

Where Will Believers and Unbelievers Be after Death

There are three states in the life of men- believer and unbeliever: **(1)** Birth to death **(2)** death to resurrection **(3)** resurrection to eternity. We will all go through the first two states but the third one is contingent to our belief and faith.

The believer state after his death will be in the presence of the Lord. His body rests in the grave, but his spirit is present in glory, where he experiences peace and freedom from all sufferings and pains. This is according to Paul in the letter to the Philippians. He said, "But I am hard pressed between the two (life and death). My yearning desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better" (1:23). At death, the body is in the state of decay, but the soul, although separated from the body, continues in the conscious state in wherever his destiny: heaven or hell. He knows where he is, he is aware of what is happening around him, as we see in the story of the rich man and Lazarus. Revelation chapter 6:9-11 confirms that. It reads: "When the Lamb broke open the fifth seal, I saw at the foot of the altar the souls of those whose lives had been sacrificed for the Word of God and for the testimony they had borne. They cried in a loud voice, O Lord, holy and true, how long now before You will sit in judgment and avenge our blood upon those who dwell on the earth? Then they were each given a long and flowing and festive white robe and told to rest and wait patiently a little while longer, until the number should be complete of their fellow servants and their brethren who were to be killed as they themselves had been." The believer, although dead physically, his spirit (conscious) is experiencing a far better position of being present with our Lord, YAHSHUA. The believer will experience the perfect rest. "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; neither shall the sun strike upon them, nor any heat; for the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall be their shepherd, and shall guide them unto fountains of waters of life: and God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes" (Rev. 7: 16-17). And that's the perfect state of rest the believer will be in after his death.

The intermediate state for the unbeliever however is the opposite of the believer. The word of God mentions three states in which the unbeliever will be after his death: **(1)** the state of **torment** (Luke 16: 19-31). **(2)** The place where he will be it

will be a place of **confinement**. I Peter 3:19: "In which He (YAHSHUA) went and preached to the spirits in prison." **(3)**The third state in which the unbeliever will find himself will be in the state of **punishment**. The second letter of Peter describes the unbeliever's soul being under punishment, waiting for the Day of Judgment: The Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment unto the Day of Judgment. Although in two different places, the unbeliever and the believer are in the state of consciousness. The first will be in torment of hell, but the second in the presence of God.

In the subject of the intermediate body, we believe that the body that we have now will be the only one we will ever have. When the believer dies his soul will be unclothed until the resurrection when his soul and spirit will be clothed again, this time with a glorified body. But the soul of the unbeliever will be clothed in the second resurrection to face eternal judgment. There is however, no intermediate body as some believe and teach. There are two false views being taught: one is "the second probation" and the other one "soul sleeping". The first view teaches that there will be a second chance for salvation after death. This teaching is broken in two theories: the Limited Second Probation and Unlimited Second Probation. The first is referred to infants who died without being baptized. The Latin word used, Limbus, means edge. So they teach that Limbus infantum is a place at the edge of hell, where the infants who died without being baptized will be. They will not go to hell, neither to heaven, but remain at the edge of hell.

The second teaching, "Soul Sleeping" teaches that the immaterial part of man goes into unconsciousness in death. Death takes a form of an unconscious sleep until the resurrection. They base their teaching on various Bible verses that describe death as sleeping. In the Old Testament they are found in Psalm 13:3 and Daniel. And in the New Testament is found in the books of Matthew 9:24; 27:52; Mark 5: 39; Luke 8: 52; John 11:11-14; Acts 7:60; 13: 36; I Corinthians 15:6, 18, 20, 51; I Thessalonians 4:13-14; and II Peter 3:4.

When the Bible refers to death as sleep, it refers to the physical body, not the soul. The physical body has to stop functioning, and rests in its corrupted state until the soul is united to it in the resurrection. The spirit goes either to heaven or to hell. Death is only a suspension of the soul's activities, but the spirit – the conscious part of men continues to function. One of several examples is Moses, who had died, yet he appeared to YAHSHUA in the Mount of Transfiguration

(Matt. 17:1-8; Mark 9:2-8; Luke 9: 28-36). So we believe that when the Bible uses the term, "sleep" it is in reference to the righteous or believers. Those who died in Christ are now experiencing a time of physical rest; they will never die eternally. YAHSHUA told Mary this at the death of Lazarus, "I am the resurrection and the Life. Whoever believes in Me, although he may die, yet he shall live" (John 11:25). At the resurrection day the spirits will unite with their new bodies. The corrupted body has to die for us to receive the incorruptible one. We see clearly that men never lose consciousness in death. The proofs are in the lives of Moses, the rich man, Lazarus, and Abraham's. They all have died, yet we read that they were conscious. They saw each other, they talked to each other. There will never be a resurrection of the spirit because it never died. At the death of the believer his spirit enters the presence of God. While Stephen was being stoned he prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive and accept and welcome my spirit" (Acts 7:59; and in the words of Paul, "So then, we are always full of good and hopeful and confident courage; we know that while we are at home in the body, we are abroad from the home with the Lord; [Yes] we have confident and hopeful courage and are pleased rather to be away from home out of the body and be at home with the Lord" (II Cor. 5: 6,8). We also read it in book of Job chapter 19:26-27: "And after my skin, even this body, has been destroyed, then from my flesh or without it I shall see God, Whom I, even I, shall see for myself and on my side! And my eyes shall behold Him and not as a stranger!"

How wonderful it would be that you my friend would find yourself beholding the face of the Lord and having communion with Him, after your death! The time for you to decide is now while you have breath. There will be no purgatory or intermediate place in death; only heaven or hell. YAHSHUA is the way to heaven, no other name in heaven or under heaven can save you; He is the only Truth that will set you free from the condemnation of hell; only He is Life and the eternal life giver. **ACCEPT HIM TODAY!**

(References from the book, The Footsteps of Messiah by Arnold Fruchtenbaum)