

Does man have an immortal soul?

Where do we go when we die?

To answer these questions, we must understand what a soul is.

“And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.” Gen. 2:7.

Thus, we have this simple equation:

$$\begin{array}{l} \text{Dust of the ground} \\ + \text{Breath of life} \\ = \text{Living Soul} \end{array}$$

A soul is the breath of life plus the dust of the ground. A soul is not a separate entity, rather it is the whole being.

In 1 Samuel 24:11, David is talking to Saul and says, “...and I have not sinned against thee; yet thou huntest my soul to take it.”

David called himself a soul and knew that he was mortal, that is, subject to death.

The Bible tells us that people and animals are the same in the fact that they are living souls, that is, the breath of life plus dust of the ground, and that both return to the dust!

“For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast: for all is vanity. All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again.” Eccl. 3:19-20

The words “soul” and “spirit” are mentioned in the Bible 915 times, and not once are they referred to as “immortal.” Quite to the contrary, we read the following verses from the Bible:

“As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away: so he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more.” Job 7:9.

“Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.” James 4:14.

“But man dieth, and wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he? As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up: So man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their

sleep.” Job 14:10-12.

“The dead praise not the LORD, neither any that go down into silence.” Ps. 115:17. (If you were in heaven after you died, wouldn't you praise the Lord?)

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

“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. 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.” Eccl. 9:5-6.



The Birthplace of Spiritualism was a home at the northwest corner of Parker and Hydesville Roads in the Town of Arcadia. Here, in New York, stood a cottage where a peddler was murdered, and where the Fox family came to live in 1847.

On March 31, 1848, the two daughters of John D. Fox claimed they could communicate with the dead through a series of ‘intelligible rappings.’ Margaret Fox (1834-1893) and Kate Fox (1836-1892) soon took to holding seances in nearby Rochester, where their older sister lived.

“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.” Eccl. 9:10.

Immortality of the soul is not a biblical teaching!

Paul, in talking to Timothy about Christ, says, “Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting.” 1 Tim. 6:16. (If you went to heaven when you died, wouldn't you see the Lord?)

We must receive immortality at Christ's second coming!

“For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and

this mortal must put on immortality. (If you had an immortal soul, why would you have to “put on” immortality?)

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.” 1 Cor. 15:53-54.

Immortality of the soul is a doctrine based upon the very first lie.

“And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.” Gen. 3:4-5.

First, Satan tells Eve that you will not truly die; then he follows it with the statement that you will be a god!

Satan well knows that humans are not immortal and that they can not be God! This very first lie is the basis of modern spiritualism.

The Pharaohs of Egypt and the Babylonians were spiritualist. The Pharaohs believed that they were gods with immortal souls.

God's people would leave all that they had as an inheritance for their children, while the spiritualist would be buried with unimaginable riches for the "afterlife."

The Bible says, "for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Gen. 3:19. We shall remain in our graves until Christ returns! There is no life after the grave, until Christ brings His reward of immortality for the righteous!

In reference to the "breath of life" Job says, "All the while my breath is in me, and the spirit of God is in my nostrils." Job 27:3.

If the spirit were a separate, intelligent entity, why would it be in your nose?

The spirit that returns to God at death is the "breath of life," and nothing more. At no time is this spirit given any wisdom or feeling when a man dies. Again, "the dead know not anything." Eccl. 9:5.

"Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit [the breath of life] shall return unto God who gave it." Eccl. 12:7.



"...as the lightening cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Mat. 24:27.

There is no secret rapture!

"...every eye shall see Him." Rev. 1:7

The Resurrection

The hope of all Christians is the resurrection to life eternal. The resurrection is mentioned 35 times!

"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: (This includes everyone who ever died in Christ, from the faithful martyr, Abel, to the last Christian who died before Christ comes. If they were already in heaven, there would be no need of their resurrection!) 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." 1 Thess. 4:16-17.

Further, both the wicked and the righteous will have a resurrection.

"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, 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." John 5:28-29.

"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: (Who are they that have part in the first resurrection? The "blessed and holy.") 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." Rev. 20:6. This text also shows that the wicked will suffer a second death; there is no ever burning hell.

Also notice that there is nothing secret about this event, "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him..." Rev. 1:7.

"And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." 2 Thess. 2:8. There is no secret second coming!

All of the righteous are in heaven, and all of the wicked are dead. How long will the wicked remain in their graves? "...they [the saints] lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished." Rev 20:4-5. The wicked are dead and the earth is empty! "I beheld the earth, and, lo, it was without form, and void; and the heavens, and they had no light. I beheld the mountains, and, lo, they trembled, and all the hills moved lightly. I beheld, and, lo, there was no man and all the birds of the heavens were fled. I beheld, and, lo, the fruitful place was a wilderness, and all the cities thereof were broken down at the presence of the LORD, and by his fierce anger." Jer. 4:23-26.

This also clearly shows that there will be no one on earth being saved during the "millennium." There is no second chance; we must be ready in this life!

There are some texts within the Bible that may tend to make us think that we have an immortal (undying) soul. We will examine a few:

The "Rich man and Lazarus" is one such story.

"There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.

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; And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. 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.

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. 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.

Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." Luke 16:19-31.

The key to the understanding of the above texts is to keep in mind that it is only a parable. Common sense and intelligence beg us to note the obvious clues:

1). Abraham's bosom is not heaven! The promised land is the "New Jerusalem," not Abraham's bosom! Jesus said this, because the Jews believed that they were saved on Abraham's merits!

2). We will not be able to see the wicked for eternity!

"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." Rev. 21:4. If you could see your loved ones in everlasting torment, wouldn't you feel sorrow and cry? God Himself declares that, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." Isa. 43:25. How could God forget their sins if He could see them in pain? He couldn't! God has promised to forget; God's promises are good!



In Egypt, kingship and the rule of the sun god were thought to be inseparable. The king was represented as the divine son of the sun god and a human mother; Satan ever mimics the true - mix-ing truth and error. As Satan has im-mitaded Christ's first advent, he will personate Christ's second coming. Believing in immortality of the soul, the Egyptians, as in many other sun worshipping religions, were buried with great riches to take with them into the afterlife.

In contrast, God's people knew that they were mortal and left all that they had as an inheritance to their children.

3). If one went strait to hell at death and burned forever afterward, Cain would have burned 6,000 years longer for the murder of one soul than Hitler would for murdering millions! This would not be justice! Our God is just!

4). What good would a drop of water do if you were engulfed in flames? NONE!

In fact, the wicked will not be rewarded with immortality! Jesus says of His second coming, "And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Rev. 22:12. As we have seen, the wicked are "destroyed with the brightness of His coming." 2 Thess. 2:8. The "reward" of the wicked is TOTAL destruction!

In the real life scenario of John 11, we read in verse 11, 12 and 14, "He saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep. Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well . . . Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead." When Jesus had arrived, Lazarus had been dead for four days!

"Jesus saith unto her [Martha], Thy brother shall rise again. Martha saith unto him, I know that

he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." vs. 23-24. Notice that Martha was well aware that he would stay in his grave until Christ called him forth at the last day, at His second coming!

Then Jesus "cried with a loud voice, Lazarus come forth."

After being resurrected Lazarus neither complained about being brought back from heaven nor thanked Jesus for releasing him from hell. Lazarus had been nowhere! Lazarus was called forth from the grave, not up from hell

nor down from heaven!

Here is another commonly used set of verses: “For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: (For we walk by faith, not by sight:) We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.” 2 Cor. 5:1-9.

This is simply a metaphor. Like Christ, Paul is using earthly things to represent the spiritual.

Our earthly house must be covered with the garment of Christ’s righteousness. “I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear.” Rev. 3:18.



This photo of an “apparition” of the “virgin Mary” taken in Medjugorje shows her holding fifteen decades of the rosary. Could this really be Mary? The Bible says NO! Mary is dead.

Jesus Himself gave her no special place among mankind. “While he yet talked to the people, behold, his mother and his brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him. Then one said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee. But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.” Mat. 12:46-50.

Since this can’t be Mary, what spirit is it?

With this in mind, we must remember two things:

1. “...it is appointed once to men to die.” Heb. 9:27 and [again, Mary is dead!], 2. “...he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on earth in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell upon the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do...” Rev. 13:13-14.

“Apparitions” have been reported since around A.D. 40, multiplying greatly in the 10th century. 20th century apparitions surpass the total of all previous centuries combined! “...the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.” Rev. 12:12.

Paul says that it is “...for this we groan, being burdened, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.” Christ tells us that “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame.” Rev 3:21. We must, like Christ who “was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin” [Heb 4:15], overcome our carnal natures to gain immortality.

“Whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord” simply because “the carnal mind is enmity against God...” If we are content with our carnal nature, we are not of, nor are we walking with, Christ! For this we are admonished to “...abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.” Rom. 8:7 & 1 Pet. 2:11

Denial of self, being absent from our body, is to be walking with the Lord. “For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal...) 2 Cor. 10:3-4.

We must “labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.”

Because we walk today with [are present with] the Lord does not mean that we’re set for life. At any time a Christian can fall or turn away. Paul himself feared the loss of eternity: “But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.” “Wherefore

let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.” 1 Cor. 9:27 & 1 Cor. 10:12

If we are absent from the Lord, walking in our fleshly ways, we must labor to be reconciled to God [see 1 Cor. 5:17-18]. In either instance, present or absent, we must strive to be “accepted of Him.”

Plainly, therefore, this is talking of dying to self and arising anew in Christ. This is not a literal out of body experience!

The conclusion of the matter is found in 2 Cor. 5:17. “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”

These texts also tell us that once saved, always saved is yet another lie based on the first lie, “Ye shall not surely die.”

The next item we’ll look at is the thief on the cross.

“And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise.” Luke 23:43.

Did the thief go into paradise that day? The answer is in the Bible! “The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him.” John 19:31-32. The obvious answer is, NO! Crucifixion was a slow and cruel punishment. They may have lived for many days



As sophisticated medical technology has permitted more and more people to journey back from the brink of death, mystical reports of scenes from an “afterlife” have become almost commonplace. Of the nearly 18 percent of Americans who claimed in a recent U.S. News poll to have been on the verge of dying, many researchers estimate that a third have had unusual experiences while straddling the line between life and death—perhaps as many as 15 million Americans. A small percentage recall vivid images of an afterlife—including tunnels of light, peaceful meadows, and angelic figures clad in white.

Tales from the realm between life and death aren’t limited to the West. In Micronesia, “experiencers” have reported that heaven resembles a bustling American city with skyscrapers and plenty of automobiles. In India, the afterlife has frequently been described as a giant bureaucracy, in which survivors are sent back to life because of “clerical error.” “There’s a lot of cultural overlay,” says Greyson, who also edits the *Journal of Near-Death Studies*. Your “afterlife” experiences are guided by *your own idea* of what heaven or hell might be.

Says Greyson, “Many people describe it as an ineffable experience, so it’s no surprise that they come up with models based on their background.” Almost all reports from around the world bear similarities to familiar daytime TV fare—the out-of-body feeling, the life review, the presence of deceased relatives on “the other side.” Taken, in part, from *US News* 3/31/97.

before dying.

Another fact is that Jesus Himself did not go into paradise that day. After His resurrection, He told Mary, “Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father...” John 20:17.

The punctuation in the Bible is not inspired. Since Jesus cannot lie or err, Luke 23:43, properly punctuated should read: “Verily I say unto thee today, thou shalt be with me in paradise.” Now this verse is in harmony with John 20:17, as it must be.

Finally we will look at Matthew 10:28.

“And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.”

This text makes it seem as though there is a definite separation between the body and soul. A closer study shows that this was not the meaning the writer intended.

Everyone agrees that the word “body” in this text refers to the mortal flesh; there is no doubt of this.

The word “soul” here is the Greek word “psuche,” which means life, the mind, or a living being. Never is it used in the sense of a immortal, conscious entity that can live apart from the body!

Of course, only God can truly give or take life! Life is His to give and to take. Man may be able to destroy the mortal body of this life, but not in the eternal sense.

To verify this view, we

need only go to Luke 12:5. "Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell...Fear him." Both texts are saying the exact same thing in reference to the same incident, but in different words! Man can kill this mortal, physical being, but only God has power to cast you into hell, the second death, which will come after the resurrection of the wicked at the end of the 1000 years. [see Rev. 2:11; 20:6; 21:8].

The Bible refers to the first death as a "sleep." The first death is not eternal; but, like this first life, it is temporal (temporary).

"And when he was come in, he saith unto them, Why make ye this ado, and weep? the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn." Then Jesus "...said unto her, Talitha cumi; arise. And straightway the damsel arose, and walked; for she was of the age of twelve years. And they were astonished with a great astonishment." Mark 5:39-42.

In yet another place Jesus plainly talks of death as sleep. "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep. Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep. Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead." John 11:11, 13-14.

Jesus teaches us that the first death is



"It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord.

"I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth); such an one caught up to the third heaven.

"And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth); How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter." 2 Cor. 12:1-4.

Some have quoted this verse to show Apostolic "near death experiences." Still others maintain that Paul is referring to his soul leaving his body to visit God. Neither assumption is correct.

The first verse informs us that he is speaking of himself in the past [in a third party sense] as the new Christian he used to be [see verse 5 also].

Concerning the things he was allowed to see, he says that he was not allowed to repeat it. John the revelator had a similar experience: "And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not." Rev. 10:4. Many prophets saw things that God did not allow them to repeat, as Satan is an ardent Bible student.

Of the third heaven, the Bible refers to the earth's atmosphere as the first; the stars as the second; and God's abode as the third: Paul was taken to see the glories of God's abode.

Paul does not know whether he was taken to heaven only in vision or if he was taken up bodily; to this he says, "only God knoweth." This is not a literal out of the body experience!

Many people, who don't actually understand the scriptures, will be deceived because they believe that evil angels, impersonating loved ones that have passed on, have come from heaven with a message of salvation.

Says Peter of the Apostles words, "...some things are hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction." 2 Pet. 3:16. We must understand the true state of the dead: They await the second coming of Christ and can not speak to us!

not permanent. Another man may put you to sleep, but only God can take your life away!

Many encounters with lost family members have been cited in various forms of literature. Are these really the spirits of the dead loved ones that they are supposed to be?

Since the Bible plainly teaches that the dead are dead, it would seem that these "spirits" are impostors. These impostors have an agenda. They are to help set mankind up for the final deceptions. "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils." 1 Tim 4:1.

Could anything better convince us to follow ways contrary to sound doctrines and follow the doctrines of devils than to have your newly lost loved one visit you and give you a "message from heaven"?

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