

Life After Death II

Invocation

Luke 24:36 And as they thus spoke, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and said unto them, Peace *be* unto you. 37 But they were terrified and afraid, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. 38 And he said unto them, Why are you troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? 39 Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit has not flesh and bones, as you see me have. Then Jesus said unto them, Have you here any food? 42 And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of a honeycomb. 43 And he took *it*, and did eat before them.

Responsive Reading

Life after Death II

First a quick review of Life after Death. 1 Kings 2:10 So David slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David.

1 Kings 11:43 And Solomon slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David his father. There are 81 texts in the bible that are similar to these with the phrase, slept with his fathers. Jesus said: in John 5:28 Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which **all** that are in the graves shall hear his voice, 29 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. Jesus left us with the understanding that the dead are in their graves waiting a resurrection. Jesus said of Lazarus, in John chapter 11, that he was asleep and He was going to wake him up. Then Jesus said plainly, Lazarus is dead. Here again, Jesus wanted us to think of death as a sleep.

The Disciple John was one of Jesus closest disciples. Peter, James and John went with Jesus on special occasions like the transfiguration of Jesus. John was with Jesus for 3 ½ years. He was at the foot of the cross when Jesus was crucified. Jesus gave the care of His mother to John. All of the disciples died brutal deaths not willing to deny Jesus. History tells us that they tried to kill John by putting him into boiling oil but like the Hebrews in the fiery furnace, he didn't die so he was exiled to the island of Patmos, where God gave him the visions of the end of the world and he wrote the Book of Revelation. John had a first-hand knowledge of Jesus so we can believe what he says. In the first chapter of his gospel, John says that Jesus was God, the creator of the world and that He was with the Father in the beginning of things. Jesus came to the world to be our sacrifice, to set up how to worship God, to teach us things and to get a family for God.

John 1:12 But as many as received him, to them he gave the power to become the **sons** of God, *even* to them that believe on his name:

1 John 3:2 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, it does 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. What did he say? We will be like Him when He shall appear.

When Jesus showed Himself to His disciples after His crucifixion, in Luke 24:36 And as they thus spoke, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and said unto them, Peace *be* unto you. 37 But they were terrified and afraid, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. 38 And he said unto them, "Why are you troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? 39 Behold my hands and my feet, that **it is I myself**: handle me, and see; for a

spirit has not flesh and bones, as you see me have.” Then Jesus said unto them, Have you here any food? **42** And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of a honeycomb. **43** And he took *it*, and did eat before them.

The resurrected Jesus had a body and John says that we will be like Him. When Jesus left, He disappeared and so did the fish He just ate.

Isaiah 65:17 For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. And in verse 21 And they shall build houses, and inhabit *them*; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. **22** They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree *are* the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands.

A spirit doesn't need to eat or live in a house. Some people think that **their** soul is immortal, living forever but we are mortal, we will die. Of God on the other hand, it says in,

1 Tim 6:16 Who only has immortality. We get our eternal life from Him.

Our minds are like computers, they operate with electrical impulses. When there are no more impulses, we are determined to be brain dead. We aren't thinking any more.

I just had a shoulder rotator cuff repair surgery. I remember laying on the bed and the next thing I knew, I woke up with a sling and a pain pump. I didn't notice the passage of hours of time or the pain of the surgery. I wasn't dead, just unconscious. When people die, they sleep the sleep of death and the next thing they know, they wake up in a resurrection. From their point of view, they died and woke up in a resurrection and didn't notice the passage of years. The next thing that they knew was that they were “with the Lord”.

Jesus is talking to the thief on the cross and it is recorded in Luke 23:43 And Jesus said unto him, Truly I say unto you, Today you shall be with me in paradise. This rendition implies that the thief would be in Heaven that day but Jesus wasn't there. Sunday morning, three days later, Jesus said that He had not yet been to heaven to see God.

John 20:17 Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: Jesus wanted to see the Father. This text would have been better if it said don't hold me back rather than touch me not.

The solution to Jesus comment to the thief, is simple, the original Greek text was written in all capitol letters with no punctuation. If we change the comma, it could read, Truly I say unto you today, you shall be with me in paradise. This would imply that today Jesus was telling him, that he will be in Heaven. At a time when the Father couldn't comfort Jesus because Jesus was dying the death of a sinner, this thief had stood up for Jesus and said to the other thief, quit deriding Jesus, He hasn't done anything wrong to deserve what he is getting but we are getting what we deserve. This was reaffirming to Jesus what He knew, He was the innocent lamb, dying for the guilty. Jesus, in giving this man salvation, gives us the idea that it is never too late to ask for salvation. This man was never baptized nor did he grow to be more like Jesus. God took him like he was, a forgiven sinner who asked.

Jesus didn't go straight to Heaven when He died, He waited for a resurrection. Jesus however is God. He has an eternal spiritual existence. We on the other hand are mortal and we must put on immortality which we get at the resurrection or at the coming of Jesus.

God has given many people visions of eternal things. Paul had seen so many visions that he once made a comment: 2 Cor 12:3 And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knows;) **4** How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. **5** Of such an one will I glory. Paul couldn't remember whether he was in a vision or not when he met the man.

Many people would like to believe that they go straight to Heaven when they die but look at the picture; we love our children and family, if we could see them making mistakes and going through extreme trouble, we would want to help them and we would not be at peace. Like my shoulder surgery, if I'm out of here, I didn't feel the pain or see what was going on. God in His love is saving us from all that. God's Kingdom is based on freedom. People need to be free to choose and with that choice comes the opportunity to make the wrong choices and the consequences will follow.

Mark 12:25 For **when they shall rise from the dead**, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as the angels which are in heaven. Jesus said that resurrected people will be single, not married.

In closing, the Biblical idea is that we sleep the sleep of death until a resurrection or the coming of Jesus. The Gospel of John was written by one of Jesus' closest disciples who was with Him for 3 ½ years. This is a first-hand account of what happened and what Jesus taught. John says that Jesus was the Creator of all things including this world and us. He was in heaven with God the Father from the beginning. We can become children of God by accepting Him and coming to Him for forgiveness. Jesus relating to the thief on the cross shows us that it is never too late to accept Jesus and gain salvation. Jesus' resurrected body needed to eat, He had flesh and bones. His body was not that of a spirit. John says that we will be like Jesus. In Heaven we will build houses and plant and eat. May God guide us into this wonderful existence with Him.