

Lighted Way Ministries
Study Guide



What does the Bible Say Happens When We Die?



SPIRITUALISM
in **CHRISTIANITY**

“For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is Eternal Life through Yahshua Messiah our Master,”

Romans 6:23



Christians today are fascinated by the mysteries “beyond the grave”. So great is the public interest in the subject that, in 2010, when the “true” story was published of young Alex Malarkey going to Heaven, the book quickly rocketed to the Best Seller list. But, as *New York Post* columnist Chris Perez reported:

The boy who came back from Heaven was full of malarkey—and he’s finally fessed up to it.

A best-selling (book) about a 6-year-old’s trip through the after-life while he was in a coma was nothing but one kid’s desperate cry for attention, according to the Christian website Pulpit and Pen.

“I did not die. I did not go to Heaven,” Alex Malarkey, who is now a teenager, wrote in a statement...

Malarkey’s heartwarming book—

titled *The Boy Who Came Back From Heaven*—will now be pulled from shelves by major Christian publisher Tyndale House after he recanted his testimony earlier this week...

“I said I went to Heaven because I thought it would get me attention,” Malarkey admitted. “When I made the claims that I did, I had never read the Bible. People have profited from lies, and continue to. They should read the Bible, which is enough. The Bible is the only source of truth.”

(Chris Perez, “Teen Admits He Lied About Dying, Going to Heaven”, January 16, 2015, *New York Post*)

Actually, the repentant teen’s advice is excellent. We cannot tell the truth about what happens when we die by listening to other people’s stories. The Bible is the only Source of Truth. So, what does the **Bible** say happens when we die?

When God created man, the Bible tells us that He formed him from the dust of the ground, breathed His Breath of life into man's nostrils and man instantly became a living soul. Notice the wording here. Man didn't **have** a living soul, man **became** a living soul:

"And (Yah) God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. "

Genesis 2:7

Scripturally speaking, a soul is made up of two things: body and breath. When the body dies, the breath of life returns to the Creator (Job 33:4; 34:13-15; Ps. 104:29-30).

"...Because man goeth to his long home (the grave), and the mourners go about the streets... Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God Who gave it." Ecclesiastes 12:5-7

According to Scripture, because the soul is made up of the body and the breath of life, when a person dies, his/her soul is also dead:

"The soul that sinneth, it shall die."

Ezekiel 18:20

"Every living soul died in the sea."

Revelation 16:3

We cannot hold a belief because it is tradition. In order to have the truth, we must believe the Bible.

What is the Soul?

Today, Christians largely believe that the **body** dies, but not the **soul**. According to popular belief, a saved person's soul—believed to be the "spirit" of the person—goes immediately to Heaven, upon death. In this way, many Christians think of the human soul as an immortal entity which never dies.

But this is not how Scripture defines the human soul. Using Scripture alone—without any human tradition—let's see how the Word of God defines a soul:

The Bible teaches that the soul is made up of two things: the spirit and the body.

What is the human spirit?

"The body without the **spirit** is dead." James 2:26.

"Spirit" is translated from the Greek word *pneuma*, meaning "breath". The fact that the spirit (the breath of life which is from God) is our breath is clearly shown in Job 27:3: "All the while my breath is in me, the **spirit** of God is in my nostrils."

According to Genesis 2:7, since the soul was made by the body (dust) plus breath, body and breath make a soul:

Body (dust—Gen 2:7)

+ **Spirit** (breath—Eccl. 12:7)

= **Soul** (a living being)

But Doesn't the Bible Teach that the Dead, Who are Saved, Go to Heaven?

The Bible tells us plainly that there are no dead people (in any form) in Heaven. Those who are in Heaven are all, only living. To show this, we will look at a number of Scriptures. But to start off, consider this, what one thing is most done by the occupants of Heaven? The one thing God's creation does most is Praise Him (Psalm 150:6; Psalm 69:34). Consider the following glimpse into Heaven, found in the Book of Revelation:

"And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the Throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia. And a voice came out of the Throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye His servants, and ye that fear Him, both small and great. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunders, saying, Alleluia: for (Yahweh) God omnipotent reigneth."

Revelation 19:4-6

It is impossible for any living thing to be in Heaven and not praise God! But the Bible tells us that the dead do not praise God—indeed cannot—for the grave is the place

KEY POINT



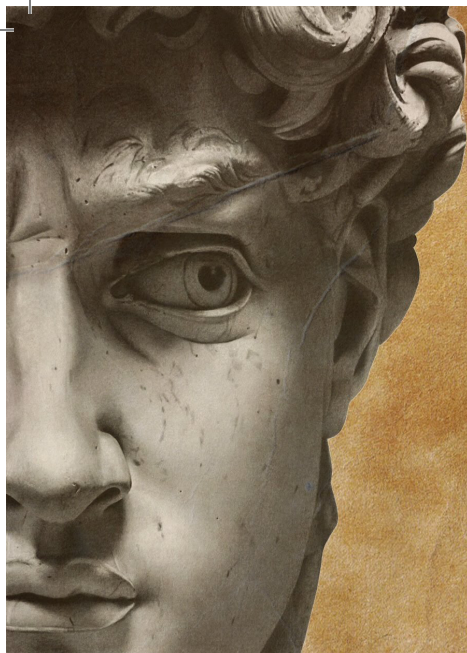
When a person dies, the Bible teaches that they have no further knowledge, memory, feelings, or anything at all. In fact, the Bible compares death to a dreamless state of sleep because there is no consciousness or awareness in the person at all:

- There are no thoughts or feelings in the grave—Ecclesiastes 9:5-6, 10; Psalm 146:4
- The dead do not praise God—Psalm 115:17
- Death is a dreamless sleep—Job 14:12, 21; John 11:11-14

of silence, Psalm 115:17:

"The dead praise not (Yahweh), neither any that go down into silence."





KING DAVID

A MAN AFTER GOD'S
OWN HEART

If ever there was a man who was saved, it was king David. Scripture tells us that he loved God so greatly and was so beloved of God that he was “a man after God’s Own Heart” (1 Samuel 13:14; Acts 13:22).

Furthermore, David is listed in the famous “Faith Chapter” of Hebrews 11, which clearly lists him among the saved. Thus, we can be certain that if God’s people go to Heaven when they die, David would surely be there. Yet, Scripture clearly tells us that David is still lying dead in his tomb, awaiting Resurrection Morning:

“David ... is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day... For David is not ascended into the Heavens.”

Acts 2:29, 34

But What About People Who’ve Seen the Dead or Have Contacted Them?

We live in a time when the deceptions of Hell are so great that the devil pulls every trick to counter the Word of God. But, as we saw in Study Guide #1 of this series, titled “*The Quest for Ultimate Truth*”, the Word of God determines what is Truth, not our senses or feelings. The devil is a master magician, who is amply able to empower spirits to impersonate the dead or appeal to our senses! Thus, we must rely on God’s Word to tell us what happens when someone dies. We cannot rely on senses, feelings, or experiences.

As revivalist Henry Blackaby said:

*“...I never deny anyone’s personal experience. I always reserve the right, however, to interpret it according to what I understand from Scripture. At times individuals get upset with me and say, “I don’t care what you say. I’ve **experienced this**.” I kindly respond, “**I do not deny your experience, but I question your interpretation of what happened because it is contrary to what I see in God’s Word**”... Our experiences cannot be our guide. Every event in your life must be understood and interpreted by the Scriptures, for the God revealed in Scripture does not change.”*

(Experiencing God workbook, p 14)

Scripture tells us plainly that it is impossible for the dead to contact the living.

*“So man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens be no more (see 2 Peter 3:10), they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep.. **His sons come to honour, and he knoweth it not; and they are brought low, but he perceiveth it not of them.**” Job 14:12, 21*

“Neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun.”

Ecclesiastes 9:6

The dead cannot contact the living, nor do they know what the living are doing. They are dead. Their thoughts have perished (Psalms 146:4).

We must stand upon the Word of God and not our senses. This means that we must not be fooled into believing that our dearly departed Grandmother has returned to give us counsel. Even if “her” apparition appears before us looking like her, sounding like her, and imitating her perfectly in every sensually convincing way, we will know that this apparition cannot really be Grandma, because the Bible plainly says:

*“The living know they will die, **but the dead know nothing**. Dead people have no more reward (in earth’s history), and people forget them.”*

Ecclesiastes 9:5 (NCV)

Deception is the standard operating procedure of the devil’s kingdom. Satan has worked powerful miracles down through the ages through people who claim to receive their power from the spirits of the dead. Consider the following examples:

- Magicians of Egypt—Ex. 7:11
- Witch of Endor—1 Sam. 28:3-25
- Sorcerers—Daniel 2:2
- A fortune-teller—Acts 16:16-18

KEY POINT



The tenets of Spiritualism have crept into Christianity. They are now so deeply believed by most Christians that to question them, even with Scripture, almost appears blasphemous. But they are demonic deceptions, nonetheless—exposed by the fact that they disagree with the Word of God. The tenets of Spiritualism (which is a form of sorcery) are:

- 1) God is a benign and loving Father who accepts and loves everyone equally. He does not judge.
- 2) Man may commune with the spirits of the departed and with angels. The belief that man may (and should) commune with spirits is so critical a belief that spiritualists define it as the “key around which our whole philosophy turns”.
- 3) There is life after death and the soul is continually existing.
- 4) Heaven and Hell are only states of mind. There is no ultimate “Judgment Day”.

The Bible warns us that, in the end-time, Satan will again use sorcery to deceive the whole world (Revelation 18:23). Sorcery is a supernatural agency that claims to receive its power and wisdom from the spirits

of the dead.

When we are not grounded upon the Word, but can be swayed by sensual experiences, we open ourselves up to overmastering deception. Demonic spirits may come posing as a godly loved one who has died, Christian leaders who are now dead, Bible prophets, or even the apostles of Christ. Scripture warned us to expect these impersonations. In fact, Satan will go so far as to pretend to be Christ Himself!

“For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.” 2 Corinthians 11:13-15

How effective will the enemy’s deception be? The Bible tells us that Satan and his angels will deceive the majority of the world! Those who believe the dead are alive, in any form, will be an easy prey, having already fallen to the deceptions of Spiritualism, now found in Christianity.

“Spiritualism is a recognised religion

and is practiced world wide. It's core belief is that we all possess an indestructible soul that survives death and can be contacted through a practice known as mediumship (modern day channelling). Spiritualism's prime tools of deception is what the Bible calls 'familiar spirits', these are deceptive unclean entities that can appear (in the mind of the medium) as deceased relatives...

Since authenticity is only based upon 'evidence' projected from the entity the practice is actually faith-based. The medium along with the audience puts total faith into what the entity has to say. This is no different from someone sending you an email claiming to be the Prince in line to the throne of some African State but requires your bank account details to deposit money to you..."

("Spiritualism Exposed", New Age Deception, www.wordpress.com)

The Devil's Oldest Lie

Before they sinned, Adam and Eve were immortal. It was only when they disobeyed God's Word and sinned, that suffering, disease, and death came upon them and this planet (Romans 6:23 and Romans 5:12).

In the Garden of Eden, Eve was

presented with a test. God had given her His Word. The test was whether Eve would believe God's Word, or her own eyes. Sadly, Eve went with her senses.

What was God's Word to Adam and Eve? He had told them not to eat from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. He also told them that, if they ate of the tree, they would surely die. We find this in Genesis 2:16-17:

"And (Yahweh) God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

The devil shapeshifted into the form of a serpent and appeared in the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. He ate of the forbidden fruit and encouraged Eve to join him. Satan lied to Eve, telling her that she would not die. Thus, the devil's first lie was that humanity could not become mortal. He said that we would never die (which is the "key" teaching of Spiritualism).

"And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst



of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. 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.”

Genesis 3:2-5

The original lie was that mankind could rebel against God, fall into sin, and **still** possess immortality. This lie is still being told—and believed—even to this day. But the Word of God is clear:

“...The soul that sinneth, it shall die.”

Ezekiel 18:4

And lest there be any confusion, Scripture goes on to say that our **thoughts** perish, at death:

“Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help. His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.”

Psalms 146:3-4

What About the Thief on the Cross?

Many believe that the thief on the cross, who died alongside Christ, was taken to Paradise immediately after death. But this idea is based upon one misunderstood Bible verse, ignoring all the verses shared in this study guide. The verse which *appears* to suggest that the thief was taken to Heaven when he died is Luke 23:43. But this meaning comes from one misplaced comma. It is important to know that the punctuation of the Bible is



not inspired. There was no punctuation in the original text. All punctuation, found in our Bibles today, was added by men. The meaning of Luke 23:43 is dramatically changed by where the comma is placed, as is shown below:

Luke 23:43 with an incorrect

comma placement: *“Verily I say unto thee, Today thou shalt be with Me in Paradise.”*

This placement of the comma makes it appear that the thief would be taken to Heaven that very day. But since Scripture needs to be interpreted through other Scripture (2 Peter 1:20; Isaiah 28:9-10), we find that this comma placement doesn't align with the rest of Scripture regarding what happens when we die.

Luke 23:43 with the correct

comma placement: *“Verily I say unto thee today, thou shalt be with Me in Paradise.”*

This placement of the comma fits all the other verses on the subject. Messiah assures the thief that he will be saved. In modern English, it should read, “I'm telling you today—I give you the assurance today—that you will be with Me in Paradise.”

The thief who died on the cross at

the same time as our Saviour is not yet in Heaven, according to Scripture. Christ's Kingdom is set up at His Second Coming (Matthew 25:31), and the righteous of all ages will enter it at **that** time and not at death:

“But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Yahshua died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Yahshua will God bring with Him. For this we say unto you by the Word of (Yahweh), that we which are alive and remain unto the Coming of the (Master) shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the (Master) 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: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the (Master) in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Far from having an immortal soul, as many believe, Scripture says that mankind is mortal. The word “immortal” is found only once in the Bible, and it refers to God.

“Now unto the King Eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.” 1 Timothy 1:17

Scripture teaches that all have sinned and come short of God’s Glory (Romans 3:23). And the soul that sins will die (Ezekiel 18:4). Because we are all sinners, in need of our Saviour, our souls are not currently immortal. However the Bible promises that the saved will all become immortal at Christ’s Return:

“Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the Last Trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must 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 Corinthians 15:51-54

There are people whom Scripture states have been “translated”. Enoch and Elijah are among these. But being “translated” means that they

are taken **without** dying.

“By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.” Hebrews 11:5

As we have seen in this study, the Bible plainly teaches that there are no dead people—nor souls of the dead—in Heaven.





Paganism Creeps In...

As Biblical archaeology, history, and Scripture confirm, the teaching of the immortal soul was believed and taught in ancient times—not by the followers of God—but by the pagans.

It all began with the worship of Nimrod. Nimrod, the grandson of Noah, became the first earthly king, known as Sargon I. Nimrod built Babylon and Nineveh.

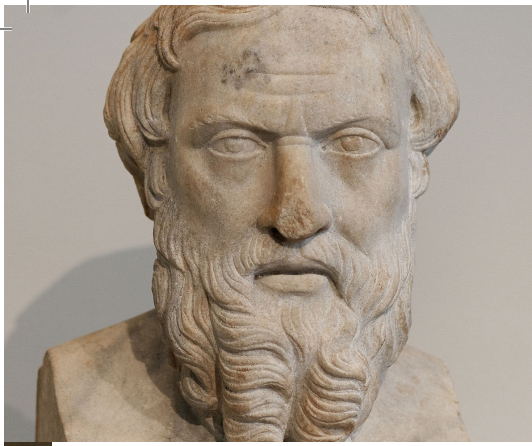
Nimrod, which means “tyrant”, was known as a mighty hunter. He led the Sumerians of Babylon to pay tribute to the skies (sun, moon, stars, and planets). The Tower of Babel was built for this purpose, echoed in other cultures such as the Aztecs, Mayans, and Incas.

Since the head of this government was such an idolatrous tyrant, Shem (Nimrod’s uncle) killed him. As is recorded in history and borne out in the stories of many cultures,



Nimrod was worshipped as a “god”, so he is shown larger than the regular people below him. Some believe that the “mountain” is the Tower of Babel (above). Above left Nimrod wears the sun on his wrist band to show his divinity and immortality.

Semiramis (Nimrod’s wife) told the people that their now-deceased king, Nimrod, wasn’t dead after all. She claimed that his soul had gone up into heaven and had taken a new shape—as the sun god. It was from this age-old, pagan story that most ancient cultures worshipped the sun. Thus, the pagan Nimrod was the first human to (supposedly) die and go to heaven. From that point onwards, the idea that a



A stone bust of Herodotus (484-425 BC) (above)



Justin Martyr (100-165 AD) (above)

person went to heaven when they died became a common, pagan teaching. Consider the following statement by the ancient Greek historian, Herodotus:

“The Egyptians were the first who maintained... that the human soul is immortal...” There are Greeks who have used this doctrine, some earlier and some later, as if it were their own.”

Herodotus, *The Histories*

Justin Martyr was a second century Christian historian and leading defender of the faith. He was beheaded for his unwavering faith. So monumental was his work, his defense of Scripture, and his unwillingness to give up the truth even when facing death, that all Christians slain for their faith after him are called “martyrs”, after his name. In about 150 AD, Justin wrote with concern about how pagan ideas were already creeping

into accepted Christian beliefs. One of the pagan beliefs which most concerned him was the teaching of the immortality of the soul. Justin wrote that anyone believing this pagan doctrine wasn’t really a Christian after all.

“... (Martyr explained that there were those) who are called Christians, but who do not admit [the truth of resurrection], and venture to blaspheme the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; who say there is no resurrection of the dead, and that their souls, when they die, are taken to Heaven; do not imagine that they are Christians.”

Justin Martyr, *Dialogues with Trypho*, 80

But now, the pagan teaching of the immortal soul, which goes to Heaven upon death, has become a core doctrine of Christianity! Yet not so long ago, key Christian leaders would not have considered someone Christian if they believed in the Nimrodian teaching of the immortality of soul! In fact, this is spiritualism!

What About John 11:26?

Since we know that Scripture doesn't argue with Scripture, we may use the many clear verses about death to help us understand the few confusing ones, including John 11:26:

*“And whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never **die**.”* John 11:26

There are several stages of death listed in Scripture. To understand the meaning of John 11:26, we also need to understand the many stages of death.

Death stage 1—Spiritual Death

a person is considered spiritually dead when he or she does not know and love God. (For example, the Prodigal son was “dead” while lost—Luke 11:32. See also 1 Corinthians 15:22.)

Death stage 2—Physical Death

This death refers to the “first death”, which is like a sleep (Hebrews 9:27). God's people are resurrected from this stage of death at the King's Return (Revelation 20:6; Philipians 3:11).

Death stage 3—Eternal Death

This death is called the “second death”. This is the death which only the wicked die and from which there is no Resurrection (Revelation 2:11; 21:8).

When Christ said (in John 11:26) that His followers would never die, He was referring to the second death—or Eternal Damnation.

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My Word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath Everlasting Life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from Death unto Life... The dead shall hear the Voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.”

John 5:24-25

KEY POINT



One never has the truth on a doctrinal issue until *all* the Scripture on that subject fits into the picture. One or two verses may appear to give a confusing meaning. But when we use the weight of evidence from all the other, clear Scriptures, we find that misunderstood verses become clear also. There are Scriptures which leave no “wiggle room” regarding what happens when we die. These guide us in understanding the other verses also.

- Man does not *have* a soul—man *is* a soul—Genesis 2:7
- Death is a state similar to unconscious sleep—Job 14:12, 21
- Dead people have no thoughts, memories, or feelings—Eccl. 9:5-6; Psalm 146:4
- Souls of sinners die—Ez. 18:20
- The saved dead will be resurrected and taken to Heaven at the 2nd Coming of Christ—1 Thessalonians 4:13-18
- We are mortal, but become immortal at the 2nd Coming—1 Corinthians 15:51-55



in SPIRITUALISM CHRISTIANITY

Lesson Study Questions and Answers

1) Alex Malarkey made up a story about going to Heaven. This story became a best selling book. When Alex repented for lying, he gave some excellent advice. He said, "... the _____ is the only source of _____" (see page 2).

2) According to Scripture, mankind doesn't have a soul, man became a living soul. What is the soul? (see page 3).

_____ + _____ = a living soul

3) What is the human spirit, according to Job 27:3? (see page 3) _____

4) What does **every** occupant of Heaven do? (see page 4) _____

5) We can know that there are no dead saints in Heaven, because the dead cannot do this. What key thing can the dead not do? (see page 4) The dead cannot _____ God.

6) What does Scripture say that makes it clear that King David was saved? (see page 5) _____

7) According to Acts 2:29 & 34, is King David in Heaven now? (page 5) _____

8) What determines what is true regarding death? (see page 5) _____

9) What must we **not** rely on to determine the truth about death? (see page 5) We cannot rely on _____, or _____.

10) Scripture tells us plainly that it is impossible for the dead to do what? (see page 6) _____ What do the dead know or feel?

12) Scripture also teaches that the dead don't watch over their living relatives. (see page 6) A dead man's sons _____ to _____ and he (the dead man) _____ it not.

13) What is the third tenet of Spiritualism? (see page 7) _____

14) What is the devil's oldest lie? (see page 8) _____

15) Who was the first person to die and "go to heaven"? (see page 12)

16) According to Justin Martyr, what teaching should you not "imagine that (you) are Christian", while believing? (see page 13) _____

Prayer of Committment:

"Dear Heavenly Father, I see that the pagan teachings of Spiritualism have come into Christianity. I also see how these deceptions could only appear attractive when I go by my feelings, senses, and experiences, instead of standing only upon Your Word. I confess and repent for committing the sin of Eve. Like she did, many times I have believed my own senses and experiences instead of the Bible. Please forgive and cleanse me from this, I pray. Please help me to stand upon Your Word in every belief that I hold. Help me believe Your Word even when it isn't popular. In Yahshua's Name, Amen."

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