

AFTER DEATH--WHAT THEN?

Text: Hebrews 9:27

INTRO: Before we can intelligently consider the fate & condition of man after death, we must know something of his spiritual condition before death. Then we will be prepared to look further into the question of what takes place after death.

I. THE STATE OF THE LIVING.

A. Safe.

1. Small children & those whose minds have not developed are not accountable. God has no spiritual law for infants, thus they do not sin.
2. Sinners whose sins have been forgiven thru obedience of the gospel. Acts 2:36-38.

B. Lost. Rom 3:10, 23; 6:23; JN 8:21, 24

II. THE FINAL STATE OF MANKIND IN ETERNITY.

A. The final state will be ushered in by the 2nd coming of Jesus, the resurrection of all the dead and the final judgment. Acts 1:11; JN 5:28-29; Rev 20:12

B. There are 2 possible destinies, determined by the life one lived on earth.

1. Safe--heaven.

And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death nor sorrow nor crying; & there shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away (Rev 21:4).

2. Lost--hell.

Anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire (Rev 20:15).

The cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, & all liars shall have their part in the lake of fire & brimstone, which is the 2nd death.

(Rev21:8).

III. PERHAPS LEAST UNDERSTOOD IS THE INTERMEDIATE STATE BETWEEN DEATH AND THE RESURRECTION.

A. Hades is the Gr work for the unseen state. The condition of a person in Hades is a foretaste of the eternal bliss or misery to come.

1. Safe--Abraham's bosom, Paradise.

LK 16:22; LK 23:43.

a. There is comfort, LK 16:25

b. There is some sense in which the Christian goes immediately into the presence of Christ, 2 Cor 5:8; Phil 1:23; 1 Thes 5:14

2. Lost--Tartarus.

For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell [tartarus] & delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment... [He] knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations & to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment.

(2 Pet 2:4, 9). LK 16:23, 25

B. Some questions considered.

1. Aren't there some passages such as Eccl 9:5 that imply that man is unconscious after death?

NO! READ THE NEXT VERSE!

Eccl 9:5-6, For the living know that they will die; But the dead know nothing, and they have no more reward, for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love, their hatred, and their envy have now perished; Nevermore will they have a share in anything done under the sun.

2. What is the difference between the intermediate state & the final state?

a. In the intermediate, the spirit is unclothed. In the final state, it will be clothed in an immortal body, 2 Cor 5:1-4.

b. In the hades realm, those who are there know there are others yet to arrive. Rev 6:9-11, When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants & their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed.

Luke 16:28

3. If those in the intermediate state are already being comforted or tormented, why is a future judgment necessary?

a. Not a trial to determine innocence or guilt, but the sentencing to one's final abode. If different degrees...

b. The judgment will be the occasion of the final vindication of the Lord's cause.

For it is written: "As I live, says the Lord 'Every knee shall bow to Me & every tongue shall confess to God.' So then each of us shall give account of

himself to God (Rom 4:11-12).

CONCLUSION: Tho there still may be many questions unanswered, these suggestions should be helpful. At any rate, it behooves us to comply with the conditions God has stipulated in order that we might have the forgiveness of our sins & all the bliss that is to be enjoyed both in the intermediate state & in the eternal realm of heaven.

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