

ARE THE DEAD ALIVE?

By Jeff Rath 5-99

It is a common belief that when someone dies they go directly to heaven where they find Saint Peter and the pearly gates of heaven. Then the newly deceased person gets a white robe, a harp, a pair of wings, a halo, and maybe even a cigar. Then he or she floats on a cloud for eternity. Basically this is mythology that contradicts the many clear Bible verses on this subject.

If you watch a movie or TV, you are quite likely to see the dead portrayed as being alive. If you go to a funeral, you are likely to hear that God killed the dead person so that He could have another person in heaven. If you call a psychic advisor he or she will claim to communicate with the dead, and will bring you advice and council from your dead relatives.

According to Time Magazine of 3-24-97, 61% of the people asked believe that the dead go directly to heaven, and an additional 15% believe that the dead go to purgatory. Popular opinion, religious tradition, and mythology do not line up with the accuracy of God's Word. But it doesn't matter what public opinion is or what religions teach - - what matters is what the Word of God says, and specifically what the Word of God says about the dead.

Man's Religions (1968) John B. Noss

"The early Christians spoke of death as a going to sleep until the Judgment Day."

What Happens When We Die? (1986) Anthony Buzzard

"The New Testament offers the simple proposition that, in contrast to popular tradition, all the dead are actually dead, unconscious, "asleep," awaiting a resurrection to life to occur at a specific moment of future history."

"traditional thinking and New Testament teaching are poles apart,"

Traditional popular Christian thought and modern mythology says that the dead are alive, and that they are now much better off. God's Word says that the dead are dead. There is no consciousness in death, no knowledge, and no wisdom.

Ecclesiastes 9:4 For to him that is joined to all the living there is hope: for a living dog is better than a dead lion.

9:5 For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten.

9:6 Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any *thing* that is done under the sun.

9:10 Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do *it* with thy might; for *there is* no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.

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Psalm 6:5 For in death *there is* no remembrance of thee: in the grave who shall give thee thanks?

Psalm 115:17 The dead praise not the LORD, neither any that go down into silence.

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

The ancient Babylonians believed that the dead lived on after death.

Mythology of the Babylonian People (1915) Donald A. Mackenzie

“Darkness was peopled by demons and ghosts of the dead.”

“Ghosts and evil spirits wandered through the streets in darkness; they haunted empty houses; they fluttered through the evening air as bats; they hastened, moaning dismally, across barren wastes searching for food or lay in wait for travelers; they came as roaring lions and howling jackals, hungering for human flesh.”

That sounds like a script for a bad 1950's horror film. But there are those who teach that when you die you are not really dead, but instead you are either in heaven or hell. Heaven is supposed to be eternal bliss, and hell is supposed to be eternal torture.

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

4:14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

4:15 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 [precede] them which are asleep. [dead]

4:16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

4:17 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.

4:18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

When people try to comfort others by telling them that the dead are alive, it is a false comfort, and a false hope. They talk about someone being in heaven, but what about the possibility of someone being in hell? What kind of comfort is it to tell someone that their dear departed friend or relative is being tortured in hell, or is a restless ghost haunting the living. It is a comfort to know that the dead are not wandering around like ectoplasmic zombies moaning and dragging

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chains, but instead they are asleep and the next thing they will know is when Jesus Christ wakes them up. The **true hope** is that there is a day coming when Jesus Christ will return and the dead shall be raised. Jesus Christ is the only one who God has raised from the dead. Jesus Christ is the firstborn from the dead, the first one up. The true Word of God gives us the truth about the current state of the dead and their future resurrection.

Romans 8:29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Colossians 1:18 And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all *things* he might have the preeminence. [that Jesus Christ might be the preeminent one]

1 Corinthians 15:22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

15:23 But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.

If the dead are dead and have no consciousness then they are neither in heaven nor in hell. There is not vast subterranean torture chamber full of sinners suffering for eternity. They are all asleep; they are dead.

Catholic Encyclopedia (1991)

“hell is a place of pain and suffering . . . and is also a place of punishment.”

Our contemporary holiday, Halloween, got started as a holy evening before All Saints Feast [or All Saints Day, November 1st] and the following day All Souls Feast [or All Souls Day, November 2nd]. In some countries the whole family would go to the graveyard on October 31st and they would tell scary stories about the dead. It may seem harmless to teach children about ghosts and goblins, and to have them dress up as dead zombies and send them out trick or treating, but it teaches them to believe in spiritualism and false doctrine, and it teaches them to believe that the dead are alive. Most religions teach that the dead are alive, and, in fact, some religions even profit from this teaching. They make a lot of money by charging money to pray for the dead.

The Church in History (1996) B.K. Kuiper

“By the end of the fifth century . . . unscriptural doctrines and practices had become deeply rooted in the Church: prayers for the dead; a belief in *purgatory* (place in which souls are purified after death before they can enter heaven);”

Babylon Mystery Religion (1981) Ralph Woodrow

“The work of the Reformation did a good job in exposing the abuses of giving money In behalf of souls in Purgatory.”

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“To play upon the love and tender memories of bereaved people, to take money for masses and long prayers, brings to mind those Jewish priests at the time of Jesus who would devour widows’ houses, and for a pretence make long prayer”

Let’s face it, to charge to pray for the dead to get them into heaven is extortion, and outright fraud on a grand scale. It is also taking money for something that can’t be done.

The Gospel According to Rome (1995) James G. McCarthy

“Though there is no biblical basis for purgatory, there is a strong philosophical need for it in Roman Catholic theology.”

“According to the Church, every sin credits temporal punishment to the sinner’s account. Acts of penance, suffering, and indulgences debt this account.”

“the [Roman Catholic] church uses purgatory to motivate Catholics to live righteously. If there were no purgatory, the reasoning goes, people would go on sinning without fear.”

There is no need for one to pay for one’s sins in purgatory or hell because Jesus Christ paid for our sins in full. I John 2:2.

Harper Collins Encyclopedia of Catholicism (1995)

“According to Catholic doctrine, people who die in the state of sanctifying grace may have committed unabsolved venial sins or still owe temporal punishment for other sins already forgiven in the past. In these cases, atonement must be made before the soul can enjoy the Beatific Vision in heaven.”

Boy, there’s a load of non-Biblical junk crammed into a couple of sentences! It’s really amazing that con-artists get people to believe this bizarre religious mythology, and it is really sad that people fall victim to this devilish false teaching.

Genesis 3:4 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:

Satan the Devil is a bold liar. He continues to promote this same lie he used in Genesis: “Ye shall not surely die”. This is the essence of spiritualism; it is one of Satan’s foundational lies that supports his vast systems of error.

Ephesians 4:14 That we *henceforth* be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, *and* cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

A more accurate and more literal translation of that verse would be:

Interlinear Greek-English New Testament (1996) George Ricker Berry

“That no longer we may be infants, being tossed and carried about by every wind of the teaching in the sleight of men, in craftiness with a view to the systematizing of error;”

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The theology of the dead being alive originated with the lie “ye shall not surely die:” and continued into pagan religions; [Babylonians, Egyptians, Greeks, etc.]. It is manifested in the ESP and psychic doctrines, and it has crept into Christian doctrine. And it continues to spread. It is a whole system of error - - it is very logical, it is very intellectual, it is very well thought through; it has excellent arguments, it appeals to your emotions, it has swayed the majority of opinion. But the whole foundation of the doctrine of the dead being alive is false. This lie **cannot** stand in the light of God’s Word.

John 8:44 Ye are of *your* father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

8:45 And because I tell *you* the truth, ye believe me not.

Jesus Christ backed down Satan the Devil with the Word of God; he was always saying, “it is written.” If there are people in heaven, then it would only be logical to assume that the famous believers from the Bible would be among the first God would have with Him in heaven. But the Bible repeatedly says that these believers are dead.

Hebrews 11:13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of *them*, and embraced *them*, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

Acts 2:29 Men *and* brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day.

2:30 Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne;

Again, the only one God raised from the dead, never to die again, was and still is Jesus Christ. The others saw corruption in that they died and their bodies decayed.

2:31 He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption.

2:32 This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.

2:33 Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.

2:34 For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand,

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Acts 13:34 And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, *now* no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David.

13:35 Wherefore he saith also in another *psalm*, Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

13:36 For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption:

13:37 But he, whom God raised again, saw no corruption.

King David was a man after God's heart (Acts 13:22), and yet when he died he did not go to heaven. He fell asleep and his body corrupted in the grave. If anyone would go to heaven after he died, surely it would be someone who was a man after God's heart; and yet it says that he is dead, buried, asleep, has no consciousness, has no remembrance, no knowledge, no wisdom, and he does not any portion in anything that is done under the sun. That is because the dead are dead.

1 Corinthians 15:26 The last enemy *that* shall be destroyed *is* death.

Death is an enemy, and it shall be destroyed. There is a time coming when all of the dead will be raised up; then and only then will the dead be alive. In addition, those believers who are alive when Christ returns will be changed from physical bodies into spiritual bodies.

1 Corinthians 15:51 Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

15:52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

15:53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality.

15:54 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.

This is the final victory.

Revelation 20:6 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.

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After the Christian church is gathered together with Jesus Christ in the air, there will be a resurrection of the just [the better resurrection], and then there will be a resurrection of the unjust. [This is where everyone else gets up from the dead]

Revelation 20:12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is *the book* of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

20:13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

20:14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

20:15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

Revelation 20:5 But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This *is* the first resurrection.

Revelation 21:8 But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

Basically the second death is eternal death; there is no consciousness, no hope, no nothing - - just death. The idea of people being painfully and miserably tortured for eternity in hell by vicious and sadistic devils with red horns and pitchforks is a mythological religious fabrication, and an outright lie. The fire symbolizes cleansing and destruction. The things of God will not be consumed with fire, but the things of the adversary will be burned and destroyed. For centuries religion has used the fear of this mythological hell where poor souls are tormented as a way to fear-motivate and extort their followers.

The Christian doctrines of life after death and hell as a place of torture are imported from Greek philosophy and pagan religion.

What Happens When We Die? (1986) Anthony Buzzard

“The evangelical scholar G. E. Ladd refers to the commonly held tenet that ‘when we die we go to heaven.’ ‘Such thinking,’ he states. ‘popular as it is, is more an expression of Greek thought than of Biblical theology’”

“Yet traditional theology has so often been hampered by the all-pervasive influence of Augustinian Platonism.”

The Bible never mentions a soul living without a body; again, this is a Greek philosophical concept.

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Catholic Encyclopedia (1991)

“Plato established the basic Western tradition on this topic by defining the soul as the spiritual part of the human person which survived death. . . . He claimed that the separated soul possessed the characteristics previously possessed in its preexistence.”

Are The Dead Alive Now? (1971) Victor Paul Wierwille

“if a person immediately after expiring is taken to eternal bliss, why is the return of Christ and/or the resurrection necessary? If after death the Christian is already alive and with Him, why should Christ return to gather His Church?”

If you believe what the Bible says, then you don't have to come up with Platonic philosophical explanations to these questions.

Galations 1:8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

1:9 As we said before, so say I now again, If any *man* preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.

Anyone who teaches that the dead are alive is teaching another gospel that is different from the gospel that Jesus Christ and the Apostles taught. God's Word says, let him be accursed.

Deuteronomy 18:10 There shall not be found among you *any one* that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, [walk on hot coals] *or* that useth divination, [fortune teller] *or* an observer of times, [astrologer] or an enchanter, [magician] or a witch, [sorceress]

18:11 Or a charmer, [hypnotist] or a consulter with familiar spirits, [psychic or medium with a spirit guide] or a wizard, [clairvoyant] or a necromancer. [medium who consults the dead]

18:12 For all that do these things *are* an abomination unto the LORD: and because of these abominations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee.

Here God says that these things are an abomination and that the people who do them are an abomination unto the Lord. All of these practices are based on the lie that the dead are alive. The Devil and his evil spirit realm are familiar with peoples pasts When a psychic with a familiar spirit tells someone this information, it appears that he or she getting it from dead people.

God wants His people to know that the dead are dead so they won't get fooled again and again by lying people, lying spirits, lying priests, lying churches, lying ministers, lying psychics, and all the rest of the liars. It is time to go back to God's Word and believe the simple truth: that the dead are currently dead, and that they will be made alive by God sometime in the future.

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So what happens to the dead? There are three categories:

1 – Christians who sleep in Christ [are dead] will be gathered together in the air. I Thessalonians 4:13-18.

2 – Old Testament believers will be in the first resurrection or better resurrection and they will reign with Jesus Christ for 1000 years. Revelation 20:6

3 – Everyone else will take part in the second resurrection and they will be judged according to how they lived. Those that fail will die the second death, which is eternal death. Revelation 20:13-15 21:5,8.

Revelation 21:4 And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

There is a day coming when there is no death, no sorrow, no crying, and no pain, and those of us who are Christians will not be tortured in hell or purgatory.

1 John 3:2 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.

This is our hope for the future.

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