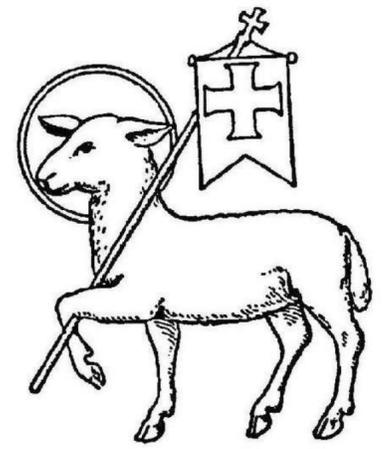


# THE BOOK OF REVELATION

## 9. Life after Death



### Introduction

- Life's ultimate questions: origin, purpose and destiny.
- All religions teach that life continues after death in some form.
- Spiritualism and clairvoyance.
- The doctrine of life after death has 'evolved' in scripture as revelation on it has unfolded rather than completely given at an early stage.

### Humanity's make up

- A mixture of physical and spiritual (Matt 10:28; Matt 16:26) Creation Genesis 2:7 from the dust (physical) and the breath of God (spiritual)
- Strictly speaking: body, soul and spirit (1 Cor 2:14-15; 1 Thess 5:23; Hebrews 4:12)

### Death

- The separation of body from soul (Ecc 12:7)
- NDE – Near Death Experience (*Dr Eben Alexander, 'Proof of heaven'*)
- The body – goes back to the 'dust' – Cremation (1 Cor 13:3) Death at sea (Rev 20:13)
- Believers 'have fallen asleep' (Daniel 12:2; 1 Cor 15:q8; 1 Thess 4:14)

### Location of the soul after death – two different views

(a) Soul sleep: "The Second Coming is the minute you die." (Ecc 9:5-6)

(b) Depends where you put the comma in Luke 23:4!

- Truly I tell you today, you will be with me in Paradise (*JW NewWorld Translation*)
- Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise (every other translation)

### Old Testament

- Early books: 'gathered to their people/ancestors' (Gen 25:8; Judges 2:10)
- Yet existence of life after death is taught in Deut 18:10-11; 1 Samuel 28:7-25
- Sheol
  - The general abode of the dead/the grave (Deut 32:22; Job 26:5; Psalm 49:12; 88:3 & 5; Ecc 9:2-3)
  - But we also read of the 'shades' being conscious in Sheol (Job 26:56; Psalm 88:10-12; Isaiah 14:9-11)
  - Post-exilic books, a future for the shades (Isaiah 25:8)

## Hades

- In inter-testamental times Hades (Greek term for Sheol) was understood to be the place where the unrighteous souls went (Luke 16:23). Hades understood as an intermediate place awaiting judgment, and not the final hell (Rev 20:14)
- Apostles Creed 'He descended into hell' (Greek 'Hades' – or the abode of the dead). Not the final lake of fire which is yet unpopulated (Matt 25:10; Rev 20:10)
- 1 Peter 3:19 'put to death in the flesh, made alive in the spirit, ... to the spirits in prison.; Ephesians 4:8, he first descended to the 'lower parts'.

## Paradise

- Persian word meaning 'Kings garden'
- Abraham's bosom (Luke 23:22)
- The third heaven (2 Cor 12:2-4; 2 Enoch ch. 8)
- Where Christ's spirit went when he died (Luke 23:43)
- Believers at the hour of the death are made perfect (Hebrews 12:23)
- "With the Lord" (2 Cor 5:8; Phil 1:21-23)
- The souls under the altar (Rev 6:9-11)

## Purgatory?

R.C. 13<sup>th</sup> century doctrine where the souls of those who died in venial sin go to be purged before they can enter heaven.

- No basis in scripture (Not even 1 Cor 3:15)
- Rejected by the Anglican Church. *Thirty Nine Articles, Article 22* "concerning purgatory..... is a futile thing foolishly conceived and grounded on no evidence of Scripture. On the contrary this teaching is repugnant to the Word of God."
- Rejected by the Eastern Orthodox Church: *The Orthodox Church does not believe in purgatory ... is a theory, unwitnessed in the Bible or in the Ancient Church. The Church has lived for fifteen hundred years without such a theory."*

## Reincarnation

- Popular Indian belief (Hindu, Buddhist, Sikh) not found in Christianity or Islam.
- Emmanuel Swedenborg's (1688-1772) theory of demon possession
- Hebrews 9:27 'it is appointed to everyone once to die, after that, the judgment'

## The Day of Judgment (Daniel 12:1-2; 1 Thess 4:16-17; Matt 25:31-46)

### Hell (Hades, Sheol, Gehenna, lake of fire)

- (a) Universalism (Acts 3:21; 1 Cor 15:22)
- (b) Annihilation (2 Thess 1:9) destruction, perish, separation.
- (c) Eternal punishment (Dan 12:2; Matt 25:46; Jude 13; Rev 20:10)
- (d) Degrees of punishment (Ex 21:23-25; Deut 25:2-3; Luke 12:42-48)
- (e) Who goes there?
- (f) Book of Life / Lamb's Book of Life (Ex 32:31-33; Ps 69:28; Isaiah 4:3; Phil 4:2-3; Rev 21:27)
- (g) Broad is the way that leads to destruction (Matt 7:13-14)