

After Life

Questions:

- 1) Do we cease to exist?
- 2) Is there conscious existence after death?
- 3) Is there a difference in what happened to Old Testament saints versus New Testament believers?

Definitions

Death, die

DIE 1. apothnesko (NT:599) (a) the separation of the soul from the body,

DEATH 1. thanatos (NT:2288), "death," is used in Scripture of:

(a) the separation of the soul (the spiritual part of man) from the body (the material part), the latter ceasing to function and turning to dust, e. g. (from Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words, Copyright © 1985, Thomas Nelson Publishers.)

Definition does not say cease to exist.

Scriptural examples

(1) Do we cease to exist?

Is there conscious existence after death?

- Luke 23:42-43
It proves that he exists after death. If his soul sleeps, he can't be with Jesus
- Matthew 22:24-32
Abraham is living right now in spirit not in body.

1 Samuel 28:11-15

God took Samuel out of Sheol. He existed in spirit form.

(3) Is there a difference in what happened to Old Testament saints versus New Testament believers?

Old Testament Saints

- Luke 16:19-31
Abraham and the rich man were conscious. There are 2 side in Hades—good side and bad side. Abraham and Lazarus were in good side and the rich man was in bad side.
- Eph 4:7-12
Jesus took captivity captive. He took everything out of good side.
- 1 Pe 3:18-22
In the days of Noah, there were those who sometimes disobeyed to God, but most of the time they were righteous. They did not make it to the ark and died. Jesus went to the good side of Sheol(Hades) and preached to them.

New Testament believers

- 2 Co 12:2-4
This shows that 3rd heaven and paradise are the same. Before Jesus died, they were not same.
- Jn 14:2-4 Where is Jesus? Heaven. We will be with him.
- Mt 5:11-12
You cant have a reward if you wont be able to go there and get access to it.
- Php 3:20
We are citizens of that kingdom so we have a place there
- Rv 19:1 Many people in heaven.
- Rv 20:14
Just as the good side of hades was brought to heaven the bad side is cast into the lake of fire

Arguments against souls sleep

1. Separation. If we can show that we separate from our body at death then the argument of soul sleep is invalid. Even the definition of death means to separate.

2. Consciousness after death. If we can show examples in scripture of those who were conscious after death then the idea of soul sleep is invalid.
3. Sleep is symbolic of death. Those that teach soul sleep say it is literal and you literally sleep in death

Separation

1 Ki 17:21 "O Lord my God, I pray You, let this child's life return to him. NASU

If he ceased to exist his life could not return. Where would it return from? Some versions say Let his soul return.

2 Co 5:8-11 we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather **to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord.** 9 Therefore we also have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to Him. 10 **For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.**

11 Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade men, but we are made manifest to God;

NASU

To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord. You can't be present with the lord if you soul sleep. Do you expect to see a bunch of snoring people in heaven?

Ge 35:18-19 It came about as **her soul was departing** (for she died), that she named him Ben-oni; but his father called him Benjamin. NASU

Lk 8:54-55 He, however, took her by the hand and called, saying, "Child, arise!" 55 **And her spirit returned, and she got up immediately;** NASU

We see the soul departing and the spirit returning. This shows the souls and spirit are together.

Jas 2:2 For just as **the body without the spirit is dead**, so also faith without works is dead. NASU

It doesn't say that the spirit without the body is dead.

Ecc 12:7-8 then the dust will return to the earth as it was, **and the spirit will return to God who gave it.** NASU

Ac 2:31 he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, **that HE WAS NEITHER ABANDONED TO HADES, NOR DID His flesh SUFFER DECAY.** NASU

Ac 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. KJV

Conscious after death

1. Scriptural examples in lesson 1
2. Other scriptures

Rv 6:9-11

9 When the Lamb broke the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God, and because of the testimony which they had maintained; 10 and they cried out with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, will You refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" 11 And there was given to each of them a white robe; and they were told that they should rest for a little while longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brethren who were to be killed even as they had been, would be completed also. NASU

Rv 4:10-11

the **twenty-four elders will fall down before Him who sits on the throne**, and will worship Him who lives forever and ever, and will cast their crowns before the throne, saying, 11 "Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created." NASU

Mt 17:3-4

3 And behold, **Moses** and Elijah **appeared** to them, talking with Him. NASU

Dt 34:5-6

5 So **Moses the servant of the Lord died** there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord. 6 **And He buried him in the valley in the land of Moab**, opposite Beth-peor; but no man knows his burial place to this day NASU

[Moses appeared without his human body, because his body was in Moab](#)

Sleep is symbolic of death, not a literal thing that happens when you die

Jn 11:11-16

11 This He said, and after that He said to them, "**Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep**; but I go, so that I may awaken him out of sleep." 12 The disciples then said to Him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover." 13 **Now Jesus has spoken of his death, but they thought that He was speaking of literal sleep.** 14 So **Jesus then said to them plainly, "Lazarus is dead,** 15 and I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, so that you may believe; but let us go to him." NASU

Mt 9:18 "My daughter has just died; NASU

Mt 9:24-25 He said "Leave; for the girl has not died, but is asleep." And they began laughing at Him. 25 But when the crowd had been sent out, He entered and took her by the hand, and the girl got up. NASU

1 Th 4:13-18

13 But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, **so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope.** 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so **God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus.** 15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 **Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord.** 18 **Therefore comfort one another with these words.** NASU

Here sleep is symbolic of those who have died. The unbelievers have no hope because they think that the loved one is gone forever. If soul sleep is true then the same thing happens to the righteous and unrighteous. They all sleep or cease to exist. So then there is no difference. How could we not be grieving as those who have no hope? Our hope is that if we die we will see them in heaven and if we live that they will be raised in the rapture and we will join them and all will be changed in a moment in a twinkling of an eye 1 Corinthians 15:52. The rapture is the greatest hope. We are changed. Satan is cast out of the court of heaven down to the earth and we are caught up.

Scriptures that seem to support soul sleep

1. **Genesis 3:19** By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return.

It doesn't say your body is dust. It says **you are dust**. And **you** shall return to dust.

2. **Ecc 3:19-21** Surely the fate of human beings is like that of the animals; the same fate awaits them both: As one dies, so dies the other. All have the same breath; humans have no advantage over animals. Everything is meaningless. 20 All go to the same place; all come from dust, and to dust all return. 21 Who knows if the human spirit rises upward and if the spirit of the animal goes down into the earth?"
3. **Ecc 9:5-6** For the living know that they will die, but the dead know nothing; they have no further reward, and even their name is forgotten. 6 Their love, their hate and their jealousy have long since vanished; never again will they have a part in anything that happens under the sun.

Solomon the author of the book did not believe in soul sleep, because he said in Chapter 12:7 that the Spirit returns to God who made it. Further the book uses the expression "Under the

Sun” 29 times. So the perspective of this book is from the viewpoint of what things look like on earth.

4. **Ps 146:3-5** Do not put your trust in princes, in human beings, who cannot save. 4 When their spirit departs, they return to the ground; on that very day their plans come to nothing. 5 Blessed are those whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the LORD their God.

The context of this passage is a key. His thoughts in verse 4 are his plans on this earth. If the spirit departs then the thoughts which perish have to be in relationship to the plans for this life.

5. **John 3:12-13** I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things? 13 No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven--the Son of Man.

This is used to say no one goes to heaven. At the time of this verse Jesus had not yet died. People went to sheol the place of departed spirits. When Christ ascended he took them to heaven. There are many examples of people in heaven. The 144000, many people in Revelation 19, the 24 elders, We have an inheritance reserved for us in heaven 1st Peter 1:4

Heaven

Many view heaven as a place a like earth, with a few colors and sounds that we don't have here. A place where you can fish all the time, dive into the water, breathe under water and see exotic life which is beyond what exists here. A place where you can meet every dog and cat that you lost on earth. Heaven is a place to meet all the relatives and have endless reunions. Others say there are angels on clouds with harps and all we do is sing hymns all day long. Peter stands at the gate to decide who gets in. (He has the keys of the kingdom.) Heaven has streets of Gold. Can you imagine?

Most of us have heard that heaven is a place where the streets are paved with gold, the gates are made of pearl, and the walls made of precious jewels. Those images come from [Revelation 21](#), which offers us the most extended picture of heaven in the entire Bible. If you ask me if I believe those things are

literally true, the answer is yes and no. Yes, they are literally true but no, heaven won't be anything like we imagine. It will be much greater.

Here's a delightful legend that makes the point very well:

I love the old story of the rich man who, on his death bed, negotiated with God to allow him to bring his earthly treasures with him when he came to heaven. God's reaction was that this was a most unusual request, but since this man had been exceptionally faithful, permission was granted to bring along just one suitcase. The time arrived, the man presented himself at the pearly gates, suitcase in hand- BOTH hands, actually, since he had stuffed it with as many bars of gold bullion as would fit. St. Peter said, "Sorry, you know the rules-you can't take it with you." But the man protested, "God said I could ... one suitcase." St. Peter checked, found out that this one would be an exception, prepared to let the man enter, then said, "OK, but I will have to examine the contents before you pass." He took the suitcase, opened it, saw the gold bars and asked quizzically, "You brought PAVEMENT?" [Note: This story is from the sermon "Heaven" by Dr. David Leininger, March 30, 1997]

When John writes about a street paved with gold, I do not doubt his words. He simply reports what he saw in his vision.

What is heaven like? Here are some biblical facts about heaven. It is ...

- God's dwelling place ([Psalms 33:13-14](#)).

From heaven the LORD looks down and sees all mankind; from his dwelling place he watches all who live on earth--

- Where Christ is today ([Acts 1:11](#)).

"Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."

- [Where Christians go when they die \(Philippians 1:21-23\)](#).

For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. 22 If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! 23 I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far;

- [The Father's house \(John 14:2\)](#).

My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you?

- [A city designed and built by God \(Hebrews 11:10\)](#).

For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God.

- [A better country \(Hebrews 11:16\)](#).

Instead, they were longing for a better country--a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.

- [Paradise \(Luke 23:43\)](#).

Jesus answered him, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise."

- ["The heavenly Jerusalem" \(Gal 4:26; Heb 12:22; Rev3:12\)](#).

But the Jerusalem that is above is free, and she is our mother.

But you have come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly,

The one who is victorious I will make a pillar in the temple of my God. Never again will they leave it. I will write on them the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the new

Jerusalem, which is coming down out of heaven from my God; and I will also write on them my new name.

- The "kingdom of heaven" (Mt 25:1; Jas 2:5).

"At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom.

Listen, my dear brothers and sisters: Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him?

- The "eternal kingdom" (2 Pe 1:11).

and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

- an eternal weight of glory" (2 Co 4:17),

For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.

- new heaven and earth wherein shall dwell righteousness(Ps102:25-27, Isa 65:17, 66:22, 2Pe 3:7, Rev21:1, Heb12:26-28)

Then I saw "a new heaven and a new earth," for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea.

- the tabernacle of God being with men (Rev 21:2-3,10,)

I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. 10And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain great and high, and showed me the Holy City, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God.