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Everything the Bible teaches about death, all in one verse!

We all face large-scale questions no matter who you are. One that seems to linger in the minds of Christians is as follows: "What happens when you die?" This question, when asked to an orthodox believer, would result in an answer of few words. Believers today seem to be left in the dark on this critical issue. Yet in reality, the bible is very clear and holds a lot of information to enlighten the biblical truth seekers on this subject.

Much confusion is abroad in churches today; some have found it hard to understand the truths that the Holy Bible presents to us. Yet, the concept is very simple. The Old Testament prophet Daniel gives us a huge clue with a lot of information to grasp in just *one verse*. When one examines Daniel 12:2 thoroughly, they would find a very detailed explanation on the state of death, what it means to both believers and unbelievers, and how it all resolves biblically.

"Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt." (NASB)

"Many of those..."

Daniel starts the 12th chapter giving us a glance of a major time of tribulation worldwide (v1). He then continues with the verse in study, showing what is to follow this earth-shattering event from the context. "Many of those...." seems to be a reference to a vast number seen in his vision. Jesus, when making a parallel prophecy, uses the word "all" in John 5:28. The Apostle John renders this with "a great multitude, which no one could count" (Rev. 7:9). Other translations choose "multitudes", again giving us the notion of a grand-scale event occurring. It refers to all mankind, as we will see shortly...

"...who sleep..."

The bible uses the word "sleep" quite frequently to describe its state of man in death. The dead are said to be "asleep." This is a critically important fact that can be backed up throughout the bible with over 50 examples. Starting in the Old Testament, one can see that all humans are said to be asleep at death (Job 3:11-14; 14:12, Psalm 13:3). King David was said to have slept with his fathers or ancestors (1 Kings 2:10, cp Acts 2:29 and 13:36). All of the great kings have "lied down with their fathers" when buried (1 Kings 1:21, 14:31, 2 Kings 13:9, 15:7, 2 Chron. 9:31, 26:2). Many other O.T. passages reiterate this notion of sleeping as the "lying down into sleep" with Deut. 31:16, Job 7:21, 2 Sam. 7:12, Nahum 3:18, etc.

The New Testament does nothing to abolish or disturb the idea the O.T. strongly holds. Jesus makes the connection clearly in John 11:11 where he says "Lazarus has fallen asleep" and immediately after in verse 14, he says plainly "Lazarus is dead." Christ is called the "first fruits of those who are *asleep*" (1 Cor. 15:20) due to his resurrection from the dead. Jesus himself slept (Eph. 4:9) and did not ascend into heaven during that time (John 20:17). 1 Thes. 4:13-16 tells us what we already know, reinforcing the fact that the dead are asleep. Stephen, when martyred in Acts 7:60, "fell asleep" when he died. More examples to reiterate this are Matt. 27:52, 1 Cor. 11:30, 15:6, 1 Thes. 5:10, and 2 Peter 3:4, all showing clearly that the word "sleep" equals death in the biblical sense.

The death state is *even further* emphasized and elaborated all over the Bible. The Hebrew word *sheol* occurs some 65 times in the O.T., always with reference to the state of the dead. A literal translation will show that *sheol* means "grave." The N.T. equivalent of *sheol* is *hades* (cp Acts 2:24-28). The KJV misleads many with the incorrect translation of these two words to "hell", which would contradict the whole biblical doctrine of end times. Neither *sheol* nor *hades* is ever depicted clearly as a place of torment or suffering. In fact, the righteous and the wicked **both** end up in the "grave" (Job 3:13-19, 30:23; Ps. 49:14-15,

89:48, Ecc. 9:10, Dan 12:13). Just consider that "the dead know nothing" in Ecc. 9:5, "our soul has sunk down into the dust" in Ps. 44:25, and "no one has ever seen God" in John 1:18 further emphasizes that *heaven* is not the destination of the dead. The myth that we all have an immortal soul is false because "the soul that sins will die" (Ezek. 18:4). As you can see, the Scriptures continue to teach in our favor the truth of "sleep of the dead".

"...in the dust of the ground..."

The bible also teaches that along with the notion of the grave, a man's body returns to dust when they die. Returns? Gen. 3:19 tells us that "for you are dust, and to dust you shall return" implying that the first man ever, Adam, would set an example for everyone and eventually return to "dust." His final destination was not heaven, but returning to what he was made of. Many other passages support this view, such as Psalm 90:3 stating "You turn man back to dust." Job 34:14 says "All flesh would perish together, and man would return to dust", further explaining that when someone dies, they return to dust. Yet again in Psalm 104:29b we see that "...they expire and return to the dust". Job states "for now shall I sleep in the dust" (Job 7:21). Other verses include Job 10:9, 17:16, 20:11, 21:26, Ecc. 3:19-20, 12:7, all which heavily support Daniel 12:2. The dust of the ground is the destination of ALL the "sleeping" persons in scripture.

"...will awake..."

If the dead state is referred to as "sleeping", then the alive state means "awake." Resurrection is the key to understanding this change. The only occurrence of a mass resurrection of believers is directly connected with the Second Advent of Christ. Jesus tells us in John 5:28-29 to "not marvel of this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear his voice, and come forth to a resurrection of life." Isaiah tells us a prophecy of a time when "your dead will live; their corpses will rise, you who lie in the dust, awake and shout for joy" (Isa. 26:19). The dead in Christ will be raised imperishable says Paul in 1 Cor. 15:52 and 2 Cor. 5:1ff. He also tells us in 1 Thes. 4:16 that "the Lord

himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first". There seems to be a condition set in place before we are to be with Christ. Clearly we can see that **Christ has to come back in order for a resurrection to take place**. By no other way are we to be with him.

"...these to everlasting life..."

The "these" in this section obviously refer to the believers who are "in Christ" (1 Cor. 15:52) who get this great gift from God. A literal translation for this section of the verse would be "some to life in the coming age" as opposed to "everlasting." The Hebrew reads *Chaye Olam* with a translation, word for word, of "to life of the age." This makes a lot of sense with the context. Daniel tells us in previous chapters of signs of the "end of the age", and now he tells us that the dead [in Christ] will have life in the "age to come." Jesus agrees in Matt. 24, and tells us that immediately after the tribulation, he will come back, at the end of the age (Matt 24:3). Apparently, there are 2 ages (Matt. 12:32), and that which bring the age to come is the Second Advent of Christ Jesus. Everything DEPENDS on him coming back.

The passage makes clear that believers obtain everlasting life upon resurrection. One does not receive eternal life immediately when they get "saved", but only when they are resurrected. The mere fact that you can die shows that you do not have eternal life. You will have it, but only when Christ comes back. The faithful now have the "promise" of life in the age to come (Eph. 1:13-14). We will take off the mortal body and put on the immortal body, a heavenly body (1 Cor. 15:53 cp. 2 Cor. 5:4). Jesus is coming back to give us this "reward" (1 Peter 5:4, 2 Tim 5:8, Rev. 22:12, Matt 16:27). He will then establish his kingdom (Daniel 7:13-14) and appoint us up to reign with him on the earth (Dan 7:27, Luke 19:17, 1 Cor 6:2. Rev 5:9-10)! We will then reign in the millennial kingdom for 1000 years (Rev 20:4), free from sin, and always to be with the Lord (1 Thes. 4:17b).

"...but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt..."

If the dead in Christ will be raised at his second advent, then what about all the other people? "The rest of the dead will not come to life until the 1000 years were completed" (Rev. 20:5). Yet they will be thrown into the lake of fire, the second death (Rev 20:14), along with the devil, beast, and false prophet (Rev. 20:10). "Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection, over these the second death has no power" (Rev 20:6a). We all wish to be apart in the first resurrection, so that we will reign with Christ forever. Woe to the ones who do not get resurrected until after the 1000 year reign, for their place is the real hell. Yet the term "everlasting", like before should **not** be used to prove a "forever torment." In Revelation, the lake of fire and brimstone expresses figuratively what is stated literally-"the second death." This scriptural definition of death is incompatible with the interpretation that the lake of fire and the second death refer to a conscious eternal torment. A more literal translation would be "death of the age."

In conclusion, we can see that Daniel 12:2 states the clear biblical notion of death, with massive evidence across the canon of scripture. The vague thought of your soul going off to heaven when you die is NOT FOUND in the bible, yet orthodox teachers and preachers continue to spread this lie. Over 50 verses have been supplied here in this paper to prove the doctrine of "conditional immortality" where the condition to receive your "life of the age" is clearly the Second Advent of Christ. I could have provided 150+ verses, which I had to leave out for space sake, but I would just want to make the point that this doctrine is held widely throughout scripture and never directly contradicted. I urge you to take time reading these verses and check them out for yourself. See if this doesn't open your eyes to the view of death as our biblical heroes saw it. Take heed to the words of scripture, meditate on them, apply them, and look forward to hearing Jesus say "well done good and faithful servant!"

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