

Scriptures and Doctrine :: Does a Christian go to heaven or to soul sleep after death?

Does a Christian go to heaven or to soul sleep after death? - posted by Cherubim (), on: 2010/5/10 19:01

I'm having a hard time answering this question due to the controversies that surrounds it so I would appreciate it if some one here can tell me the truth about this question without contradicting any verse in the Bible.

For example, Paul said the dead shall rise on judgement day while Jesus said to the sinner on the cross "I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise". How can this sinner go to paradise the moment he died? I'm really confuse please help

Re: Does a Christian go to heaven or to soul sleep after death? - posted by jerryaustin1 (), on: 2010/5/10 19:47

It is written by paul " to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord." When a believer dies his soul leaves his body. It is his body that will be raptured up " the dead in Christ shall rise first" scripture states. The believers which are alive and remain will also be raptured up but it is the bodies of the dead believers that will be raptured. When the believer dies he is present with the Lord. Some time later at the rapture his body will be resurrected and glorified.

Re: Does a Christian go to heaven or to soul sleep after death?, on: 2010/5/11 0:39

Hey Cheribum

I had a vision one time(I can see my conservative friends tightening up as they read this:) I was pondering the Scriptures

"Act 1:9 And saying these things, as they watched, He was taken up. And a cloud received Him out of their sight.

Luk 24:51 And it happened as He blessed them, He withdrew from them and was carried up into Heaven.

In my vision I was watching Peter watch Jesus ascend into the cloud. Then suddenly I was in a crowd without number, they lined a path on either side. At the end of the path, there was God the Father, I could not see Him, I just knew He was there. Jesus was on a magnificent majestic looking white stallion. All the people were casting down crowns from their heads at the feet of the horse and the horse was moving very deliberately through the crown that were thrown down and the vast crowd cried "Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord God almighty. And the Father cried out to all, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." And here is the unusual part(if that was not unusual enough:) Peter was in the crowd casting down his crown.

Does this mean anything? No. It was a glorious vision of Christ's triumphant return to heaven, that's what I took from it and I was greatly blessed. Let me throw this out there to ponder. Could it be, since time is only relevant here on earth and that Jesus stepped into time and space, He simply stepped back out into "eternity." We know that Peter lived at least another 20-30 years after Jesus died and arose, but could it be that since there is no time in heaven, those 30 years were irrelevant. Could it be that this is why that very day for the thief on the cross, He would be with the Lord, even although we know that the Lord was on the earth and interacting for a period of about 40 days before he "ascended."

Obviously the truth is that this is fine to ponder, but it is way beyond our pay-grade to know and understand the relationship between time and space and eternity and heaven. The good thing to know is that we will be there with our Lord, soul sleep or not.....brother Frank

Re: , on: 2010/5/11 7:58

I don't put any stock in visions like that (no offense, Frank :-))... but scripture does say: "to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord".

Soul sleep is a lie most held onto by the Seventh Day Adventist cult, which also teaches that there is no hell.

Krispy

Re: , on: 2010/5/11 8:48

This will not contradict scripture, but it will contradict our notions of the time/space continuum.

Having died--->(that's what getting your body pulled through a compact cars wheel-well and catapulted aprox. 40 feet, then after flopping like a quarter in trajectory, making a one point landing smacking the back of your head on asphalt- will do to you)

Re: , on: 2010/5/11 9:42

Dont worry Krispy, I knew that :) you were not supposed to put any stock in it, merely ponder, if you like, on questions that can never truly be answered this side of eternity :)

PS Krispy, do not throw the baby out with the bath water, just because there are crazies out there, does not mean that God does not give His people visions and dreams for edification and exhortation (and they will never violate Scripture)

Re: , on: 2010/5/11 13:05

I treat visions like I do mushrooms. Some are poisonous, some are good for you... I prefer to avoid both.

Krispy

Re: - posted by TrueWitness, on: 2010/5/11 13:56

I'd just like to point out a fact about the Greek of Luke 23:43. In Greek, there is no punctuation. Removing punctuation from the English translation renders the verse thus: Assuredly I say to you today you will be with Me in Paradise. This could be understood either as:

1) Assuredly I say to you today you will be with Me in Paradise.

OR

2) Assuredly I say to you today you will be with Me in Paradise.

I think the point is moot since the Paradise He is referring to is Abraham's bosom (the nice and pleasant part of Sheol) in the heart of the Earth. See the story of the rich man and Lazarus. So yes, both Jesus and the penitent thief were both taken there to Paradise (not Heaven) that very day.

Re: , on: 2010/5/11 14:25

" I prefer to avoid both."

I know you do brother :) If I used the same logic as you have expressed, I would never love anyone again if I had been hurt in the past.....brother Frank

Re: - posted by Areadymind (), on: 2010/5/11 14:30

I agree with TrueWitness, all my studying of the whole bible completely lead me to this exact same conclusion. However, I wonder why this verse (Luke 23:43) is the only verse ever that I hear people being concerned about the comma. Kind of weird. I have been told that the second wording as you put it means there is such thing as soul sleep. I have to say that the moving of a lacking comma is a weak thing to build a doctrine on, yet I am no scholar...however, it is probably the only verse where I have been exposed to a punctuation debate.

The only logical conclusion is the thief went with Christ to paradise in Abraham's bosom. This answers the riddle of the Psalmist claiming, "Thou shalt not leave my soul in hell, neither shall ye suffer thine Holy One to see corruption."

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Re: , on: 2010/5/11 15:19

I have heard this argument before about Luke 23:43. I don't buy it...

It would be redundant to say "I say to you today...". No one ever says "I say to you yesterday..." or "I say to you tomorrow...".

Jesus meant what all of Christianity has believed it to mean... and that is that on that day that man was in paradise with Jesus.

Krispy

Re: - posted by Areadymind (), on: 2010/5/11 15:30

Yeah Krispy, after I wrote that I thought that it makes no sense for Jesus to emphasize the day in which he is saying what he said. Who talks like that? It would be really weird if I told my wife...tonight I say unto you, we are going to brush our teeth before bed! And she derived that meant we were going to do it in 2000 years.

I guess if you think Jesus was all like mystical and held his hands in strange gestures, and had piercing azure blue eyes, well maybe then.

Thanks Krispy.

Re: Does a Christian go to heaven or to soul sleep after death?, on: 2010/5/11 16:49

These are not my words, but part of an email bible study that I belong to. Only the names were changed.

Quote:
-----Hi Bob, Please answer this question for me. When 'they' put the body of Bobby Purdy in a casket/urn and bury the body of Bobby Purdy in the ground -- where will Bobby be? And why will Bobby be there? Your brother Larry.

Bobby says: If my connection with Christ is "life," (and it is) then Bobby will always live. Physical death has no power to change what Christ has done for Bobby. Romans the sixth chapter explains that Bobby died with Christ. Bobby was buried with Christ. Bobby arose with Christ. And Ephesians says that Bobby is seated in the heaven-lies with Christ. This is a positional truth that assures all believers of victory over death in any form. This is the reason that Bobby can say that "all things work together for good for those that love the Lord." Even physical death works for good. 1 Corinthians 15 says that Bobby will leave the flesh body and exchange it for a spiritual body. Where will Bobby be?" you ask. Where ever Christ will be in the spiritual realm, there will Bobby be. I do not believe in reincarnation, where a person gets a second chance. I believe that the work of Christ completes us in the eyes of God and there is no labor from the cross of Christ. In His words, "It is finished." The last bit of debt is paid for once for all.

Brother Bobby, where is this "spiritual realm" now? Is Jesus Christ in that spiritual realm now or does He have to wait until you get there? Does the Bible describe this "spiritual realm"? If so, how and where? Thanks, Bro. Larry.

Bobby says: From the beginning of time everyone thought in terms of reality as being dualism. That is, the spiritual and the physical. The Gospel of John tells us that Jesus was with God and came to earth as the Logos or Word. He left one realm to enter into another. One has to distinguish the differences in the physical "heaven and earth" and the Mosaic Economy, which was also called "heaven and earth" when reading the Bible. Then there is the heaven of heavens or the heaven-lies. This is where Christ is. Paul admonishes us to put our affections on things above, where Christ sits. This is the spiritual realm. It is more real than the physical realm that passes away with time. In the physical realm, people are there and they are not there. For example, Fish are there and then someone eats them and they are gone. The spiritual realm is not like that. In the physical, there is time - the past and the promised future. In the spiritual there is only the NOW. Time is connected with matter and all that is physical. In the NOW, there is neither change nor growth. It is the NOW.

Re: - posted by ccchhrrriiiss (), on: 2010/5/11 17:14

This is a difficult topic that I think might be next-to-impossible (and even unnecessary) to reach a definitive conclusion upon. I have heard various ministers preach entire sermons on this subject -- complete with Scripture passages meant to validate the point of the particular preacher -- only to find that each ministers' teachings often contradict one another.

I do think that it is important to remember that God is NOT confined to the laws of nature (including time -- which is even "relative" in our own universe). After all, God knows the end from the beginning (Isaiah 46:10). He knew us before we were born (Jeremiah 1:5). He knew and chose us before the foundations of the world were formed (Ephesians 1:4). After all, God knows the end of human history -- and even beyond -- and partially revealed it to John (via his Revelation). In fact, the Word says that God has raised us up so that we sit with Christ in "heavenly places" (Ephesians 2:6).

There is a lot of debate over how the end will come. Some people argue that we immediately leave our bodies when we die and face judgment (or containment in "Paradise"). Some argue that we "sleep"...but that the sleep seems to be instantaneous as we pass through all of human history and awaken at the sound of a trumpet. I have even heard preachers argue that Jesus died and went to Hell as a means to demonstrate what happens when we die and to get the "keys" of death and Hell from Satan (although I believe that Christ's work was finished on Calvary -- when He said, "It is finished"). Still, I think that it would be difficult to preach something in a definitive manner when it is obviously unclear from Scripture.

Paul spoke of a man he knew who was "caught up into paradise" (or the "third heaven") and beheld things that he was not permitted to speak about (II Corinthians 12:2-4). Many of the prophets of the Bible (like Daniel, Jeremiah, Isaiah and John) traveled through time and saw certain things that are included in Scripture. Jesus spoke of the future as if He had already seen it happen (such as in Matthew 24). When it comes to the exact timing and manner of events in the "future" (if such a thing even existed to God), I think that the words of Christ from Acts are an important thing to remember: "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power" (Acts 1:7).

Is it possible that we leave our bodies and go straight to Heaven when we breathe our last breath. Yes. Is it possible that we "sleep" in our bodies until the trumpet sounds? Yes. Ultimately, I suppose that I don't even care HOW I finally am able to see Jesus's face. I just look forward to seeing His face when the time (or lack thereof) comes!

Re: , on: 2010/5/11 18:04

Chris writes.....

" This is a difficult topic that I think might be next-to-impossible (and even unnecessary) to reach a definitive conclusion upon.'

I agree with that sentiment, yet I am glad the question was asked and pondered.....brother Frank

Re: - posted by twayneb (), on: 2010/5/11 18:26

It has been said that this notion is unique to or at least most prevalent in cults such as SDA. It might come as a surprise to some that early pentecostals (1901-?) and some today still hold to the idea that the soul sleeps until judgment. The problem I have seen is that they use the book of Ecclesiastes very prominently in their doctrinal stance. I am not so sure that this is the proper use of the book. Other than that their only argument from the NT that I have heard often is that Paul did not say that the spirit goes to the Father immediately upon death but that he would rather be with the Father than in this body. There is some technical merit to this argument as that scripture can easily have that interpretation applied.

This is my opinion, but I am not so sure you can use the parable of the rich man and Lazarus in this discussion. I believe to do so is to make the supporting details of the story the story itself. That parable is speaking directly to the Jew's rejection of the Messiah though He come back from the dead.

It is interesting to note that judgment is the phase of the trial where the verdict is already in and the defendant has sentence passed on him. I see no conflict in those who are believer's going immediately into the presence of God and returning with Him to obtain glorified bodies at the day of the Lord. But I am not sure you can become too dogmatic about it.

Re: - posted by Areadymind (), on: 2010/5/11 18:28

Yeah, Chris, when I tried to resolve all of that I almost lost my mind like people do when they contemplate pi. Relativity ended up being my safeguard. I totally agree that there is a great mystery in the whole thing that people have really cracked their teeth on. It was actually this discussion that got me questioning a lot of commonly held eschatology statements. It is just like Paul Washer said, "when the end comes you will know everything you need to know about the return of Christ." Or he said something like that. It is kind of the same with the idea of resurrection.

Re: Lk. 23:43, on: 2010/5/11 19:01

ummmm...

If we are to take that verse from the Greek, granted there are no punctuation marks, however, the order of the sentence is different than the first Anglican Bible (aka:KJV).

It reads like this:

Lk 23:

43 And said to him Jesus(,)truly i say to you today with me you will be in paradise(".)

That kinda' alleviates the question of where the comma should be, however, another important question is what does the word paradise really means.

Jesus was speaking of what Jewish culture considered the abode of the dead, Sheol. It was also thought to have an expanse dividing the rest of the wicked and those in "Abraham's Bosom"- those who were of Israel's Theocratic Commonwealth, walking in the covenant with YHVH, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

From other scriptures in the N.T. we find Jesus went to Hades, which is the Greek word for the abode of the dead, paradise being the short term for what the Jews and Greeks alike considered the side of Sheol for the righteous (aka: Abraham's Bosom).

This abode of the dead is the setting for Jesus parable of Lazarus and the rich dude.

This all makes the most sense as to where the thief would be with Jesus as:

1) Jesus was not resurrected until after three 24 hour days;

and,

2) When Jesus appeared to Mary after His resurrection, He told her not to touch Him, because He had not yet ascended to Heaven.

Jesus' resurrection changed everything, but not for those who continue operating according to this time continuum. Walking in (His) Faith(fulness), we function above these laws by the Law of the Spirit of (resurrection) Life in Him.

The devil is still the god of this world. Beyond that is beyond his jurisdiction, being cast down to earth, stuck here until the end of this kosmos (aka:age).

Most all cultures have a similar conception (with variation in specifics) of what has been termed Paradise/Abraham's Bosom, the good side of Hades/Sheol in the previous paragraphs.

CIAO!

g

Acts 20:32

p.s. there is nowhere in the Bible that it says we 'sleep' in our bodies until resurrection. It says our bodies, if we are saved, indeed do sleep.

edited: airer in one lil' frase at the end of a sentence.

Re: - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2010/5/11 22:23

Krispy wrote:

I treat visions like I do mushrooms. Some are poisonous, some are good for you... I prefer to avoid both.

Krispy, you sure are missing some ggggooooooooodddd eatin' if you refuse to eat mushrooms because some are poisonous!

ginnyrose

Re: - posted by nearthecross, on: 2010/5/12 0:23

Quote:

-----I treat visions like I do mushrooms. Some are poisonous, some are good for you... I prefer to avoid both.

"Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

1 Thessalonians 5:20-21

"Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues. Let all things be done decently and in order."

1 Corinthians 14:39-40

"Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge. If any thing be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace. For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted. And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints."

1 Corinthians 14:29-33