth about Jesus. (compare **Lk 16:31**)

In this parable, Jesus overturns a common view that people are poor because of their sins and rich because of their righteousness.

He shows that a poor person could end up in Heaven.

He shows that a rich person could be excluded from Heaven.

The great gulf that separates them is the difference in their character.

Those who possess Jesus' character will become the citizens of Heaven.

Those who do not possess Jesus's character will not enter into Heaven.

The great gulf that separates them is the gulf between eternal life and eternal death.

Heaven will be the abode of those who will live forever.

Hell (the grave) will be the reward of those who will be forever dead.

The great gulf that separates them is Jesus. (**1Jn 5:12**)

Those who have the Son will have life.

Those who do not have the Son will not have life.

Everyone goes to the grave when they die.

As we have seen, the dead "sleep", awaiting Jesus's return.

Only when Jesus returns, will He raise those who will go with Him to Heaven.

Did the thief on the cross go to heaven that very day? (**Lk 23:43**) (No)

Misplaced comma - should be "**Verily I say unto thee today, shalt thou be with me in paradise.**"

Three days later, Jesus had not yet ascended to heaven (**Jn 20:17**)

Note that all punctuation (even sentence breaks) was inserted by translators.

Another obvious comma problem (**Ac 19:12**) - "sick handkerchiefs" should be "sick, handkerchiefs"

Is it true that no one from earth has ever gone into heaven except Jesus? (**Jn 3:13**) (No)

See the samples in the above Notes section.

From the context, we see that no one has gone and then come back to tell about it. (**Jn 3:11,12**)

Is it true that whoever believes in Jesus will never die? (**Jn 11:26**) (Yes and No)

They will die the first death (**Heb 9:27**), but not the second (eternal) death. (see **Mt 10:28, Rev 20:11-15**)

When we die, are we immediately at home with the Lord? (**2Co 5:6-8**) (No)

To be absent from the body is death.

While sleeping in the grave, we will not be conscious of the passage of time.

Therefore, when we are resurrected it will **seem** as though it were the very next instant.

The context refers to an intermediary, naked state. (**2Co 5:1-4**)

This is death, which separates our earthly body from our heavenly body. (compare **Job 1:21**)

In other texts, Paul plainly shows that the transition is not actually at death. (**1Co 15:51-53**)

Did a man whom Paul knew visit heaven? (**2Co 12:2**) (No)

Paul is describing one of his previous visions in a modest third person manner.

In the previous verse, **2Co 12:1**, Paul clearly states that he is now talking about visions and revelations.

Does Paul say he will immediately go to be with Christ when he dies? (**Php 1:22-24**) (No)

Paul is simply expressing his longing for the future life with Christ in Heaven.

In other texts, Paul plainly shows this will not occur until Jesus comes back. (**2Ti 4:6-8**)

Did Christ preach to spirits of the dead after His crucifixion? (**1Pe 3:18-20**) (No)

It says He preached long ago in the days of Noah through the Spirit (through Noah).

The "spirits in prison" were those under the bondage of sin. (see **Lk 4:18**)

Was the gospel preached to the dead? (**1Pe 4:5,6**) (No)

It says it **was** preached to those who are **now** dead. It was preached to them when they were alive.

The context is the fairness of the judgment.

It does no good to preach the gospel to those who have already died. (**Heb 9:27**)

Were dead souls crying out from under the altar? (**Rev 6:9,10**) (No)

This cry was figurative. Compare the cry of Abel's blood. (**Ge 4:10**)

What about "near death" experiences?

Whatever a "near death" experience really is, it is not death.

When people die, they do not come back to life until the resurrection.

Consider that our brains are able to construct very real scenes in our dreams.

"A study suggests that the oft-reported sensation of leaving the body during a brush with death may have a simple explanation in the body itself. These "out-of-body" and "near-death" experiences -- in which people resuscitated on the operating table speak of being drawn toward a brilliant light, or looking down on their own bodies -- may be influenced by a portion of the brain misfiring under stress, the study suggests. ... Other researchers have suggested that OBEs occur as brain cells die from lack of oxygen, or when the brain releases pain-inducing chemicals called endorphins.

... The findings were published in Thursday's issue of the journal Nature."

(CNN.com/Health, *Study: Brain misfires may cause 'out-of-body experiences'*, Sep. 19 2002)
