

# Christ Confirmed the Dead Do Not Go to Heaven

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In many religions of this world, it is believed that the dead go to another place following their death. This afterlife is described differently depending on the religious affiliation. The majority of those who regard themselves as "Christian" believe they go to heaven where God exists. For the purpose of this study, the teaching that the dead go to heaven will be examined according to Jesus Christ's statement in John 6:39-40, 44.

The power to bring the dead back to life is held by Almighty God alone,

Then Jesus answered and said to them (the Jewish religious leaders), 'Most assuredly, **I say to you, the son** (Christ) **can do nothing of himself**, but what he sees the Father do; for whatever **He** (God the Father) does, the son also does in like manner (Jn. 5:19; NKJV; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

However, God the Father has delegated this aspect of His power to Christ,

For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the son (Christ) and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day (Jn. 6:40; ESV; Ed. note in parenthesis).

Christ confirmed that at some point in the future his Father would give him permission to resurrect many people. Christ associated this action of resurrecting the dead with a period of judgment,

For as the Father raises the dead and gives life to them, even so the son (Christ) gives life to whom he will. **For the Father** judges no one, but **has committed all judgment to the son** (Jn. 5:22; NKJV; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

He said also to the man who had invited him, 'When you give a dinner or a banquet, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, lest they also invite you in return and you be repaid. <sup>13</sup>But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, <sup>14</sup>and you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you. **For you will be repaid at the resurrection of the just'** (Lk. 14:12-14; ESV; emphasis added).

However, "when" Christ would begin doing this "en masse" is another matter, which will be discussed later in this study. Based on these facts, it is certain that no dead person, prior to Christ's ministry, could have been brought back to life eternally. This is confirmed by the following scripture dealing with David, a well-known servant of God,

Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead (now) and (still) buried, and his tomb is with us to this day (David is still not resurrected even following Christ's resurrection) (Ac. 2:29; NKJV; Ed. notes in parentheses).

Solomon confirmed that his own father, King David, was dead and totally unaware of what was happening on earth,

For the living know that they will die; but **the dead** (including King David at this point in time) **know nothing**... (Eccl. 9:5a; NKJV; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

The dead do not praise the LORD, nor any who go down into silence (Psa. 115:17; NKJV).

The apostle John, writing after the resurrection of Christ, clearly stated that Jesus Christ is the only person who has ever been resurrected to eternal life,

No one has gone up to heaven except the one who came down from heaven, the Son of Man who is in heaven (Jn. 3:13; ISV).

Even infants that die not long after birth or in the womb are not resurrected or taken up to heaven. They too sleep and await the second resurrection,

Why didn't I die while I was still in the womb, or die while I was being born? <sup>12</sup>Why was there a lap to hold me, and why were there breasts to nurse me? <sup>13</sup>**If I had died, I would be lying down by now, undisturbed, asleep, and at rest'** (Job 3:11-13; ISV; emphasis added).

Or why was I not buried like a stillborn child, like babies who never saw the light? (Job 3:16; ISV).

The state of the dead is the same for everyone. The wicked do not go to a place of eternal torment, which is commonly known as hell, nor do the righteous go immediately to heaven following their death. Instead, the dead see nothing, do nothing, and hear nothing. No one has any advantage over others in death because they all wait together for Christ's return,

In that place, the wicked stop causing trouble, and there those whose strength is exhausted are at rest. <sup>18</sup>In that place, those who once were prisoners will be at ease together; they won't hear the voice of oppressors. <sup>19</sup>The unimportant and the important are both there, and the servant is free from his master (Job 3:17-19; ISV).

Whatever work or occupation comes our way, we are to do it with all our might; in death, there is nothing anyone can do,

Whatever presents itself for you to do, do it with all your might, because there is no work, planning, knowledge, or skill in the grave where you're going (Eccl. 9:10; GW).

The dead are described as being asleep or in an unconscious state (Dan. 12:2; Job 3:13). Because David was dead and unaware of what was happening on earth, he did not know how powerful and famous his son, King Solomon, had become,

You (Almighty God) prevail (because death reigns due to man's sins; cf. Rom. 5:17) forever against him, and he passes on (dies); You change his countenance (because the physical body decays at death) and send him away (from any communication with Almighty God). <sup>21</sup>**His** (the dead man's) **sons come to honor, and he does not know it** (Job 14:20-21; NKJV; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

Christ's period of judgment commenced when he defeated Satan by using the Word of God, as mentioned in Matthew 4:1-11. It has since continued with those who comprise the Body of Christ, the true church of God,

Of judgment, because **the ruler of this world** (Satan) **is judged** (Jn. 16:11; NKJV; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

For **the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God**; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God? (1Pet. 4:17; NKJV; emphasis added).

We can see this judgment of the house of God in progress in the letters Christ addressed to the angels of the seven churches that oversee them and are in their care. In these letters were characteristics or traits the churches would echo throughout the eras (Rev. 1:20; 2:1-11; 12-17; 18-29; 3:1-6; 7-13; 14-22).

However, any final rewards and punishment will not begin until Christ returns. It is only at Christ's triumphant return that those who willingly lived in accordance with God's law and commandments and held onto the testimony of Jesus Christ (Rev 12:17, 14:12), will be rewarded by a resurrection to eternal life.

Martha understood that her brother Lazarus would be resurrected at the last day of Satan's system, which we understand and term the first resurrection,

Martha said to him (Christ), 'I know that he will rise again (from the dead) **in the resurrection at the last day** (Jn. 11:24; NKJV; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

Christ confirmed this would occur when his heavenly Father gave the signal to commence this marvelous act (Mt. 24:36; Mk. 13:32),

Jesus said to her (Martha), '**I am the resurrection** and the (way to) life (everlasting). He who believes in me (Christ's teachings centered on trust and obedience toward Almighty God), though he may die, he shall live (Jn. 11:25; NKJV; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

Job understood the sequence and timing of the transformation of those who will be found obedient and faithful.

If a man die, shall he live again? All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come (Job 14:14; NKJV).

To confirm that Christ has permission from his heavenly Father to resurrect the dead, Christ raised Lazarus back to life. Lazarus was then able to live out the remainder of his days,

These things he (Christ) said, and after that he said to them, 'Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I may wake him up.'<sup>12</sup> Then his disciples said, 'Lord, if he sleeps he will get well.'<sup>13</sup> However, Jesus spoke of his death (used sleep figuratively), but they thought that he was speaking about taking rest in sleep.<sup>14</sup> Then Jesus said to them plainly, 'Lazarus is dead' (Jn. 11:11-14; NKJV; Ed. notes in parentheses).

Then they took away the stone. And Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, 'Father, I thank You that You have heard me (cf. Jn. 11:22).'<sup>42</sup> And I know that You always hear me, but because of the people who are standing by I said this, that they may believe that You sent me'<sup>43</sup> Now when he had said these things he cried with a loud voice, 'Lazarus, come forth!'<sup>44</sup> And he who died came out bound hand and foot with grave clothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth (Jn. 11:31-44a; NKJV; Ed. notes in parentheses).

So teaching that the dead go to heaven, as comforting as it may feel, is a lie and the same one Satan used against Eve when he said, "You will not surely die," in Genesis 3:4. In other words, Eve was deceived into thinking she could sin and not see death since Satan planted the concept in her mind that she had an immortal soul. This lie continues today and it permeates many religious systems to one degree or another. The truth is that only Jesus Christ has the authority to raise the dead, and this will not occur until he returns. This is the real meaning behind what Christ said to Martha just prior to Lazarus being brought back to physical life,

Jesus said to her (Martha), **'I am the resurrection and the life** (everlasting) (Jn. 11:25a; NKJV; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

Those who have died in the faith, even from the time of righteous Abel, will be resurrected to eternal life along with the faithful who are still alive upon Christ's triumphant return (cf. Heb. 11:4). It will all happen in a twinkling or blinking of an eye (1Cor. 15:51-52).

For the majority in the first resurrection it will be the very first time they will see Christ. In regards to the patriarchs, the prophets, and those who obeyed Christ during his earthly ministry, it will be the first time since their death that they have seen, spoken, or interacted with him,

And this is the will of Him (Almighty God) who sent me (Christ), that everyone who sees the son (at the time of the first resurrection; Rev. 20:4-6) and believes in (believed they needed to trust and obey; cf. Mt. 4:4) Him (Almighty God; cf. Jn. 17:3) may have everlasting life; and (because these conditions were met) I (Christ) will raise him (or her) up at the last day (of Satan's system) (Jn. 6:40; NKJV; cf. Rev. 20:1-3; Ed. notes in parentheses).

Behold, I (Paul) tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed – <sup>52</sup> in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet (Mt. 24:31). For the trumpet will sound (in the heavenly realm), and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed (1Cor. 15:51-52; NKJV; Ed. notes in parentheses).

God's faithful servants are not in heaven right now. Scripture clearly shows that those who have died in the faith will be caught up together with those who are alive at the return of Christ; not any sooner,

For 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. <sup>17</sup> Then we who are alive (at that future time) and remain shall be caught up together with them (those who have been dead until this point) in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always (from that point forward) be with the Lord (1Thes. 4:16-17; NKJV; Ed. notes in parentheses).

The doctrine or teaching of a rapture scenario in which people are 'taken' to heaven before or after the advent of Christ is nothing more than a deception. Every person who has lived and died, with the exception of Jesus Christ, is now asleep. When Christ returns the first of two resurrections will commence. As scripture has pointed out, the first resurrection will occur at the time of Christ's return. The second resurrection will take place following his millennial reign on earth (Rev. 5:10). Those who are in the first resurrection will never see death again. This is a better resurrection (Heb. 11:35). Once

the millennium is finished, Christ will resurrect the rest of the dead for judgment with the goal of rehabilitation leading to repentance,

I saw thrones, and sitting on those thrones were the ones who had been given the right to judge. I also saw the souls of the people who had their heads cut off because they had told about Jesus and preached God's message. They were the same ones who had not worshiped the beast or the idol, and they had refused to let its mark be put on their hands or foreheads. They will come to life and rule with Christ for a thousand years. <sup>5</sup>These people are the first to be raised to life, and they are especially blessed and holy. The second death has no power over them. They will be priests for God and Christ and will rule with them for a thousand years. No other dead people were raised to life until a thousand years later (Rev. 20:4-5; CEV).

But Christ has been raised to life! And he makes us certain that others will also be raised to life. <sup>21</sup>Just as we will die because of Adam, we will be raised to life because of Christ. <sup>22</sup>Adam brought death to all of us, and Christ will bring life to all of us. <sup>23</sup>But we must each wait our turn. **Christ was the first to be raised to life, and his people will be raised to life when he returns** (1Cor. 15:20-23; CEV; emphasis added).

As for the fallen host, their punishment leading to correction and rehabilitation will begin once the millennial rule of Christ is completed. As scripture points out, Satan will have his spiritual body changed and confined to a physical (mortal) one (cf. Isa. 14:16). This same principle will apply to the entire fallen host. When this occurs, the people of the earth will look upon these fallen spirit-beings and ponder how they could have influenced so many people and done so much harm and destruction.

Sadly, mainstream Christianity teaches that mankind has an immortal soul, which at death, allows them to live with their God in heaven. At the subconscious level, they are really implying is that there is no real need for the Messiah - since humans automatically receive eternal life and that sin (which is the transgression of the Law; 1Jn. 3:4; Rom. 6:23) doesn't really matter. Its advocating that there is no need to be obedient to God's law and commands which define His will (Jn. 5:30; Mat 26:39). This invariably leads people to think they can choose, or create, whatever path they wish and it will lead them to eternal life regardless of whether they obey God's word (Jude 17:6). Christ is the only way that repentant sinners can receive the gift of eternal life. Christ did not say "I am a way, a truth and a life". Instead, Christ said that he is **the way, the truth and the life** (Jn. 14:6). Those who do not repent, and begin to willingly obey every word of God, will not be given an opportunity to take part in the first resurrection at Christ's return. They will remain dead until the 1000 years have passed. Therefore, unrepentant sinners cannot play by their own rules and expect to inherit everlasting life. Obedience to the commandments of God, which is ultimately recognition of the perfect will, nature and character of God the Father, is what the Lord God Almighty is achieving in the hearts of every human or fallen host, so the creation can co-exist in perfect harmony for all eternity.

Now when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all (1Cor. 15:28; NKJV; cf. Psa. 19:7).

Those who have never heard of Christ, or die young, will be given the opportunity to be taught the gospel of the kingdom of God. They will in no-way be excluded or looked

down upon. All will be shown the way to eternal life, and many in this group will find it easier not having been corrupted by false doctrines and not having to unlearn a lifetime of false teachings. It is not that those who are called now are in any way better than those who have not heard of Jesus Christ and his Father (Jn. 17:3). God calls those considered poor, foolish and/or weak in the eyes of this world to shame the powerful (1Cor. 1:27; Jas. 2:5; cf. Eph. 6:12). The good news is that those who never known God and His truth will be have an opportunity to do so in the second resurrection.

God's word, The Bible, is very clear there are only two resurrections. Those in their respective groups receive either their reward at the first resurrection or their rehabilitation at the second resurrection. To many this will come as a surprise, having been taught Satan's false doctrines (including the teaching of the immortal soul). Hopefully, at this point it won't be a surprise to anyone anymore,

Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, and will come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment (Jn. 5:28-29; NASB).

This document is the collaborative work of individuals who believe God's truth should be given freely (Mt. 10:8; 1Cor. 2:12; 2Cor.11:7; Rom. 10:14-21) and the message of the one true God should be made available to all nations (Mt. 24:14) as a prerequisite to the return of Jesus Christ as King of kings (Mt. 17:10; 19:17; Mk. 9:11; Lk. 1:17; Rev. 19:11-16).

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