



Scriptures and Doctrine :: What happens to us after death?

What happens to us after death? - posted by Truthstands, on: 2005/12/4 4:02

What happens to us (Christians) after we die? This is perhaps a very important question that many Bible teachers and theologians have been debating about.

There are two schools of thought regarding the intermediate stage.

1. After we die, we go to be with the Lord immediately.
2. Our Soul sleeps in a place called Sheol. And we will wait there until the resurrection. You can read more about this view.

(<http://www.bereanbiblechurch.in/messages/sunday/afterdeath.htm>) What happens to the brethren when they die?

(<http://www.bereanbiblechurch.in/messages/sunday/sheolobjectionsanswered.htm>) Objections Answered Concerning The Intermediate State In Sheol

Thanks

Re: What happens to us after death? - posted by worzle, on: 2005/12/4 9:13

Luke 23:43:

And he said to him, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise."

--

I heard a guy called David Pawson speak on this saying paradise literally meant "palace garden" rather than 'heaven'.

Re: What happens to us after death? - posted by Onfire, on: 2005/12/4 10:17

Hi Truthstands,

This is an interesting post.

Thought is that when God was with us in the flesh He plainly said the Kingdom of Heaven/God is at hand. Christ by coming to earth and eventually atoning for our separation from Him ushered in the Kingdom of Heaven. The moment that we exercise our faith in Him as our Lord and Saviour, we are in the Kingdom of Heaven. That means that Heaven begins for us now because we are spiritual beings and eternal life begins for us even now while our souls remain temporarily with a human body.

When our human bodies give up if we have chosen to exercise our faith in Christ and have been made children of God abiding in His family in the Kingdom of Heaven we will continue spiritually with Him. However, Sheol as indicated also by the word Hell means perish. The wages of sin is death. If we do not walk by faith in Him we are separated from Him and thus our souls will perish. They will not go to a place of eternal punishment, but they will cease to exist. There is no way that a loving God will punish people forever for not choosing Him. It will be exactly as scripture said, that whoever should believe would not perish.

The idea of a place of burning comes from the garbage pit outside the walls of Jerusalem. This was also a place where pagans sacrificed people. Scripture uses that as an allegory to the fact that we do not want our life to end up in ruin. However, people unfortunately have turned it into a literal place.

Either Satan is destroyed by God or he is not. I believe scripture states that he will be destroyed. If that is the case there would be no reason for God to destroy Satan while eternally punishing those who did not choose Him by faith.

So for followers of Christ it is not as important where we go after we die as where we are now. If we are part of the Kingdom

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om of Heaven now, we will continue as such. If the fruit of the Spirit is not present now, if we do not walk by faith, if we believe man's doctrines more than the truth of God than we are not part of the Kingdom of Heaven now. We can answer those questions about the hereafter for ourselves, here and now. Our soul goes from being attached to a human body to existing with God spiritually as He exists spiritually. If we do not walk by faith where we think we do or not our soul will perish.

Re: What happens to us after death? - posted by ccchhhrrriiiss (), on: 2005/12/4 11:20

Hi Truthstands...!

Quote:

-----There are two schools of thought regarding the intermediate stage.

Actually, I believe that there are more than just two schools of thought. There are several subdivisions of this discussion, like questions concerning how many "judgment days" there are, and when will we face judgment. This has been discussed extensively in previous threads, but it is always an interesting discussion.

Here is a link to one that was quite interesting:

https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic_id=6743&forum=36#50829

Since that one is old (and dealt more with *judgment*), I am interested and reading responses in this one!

:-)

What happens to us after death? - posted by crsschk (), on: 2005/12/4 13:30

Quote:

-----Psa 116:15 Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints.

One perspective.

Re: What happens to us after death? - posted by Graftedbranc, on: 2005/12/5 21:53

Quote:

-----There are two schools of thought regarding the intermediate stage.

I think it is instructive that Paul in second Corinthians when speaking of His being "caught away, whether in the body or out of the body...", He speaks of two separate events. In one he says, "I was caught away to the third heaven. And again he says, "I was caught away into Paradise".

If Paradise and heaven were identical, there would not be this distinction in Paul's testimony.

Graftedbranch

Re: - posted by Agent001 (), on: 2005/12/6 0:21

The distinctions between Paradise, Gehenna, Hades/Sheol were discussed very recently in the following thread:

(https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic_id8012&forum36&7) Gehenna and Hades

A preliminary observation is that the **intermediate state** of human existence is never discussed in detail in the scriptures. The concern has always been the **resurrection** after this state.

We should probably pay more attention to what the scriptures emphasise rather than venture into too much speculation.

Anyways, check out the above link for my views.

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2005/12/8 17:44

Quote:

-----by Graftedbranc on 2005/12/6 2:53:30

I think it is instructive that Paul in second Corinthians when speaking of His being "caught away, whether in the body or out of the body...", He speaks of two separate events. In one he says, "I was caught away to the third heaven. And again he says, "I was caught away into Paradise".

If Paradise and heaven were identical, there would not be this distinction in Paul's testimony.

This is not true. In fact, it would just be a typical Hebrew (<http://www.cresourcei.org/parallel.html>) "synonymous parallelism" of which there are probably hundreds in the scripture. You will see how misplaced your logic is by examining: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass." (Zech. 9:9, KJVS) According to your logic, this would have become a circus trick with two separate animals being ridden at the same time.

Re: - posted by Christinyou (), on: 2005/12/9 23:05

2Cr 5:8 We are confident, , and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

Here is the 1 remaining inexact match:

2Cr 5:6 Therefore always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord:

2Cr 4:14 Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present with you.

Jesus will never leave us or forsake us. The Holy Spirit is in us forever. They cannot deny Themselves, we are in Them and Them in us and including the Father who's Abode is with us. Spirit and Soul are alive unto God now and forever. The only remaining task is for an everlasting body glorified on resurrection morning which we do not know what it shall be, but we know it will be like His Glorious Body. Amen.

In Christ: Phillip

Re: - posted by jimbob, on: 2005/12/10 0:50

"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass." (Zech. 9:9, KJVS)

Ron, the real trick here is riding these two colts at the same time to the two different places!

Re: - posted by Graftedbranc, on: 2005/12/10 10:27

Quote:

-----This is not true. In fact, it would just be a typical Hebrew "synonymous parallelism" of which there are probably hundreds in the scripture. You will see how misplaced your logic is by examining:

What you say is a possibility, it allows for the possibility that he is restating the same thing. But it also allows for the possibility that they are two separate events. Paul spoke of "on to visions and revelations" plural.

One cannot fasten a hard doctrine on this one passage but it allows for either interpretation and the fact that they are two separate statements contrary to your example suggest the latter. So to say, "This is not true" is not a fair statement. It is the totality of the revelation in the Word of God upon which we fasten doctrine.

We know that the Lord said to the thief on the Cross. "This day you shall be with Me in Paradise". And in other passages we are told that when the Lord died, He "descended into hades", not that he "went to heaven". Yet He also said 'this day you shall be with Me in Paradise.

The Lord ascended to the heavens after His resurrection, not in the interval between His crucifixion and resurrection. When the Lord died on the Cross He descended into hades into Paradise. The place of the just dead. That is the "Bosom of

Abraham", Paradise.

Graftedbranch

Re: - posted by BeYeDoers (), on: 2005/12/10 14:42

Onfire, you said

Quote:
-----They will not go to a place of eternal punishment, but they will cease to exist. There is no way that a loving God will punish people forever for not choosing Him.

Not to be rude, but you are dead wrong my friend. This view of annihilation is found nowhere in scripture and in fact is a anti-scriptural. Lexicons and history are good tools, but don't let them interpret scripture for you. Sheol in the OT was a general term meaning "place of the dead." The Jews believed that after you die, you go to Sheol...it wasn't necessarily bad, good, whatever, but souls did continue to exist there after the body died.

Now, your assumption that a loving God would never punish eternally is simply your assumption based on human wisdom. The God of the Bible is loving, but that doesn't outweigh His other attributes. He is also Holy, Holy, Holy and will rightly judge the living and the dead. A loving, just judge MUST punish the wicked.

You are right about Gehenna being a pagan trash incineration heap, and Jesus used this as an analogy and foreshadow of the things to come so that unrepent sinners would be motivated to repent once they had an idea of what would happen to them. While Gehenna was temporal, the fire of hell is eternal. Jesus was 100% clear about this (Mt 18:8, 25:41). Jesus was also clear about God's eternal punishment (Mt 25:46). Luke 16:19-31 is the story of Lazarus and the rich man. Jesus is telling it to teach the Pharisees the realities of heaven and hell and who would enter each. The rich man was in torment because of the flames. His body is dead, but his conscious soul, the torment, and the flames are very much real. You will say "that is just a parable". No it's not. It really happened. The way Jesus tells this story is very unlike any of his parables. There are names of people, lots of detail, and it is being directed toward a specific group of people in a specific way. But even if it was a parable, and annihilationism is true, Jesus would have been ludicrous for making up such a story b/c it would have in no way taught anything remotely close to the truth.

The rest of scripture also bears witness to an eternal place of torment. Jude says that the fire is part of the eternal punishment (Jude 7). The devil will not be annihilated. God is eternal from eternity past to eternity future. Angels exist from temporal past to eternity future. Humans have temporal bodies past, present, future, but have souls existing from temporal past to eternity future. The devil will be thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone with the beast and false prophet "and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever" (Rev. 20:10). After the great white throne judgment, "whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. 20:15). A taste of eternal life is described in Rev. 21:1-7, eternal death in verse 8. It is the death that does not die, and the fire that never burns out.

Whatever you call it (the Bible calls it hell or the lake of fire), God has created a place of eternal punishment for the devil, the 1/3 of angels that rebelled with him, and every human being that has ever lived and not repented of his sin and exercised his faith solely in Jesus Christ, the God of the universe.

In response to the original post, I believe that after the cross, Jesus went to the part of Sheol holding the OT redeemed and led them to paradise, and subsequently all believers will go here after death to be with our Lord. After Judgment Day, all believers will be in the very presence of God in all his glory for all eternity.

denver

Re: - posted by Warrior4Jah (), on: 2005/12/11 9:51

Hey Onfire,

Another verse that comes to mind regarding this:

(Isa 66:24)

And they will go out and see the dead bodies of the men who have sinned against Me; for their worm will not die, nor will their fire be put out; and they will be an object of disgust to all flesh.

(<https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/mydownloads/singlefile.php?lid7740>) The worm that never dies..

A compilation I found very powerful, but perhaps you should listen to the sermon first. Which I don't know the full link for. . perhaps someone else can provide the link?

Re: - posted by IRONMAN (), on: 2005/12/11 13:54

brethren

what of this scripture in luke chapter 16. it may appear to be a parable but not that the disciples don't ask what it means nor does Jesus give any other explanation for what it means. it seems to me that either this was well known among people of the time and perhaps disputed but the disciples seemed to understand it as what would happen after death. there is a separation between the wicked and righteous in this place where the wicked are in torment while the righteous are in Abraham's Bosom. This is before the day of judgement after which both these people who died before Christ returned and those who were living at Christ's return are sent to their respective places.

19 There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: 20 And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, 21 And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. 22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; 23 And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. 24 And 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. 25 But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. 26 And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence. 27 Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: 28 For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. 29 Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. 30 And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. 31 And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

Re: - posted by Onfire, on: 2005/12/11 14:39

BeYeDoer ~> I accept the fact that I could be wrong and God may in fact want to punish people forever. However, I believe scripture also when it refers to perishing and death as being exactly that.

Personally, I believe it would be punishment enough to be judged and found that I had made the wrong choice and that my soul had no opportunity for eternal life. Yes, there will be a lot of gnashing of teeth when they realize they have made a very bad choice.

If you have to fear someone into making that choice by using fire and brimstone, than have they really made that choice based upon their faith in Him.

Re: - posted by Onfire, on: 2005/12/11 14:51

Warrior ~> I appreciate all of your discussion on this matter and I'm not just trying to be contrary and difficult. I listened to the sermon on the worm that never dies it was interesting.

I believe there is punishment for all who do not put their faith in Christ. I believe that the punishment is to perish/death, to not receive eternal life is their punishment. We are not just merely annihilated, we suffer that punishment of not receiving eternal life, we face His judgement first.

Here's another thought. If Christ ushered in the Kingdom of Heaven and it exists for us now spiritually, than does Hell being its counterpart also exist for us spiritually now. We are either part of one or the other now, light or dark. So in that sense Heaven and Hell are physical because we also have physical bodies and those bodies participate in the spiritual realm now.

Re: - posted by Warrior4Jah (), on: 2005/12/11 14:59

Hey onfire,

Nowhere (so far I know) in scripture death is being explained as 'the end of your existence'. Do you believe that God's Word does not contradict itself?

Re: - posted by Warrior4Jah (), on: 2005/12/11 15:28

Hey onfire,

Well we seek God and want His Truth, not our own truth right? :-)

Quote:
-----onfire wrote:
Warrior ~> I appreciate all of your discussion on this matter and I'm not just trying to be contrary and difficult. I listened to the sermon on the worm that never dies it was interesting.

What do you exactly think what happens to a person after judgement?

Quote:
-----I believe there is punishment for all who do not put their faith in Christ. I believe that the punishment is to perish/death, to not receive eternal life is their punishment. We are not just merely annihilated, we suffer that punishment of not receiving eternal life, we face His judgement first.

The Kingdom of God is also on earth present in people who follow God.
The world and the children of the world walk in darkness, the Bible tells us that we walk in the light if we follow the Lord.
(and this is on the dark earth)

This doesn't mean that people who walk in darkness are now in hell. People, now not aware of judgement and living without Christ spend their lives living for self and even enjoy their (sinful) lives.

Quote:
-----Here's another thought. If Christ ushered in the Kingdom of Heaven and it exists for us now spiritually, than does Hell being its counterpart also exist for us spiritually now. We are either part of one or the other now, light or dark.

I'm not sure if I understand you correctly here with this last quote. But hell is not (on) earth.
I have no insight on the spiritual realm, other than that I know it exists and that the saints on this world do have an impact on it. :-)

You could see the earth as a battlefield for souls. Satan trying all in his power to keep the people ensnared in self, trying everything in his power to prevent people from getting to know and live for Christ.

Quote:
-----So in that sense Heaven and Hell are physical because we also have physical bodies and those bodies participate in the spiritual realm now.

Re: - posted by GaryE (), on: 2005/12/11 16:49

Dear Onfire and Warrior4Jah,

In the Sermon Index there is a read text by Johnathan Edwards called Devine Retribution on the subject of hell. You both may find it interesting to listen to.

In Christ,
GaryE

Re: - posted by BeYeDoers (), on: 2005/12/11 16:54

Onfire,
once again you are letting Webster define "death" and "perish" for you, not the Bible. Let scripture interpret scripture. Death in our understanding of the word, from a dictionary, may mean ceasing to exist, but it DOESN'T mean that in scripture. In the Bible death does not die. The word death is chosen just because it is the opposite of life. They are both eternal. Read Jesus' words again in Matthew, as well as Jude's. They say without contention that hell and the punishment therein is ETERNAL. In Revelation the devil and beast and the false prophet are punished "day and night forever and ever" in the lake of fire where all the unregenerate also go. Does the Bible say that or not? You are ignoring parts of scripture and getting your theology from an English definition of a word. Please read scripture. I beg you to set your mind straight with God. His word is very clear on this matter.

Re: - posted by Onfire, on: 2005/12/11 23:31

I don't believe that I'm defining death and perishing by Webster's definition. I believe the scriptures are clear about what they say. I see as much human understanding and assumptions in regards to those who believe in eternal punishment as from those who accuse me of believing that the wages of sin is death.

The best thing about being filled with the Spirit of God is that we have the opportunity to have insight into the spiritual realm.

Regardless of the debate that goes on about the physicality of Hell, I'm glad I won't have to worry about going there or being annihilated. And I still don't believe in fearmongering someone into making a decision to follow Christ. People should fear God not being punished.

Re: - posted by Onfire, on: 2005/12/11 23:35

BeYeDoers this is off topic; however, many people involve themselves in idolatrous worship within institutional churches and they too should set their mind straight with God as well regarding what they have done to His Church.

Re: - posted by Warrior4Jah (), on: 2005/12/12 5:36

I will have a look at it, thanks! :-)

Quote:
-----GaryE wrote:
Dear Onfire and Warrior4Jah,

In the Sermon Index there is a read text by Johnathan Edwards called Devine Retribution on the subject of hell. You both may find it interesting to listen to.

In Christ,
GaryE

Re: - posted by tacklebox (), on: 2005/12/12 8:44

Quote:
-----They will not go to a place of eternal punishment, but they will cease to exist. There is no way that a loving God will punish people forever for not choosing Him. It will be exactly as scripture said, that whoever should believe would not perish.

How do you explain these words by Christ? (Who I believe didn't waste a single word nor used words lightly as men do):

"And these shall go away into **everlasting punishment**: but the righteous into life eternal." -Matt. 25:46 (emphasis added)

And don't try to say that the Greek word for "everlasting" doesn't really mean "eternal" because the same word used for eternal punishment is also used in that SAME verse for eternal life. So if we have life eternal, then the lost have punishment not eternal. It's nothing I am happy about, and it saddens me beyond measure, but changing the words of Christ won't just to make me feel better is never a good policy. In fact, knowing there is such a place quickens me to spread the Gospel and intercede in prayer daily.

Re: - posted by Onfire, on: 2005/12/12 9:11

What I find very interesting and please forgive my boldness because I'm not directing this to anyone here. If I were to go on about my denomination or my Pastor or the programs in the building that I attend, no one would probably question if my faithfulness was more to the doctrines of man. No one would question if I'm glorifying a person in leadership as my authority over Christ. No one would question if I were given to the many false doctrines that are being taught through Christianity. And no one would question if I disregarded the Church that He established for the one that man instituted. People tend to hone in on the nonessential things and miss the fact that so many people have more allegiance to what man has built up rather than what Christ wants to build within us.

To whom my faith rests is by far more important than whether I think this or that is a physical place once by body kicks the bucket. I just think it is very interesting, because I could go on forever about being involved in earthly things that man has built using Christ's name and few would venture to correct me in those regards. But being more concerned about the spiritual state of things rather than the physical state seems to get a lot of people riled up.

Re: - posted by BeYeDoers (), on: 2005/12/12 10:17

I haven't seen anyone on this post question your faithfulness. None of us have a right to do so. What we are questioning is the way you interpret scripture. You have not presented anything from scripture that says death means annihilation, and several of us have presented abundant scripture showing that hell is real and God will eternally punish the wicked. You said that the issue is nonessential, and you are right as far as salvation is concerned. You do not have to believe in hell to be saved. But I DO believe that hell is absolutely essential to the gospel. You said that we should fear God and not punishment. True. But what did Jesus say? "Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him" (Luke 12:5). Jesus used the truth that AFTER death God can cast into hell (what is he casting? bodies into the fire pit outside of Jerusalem? who cares? that's nothing to fear if your soul is annihilated). It was hell that Jesus used to instill the fear of God.

I also haven't seen anyone here defend their church building. They are defending the scriptures. This is a red herring and a straw man. If you are insinuating that the eternal punishment and lake of fire is a man-made doctrine and originated in an institutionalized building and therefore can't be true, then that is a genetic fallacy. It also just isn't true...it's not a man-made doctrine, it's a Jesus-made doctrine.

I am only continuing this conversation b/c I believe you are in theological error on something that is one of the key points of the gospel and the Christian faith (again not essential for salvation). Annihilationism disregards the clearest of teachings of scripture on this subject. Jesus was more clear about what hell is like than heaven. You have not adequately explained any of the scriptures that several of us have provided. You have not supplied any form of refutation, only a restatement of your beliefs. I'm not here to have worldly debate or to argue. "What happens after we die" is one of the most important spiritual truths and must be answered for every person in at least a basic way. If annihilation is true, then sinners have no reason to want to spend eternity in heaven. They do not want to come to the light for fear their deeds will be exposed (John 3:20). They love their sin and want nothing to do with God. If there is no hell and they are just annihilated, that'

s what they want!! They would rather live the way they want and just cease to exist if that means avoiding God and his "no fun zone" that we Christians like to call life with Christ. The devil created the doctrine of annihilation b/c he doesn't want you to believe in hell. Hell might actually cause someone to see the seriousness of their crimes against God and repent!

Exegesis, not eisegesis.

Re: - posted by Onfire, on: 2005/12/12 23:11

If my faith in God is in question then I should be judged because scripture does tell us to do that.

I have presented from scripture two very important verses that say, The wages of sin is death, not eternal punishment. And John 3:16 which indicates that they will have everlasting life if they believe and will not perish. It doesn't say they will have everlasting punishment. I also indicated that people will be punished. Not receiving everlasting life is punishment in of itself.

It's interesting how so many people can give vivid descriptions about the state of Hell and eternal punishment but only a few assumptions about Heaven.

You're right Jesus did use Hell as an analogy and we must understand in context what Christ was really referring to. We can't take His analogies and turn them into physical realities. We must understand the time line from which He taught these important lessons as well as to whom He was speaking and the examples that He was using in those analogies.

I always thought the gospel was essential for salvation and you're telling me that Hell is key points of the gospel, but it's not essential to salvation.

Jesus was more clear about the death of a person's soul than He was a physical location where God would make people suffer for not choosing Him.

I didn't say one time that I don't believe there is Hell. I believe that people will be punished. I do not believe in eternal punishment. I do believe that man will be held accountable and be judged. I do believe that Jesus Christ spoke clearly that people would suffer and die as a result of their separation from Him just as those outside the walls of the city. Their bodies were destroyed. If we do not choose Him our punishment is that we will not inherit eternal life.

People defend their church buildings all the time.

I believe that the second death indicates clearly that death will end.

What happens after we die is nowhere near as important as how we live now. Are you dying now, because that's what Christ is more concerned about.

I'm concerned more about people's faith in Christ now. The rest is up to God to decide because He is the judge of their salvation. People are unwilling to look at the spiritual state and faith of others but they get off on tangents about what they think Heaven and Hell are all about. The fact is Heaven exists for those who follow Christ now and for many people who call themselves Christians this is a concept they are unfamiliar with. Many have no clue what spiritual warfare is all about but they are filled with all sorts of notions about Hell and eternal punishment.

I don't believe in annihilation. I believe people will be punished. I believe their punishment is to not receive eternal life and that their soul will perish / die as scripture clearly states and as Christ clearly taught using the pit and sacrifice of sinful people as an example.

Did Jesus ask us to defend scriptures?

Re: - posted by Onfire, on: 2005/12/12 23:17

Tackle ~> Death is eternal isn't it. Death of our soul is the punishment that we receive. Punishment in the form of torture is not what is referred to in Matt 25:46

Everlasting/eternal it means forever. Our punishment is that we will perish.

When you have a child and they don't make the choice that you would hope that they would make, do you give them an eternal spanking or is their punishment that they do not receive what they could have had if they would have made the proper choice?

Most Christians don't understand the scriptural importance that Heaven exists for us now in this lifetime. They are waiting to die to get to Heaven and God wants them to be a part of it now. Many are spiritually dead and they are just waiting for their bodies to catch up with their souls.

Re: - posted by CyberCarbon (), on: 2005/12/17 2:16

Your spirit is eternal, the second death is a judgement by God.

Re:, on: 2005/12/19 12:17

Onfire wrote:

Quote:
-----I have presented from scripture two very important verses that say, The wages of sin is death, not eternal punishment. And John 3:16 which indicates that they will have everlasting life if they believe and will not perish. It doesn't say they will have everlasting punishment. I also indicated that people will be punished. Not receiving everlasting life is punishment in of itself.

The Bible says that "the wages of sin is death" (Rom.6:23), and also, "for all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God" (Rom.3:23). If all have sinned, starting from Adam - "but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die" (Gen.2:17) - we all deserve to and will die. Death is a reality and it is because of sin that death came into the world. But notice that Adam doesn't die physiologically right away. His death because of sin is a death of the spirit, not the body. It is not an end to his earthly life or existence.

Also have in mind that we cannot equate eternal life (which can begin in this world) with mere existence. You may exist in the flesh, but if you have not believed in the Son of God, in reality, you are dead as of this moment (Lk.15:32). That is to say, a person exists in fleshly form, but the life of God is not in him; hence, s/he is dead because of the sin s/he has committed. This, however, is a present or temporary state of death (which, of course, can become eternal if the person never comes back to life), or it is the absence of life (until the son in the parable is "alive again"). Paul also compares this absence as a state of sleep (1 Cor.15:6).

The Scripture, however, does not specify a kind of temporary life equivalent to this kind of temporary death (whose grip you can get out of once you are saved). True life, as the one in Christ, is eternal life; if it were not eternal, then it would be no life at all. See, there is no need for Jesus to compare real, eternal life with worldly, temporary death, for such a comparison is useless. Christ speaks in heavenly terms here and about eternal values. The Scripture says, "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life" (Jn.3:16). The opposite of eternal life will be eternal death or the absence of such life - not a state of non-existence, for one can be dead in the flesh in this world and still exist. This death, then, is the absence of eternal life, or the eternal absence of life.

It is a fact that all have sinned and will die ("the wages of sin" being both temporary and eternal death), but to "perish" here is rather the absence of the eternal life that is only in Christ (1 Jn.5:11), and not annihilation of the soul or it ceasing to exist. It is the opposite of life, and since life, as Christ presents it, is not tantamount to mere existence, then death is not the opposite of existence. Hence, it does not mean the end of existence, just as being dead right now by not believing in Christ does not mean you or your spirit do not exist.

Onfire—

I think here we have to distinguish between death as an end to earthly life and death as opposite to eternal life or life, not of the body, but of the soul. The John 3 text talks about death as an eternal state or quality juxtaposed to life, and it is beyond this life. The Bible also says that because of the sin you have committed, you will surely die (see Ez.18:24). This is a different kind of death – the text could have well said, “because of the sin he has committed, he is surely dead already,” but it does not. Also, in 2 Cor.4:3, Paul says, “And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing” (emphasis mine). He does not write that the gospel is veiled to those who have perished, meaning that the one in context is a different kind of death – this time a death coming in the future and not temporary.

I think here the question is what meaning we attribute to the words “death” and “perish.” If we speak in heavenly terms, assuming that there is no beginning and no end since everything is eternal, then we need to revise our notions of life and death, and more so the idea that while death is an end in itself, there is nothing apart from it, not even the notion of existence. It is, in fact, just the opposite: while death is an end in itself, it takes place in eternity, or it is an eternal state. It is the absolute end or absence of life, and, therefore, not an annihilation of the soul. Think about it this way: If I were dead in the flesh right now, and because of this death my soul were, indeed, annihilated, then why would Christ come to save souls that didn’t exist in the first place?

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts (Col.3:15),
S. Stefanov