

SECRETS OF PROPHECY

LIFE AFTER DEATH



it is written
OCEANIA





One of the great mysteries of life is death. What happens to people when they die? Where do they go? Is that the end of the journey, or just the beginning? Are they completely dead or is there an inner soul that continues to live?

Throughout the cultures of the world, the dead are buried in different ways. In the western world a coffin in an underground grave is the typical burial. The Buddhists of Tibet prefer a “sky burial” where the dead are prayed for then given over to devouring vultures. A visit to Cairo will show you the mummies of the pharaohs and the great pyramids in which they were buried.

You may have witnessed the Hindu open cremations on the Indian Ganges river. Here the remains are ceremoniously sprinkled into the flowing river. Archaeologists have discovered thousands of graves from ancient Persia; all buried in the cracks of a cliff face on the much-loved “mountain of mercy”, Rahmat Mountain.



The destination of the dead polarises the world. In the Christian faith many believe the “soul” goes straight to heaven, (or maybe hell). Others believe in a place called purgatory – an area of spiritual cleansing prior to heaven. “Limbo” is a place for people who are not good enough for heaven, but not bad enough for hell. To some religions, the afterlife is spent in a place called “paradise”. For many in the world there is simply no destination for the dead.

Over half the world believes in reincarnation, where the soul

experiences successive lives on planet earth. The form of that life can be either on a higher or lower plane. It depends on the moral quality of the current life.

Interest in the supernatural is a feature of the 21st century. Many today recount a Near Death Experience (NDE), where they sensed themselves leaving their body and entering a sphere of bright light and unexplainable beauty.

High rating television programs are demonstrating “crossing over”. There is “live” communication between the living and the dead. Disney movies, thousands of internet sites, best selling books and popular board games also feature open discussions with the dead. People see apparitions of the Virgin Mary all over the world. They feel she encourages them in their faith and gives messages of hope and peace to the world.

More and more people are visiting mediums and “spirit guides” in the hope of getting in touch with much loved relatives who have passed away. They want friendship, reassurance, support and strength to cope with their emotional heartache and loss.

Is there life after death? What is the soul? What is the spirit? Can we talk to our dead loved ones, and if so, should we?

This study guide uncovers the mystery of life after death. It reveals why a correct understanding of this subject is so vital to your future.

Q1 WHAT ROLE WILL THE SUPERNATURAL PLAY IN END TIME EVENTS?

Revelation 16:14 For they are spirits of _____, performing _____, which go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty

Bible prophecy predicts demons will work supernatural miracles to deceive the world. These miracles will include “false christs and false prophets” (Matthew 24:24). Billions could be deceived by the devil and his demons impersonating past spiritual leaders.

Can you imagine what would happen if Jesus Christ, Mohammed, Buddha, Ghandi and the Virgin Mary all reappeared on earth at once? Just imagine a united peace plan

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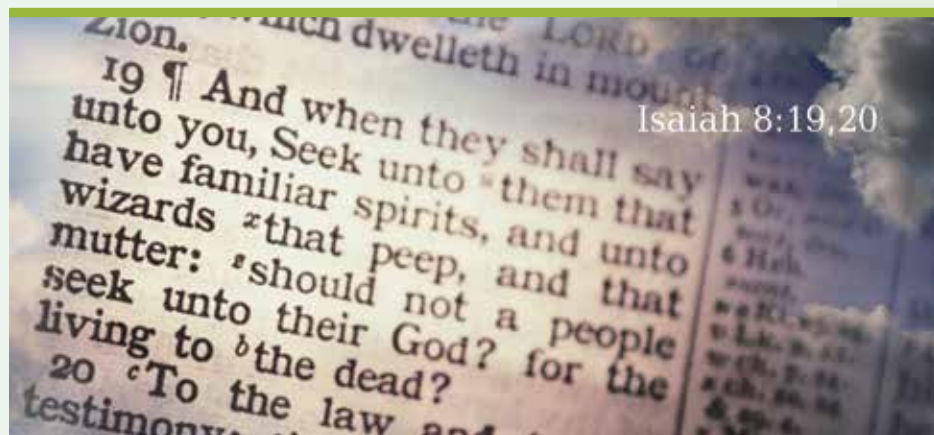
for a world ravaged by natural disasters and terrorism. How easily the nations and religions of the world could be influenced to sacrifice truth in order to form a “one world” New World Order.

Q2 BY WHAT METHOD SHOULD WE TEST SUPERNATURAL PHENOMENA?

Isaiah 8:19,20 *And when they say to you, “Seek those who are mediums and wizards, who whisper and mutter,” should not a people seek their God?... To the _____ and to the _____! If they do not speak according to this _____, it is because there is no light in them*

Instead of seeking mediums and astrologers as “spirit guides”, the Bible suggests we seek guidance from the Creator God. After all, He is the only one who truly knows the future (Isaiah 46:9,10).

There is a clear benchmark for testing the supernatural – the “law and the testimony”. It is “this word” that is the path to seek God’s guidance. If we want to ensure evil spirits do not deceive us, then the Bible (law and testimony) is God’s source of protection and truth.



One of the devil’s most effective weapons in removing trust in the Bible, is to influence senses and feelings. Visiting a medium can touch the heart. Issues such as relationships, a successful future, grief and loneliness are discussed. It seems natural at times for emotions to overrule the rational. You may even see, hear or touch someone who you thought was lost to you forever.

The deceptions of the last days will challenge our faith in God and His Word. Now is the time to exercise that faith by testing everything in life by the Bible.

Q3 DOES GOD GIVE ANY WARNINGS ABOUT CONSULTING THE DEAD?

Deuteronomy 18:10-12 ... or one who conjures spells, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the _____. For all who do these things are an abomination to the LORD ... (v11,12)

God makes repeated warnings to His people to stay away from any association with mediums and contacting “familiar spirits” (Leviticus 19:31). The “familiar spirits” include those people you have known and loved for many years, but are now dead.

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It is understandable why people want to contact their loved ones. Just a word of encouragement and love brings comfort and hope to people who are hurting. So why is God so definite in His opposition to consulting with the dead?

Q4 IS IT POSSIBLE FOR THE DEAD TO TALK TO YOU?

Ecclesiastes 9:5 For the living know that they will die; but the dead know _____, and they have no more reward, for the memory of them is forgotten

The Bible is clear. It is impossible for a dead person to talk



to you – the dead know nothing! Any contact with the “dead” is, in reality, contact with an evil spirit. That is why this practice is such an abomination to the Lord.



The original “medium” was a serpent in the Garden of Eden. God told Adam and Eve that disobedience would cause death. The devil spoke his first lie on earth through the serpent – “you will not surely die” (Genesis 3:4). Since that time the devil has made that lie a key teaching of virtually every unbiblical religion. The popular view today is that when someone dies, only the body dies while the “soul” keeps living.

This subject is extremely important to all. A view that is consistent with the devil’s first lie, will set people up for the grand deceptions of the last days.

In the remainder of this study guide, we will discover what the Bible says about life after death.

Q5

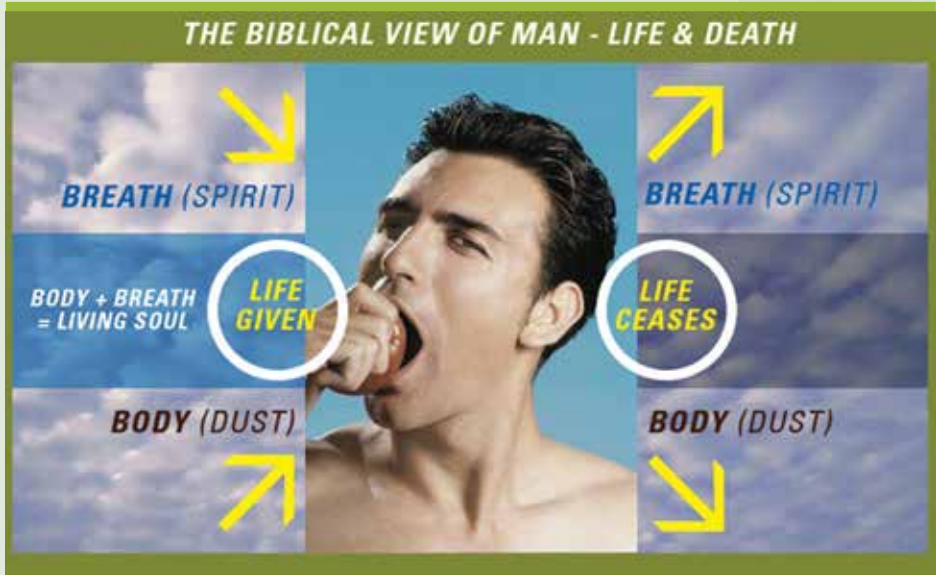
HOW DID GOD CREATE HUMAN BEINGS?

Genesis 2:7 And the LORD God formed man of the _____ of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the _____ of life; and man became a living being

An understanding of death begins with an understanding of life. God miraculously formed humans out of the dust of the ground and the breath of life.

The last word in this text “being” is translated in the King James Version as “soul”. “Being” and “soul” can be used interchangeably (the Hebrew word for being, “nephesh” is translated hundreds of times as soul throughout the Bible). The story of creation provides the best definition for soul in the Bible.

Dust of the ground + Breath of life = A living soul



The Bible says that you are a soul. God did not put a soul into Adam and Eve. He put the breath of life into them and they became souls. At death you cease to be a living soul.

To illustrate: A light globe + electricity = light

If you disconnect the electrical plug the light ceases to exist. The light doesn't travel back through the wires to the electricity company. It is simply not in existence. Take away the breath of God and there is no soul.

Another example would be the creation of a wooden box. If we had some boards and nails we could take a hammer and drive the nails into those boards to make a box. We would then have three things instead of two. Remove the nails and where does the box go? The box no longer exists. Once again, remove the

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breath of God and the soul ceases to exist.



The Bible says that God saved eight souls in the Ark (1 Peter 3:20). It is important to note that these were eight living people, not eight disembodied ghosts!

The ancient Greek philosophers taught the concept that humans possessed a soul. It was a conscious and immortal part of life that goes on living after death. But the Bible is clear. God made a living being (soul) out of the dust of the ground and the breath of life.

Q6 WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A PERSON DIES?

Ecclesiastes 12:7 Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit will _____ to God who gave it

Every person who dies will decompose and become dust, while the spirit of life returns to God. This process is the exact reverse of the story of creation. The soul ceases to exist when the body returns to the earth and the spirit returns to heaven. There is no distinction between the good and the bad. This is the experience of everyone who dies.

What is the “spirit” that returns to heaven? The spirit is not the same as the soul. The word spirit comes from the Hebrew word “ruach”, which simply means breath. In the New Testament the word for spirit is the Greek word “pneuma”, which means breath or air. A number of words today have this word as their foundation. For example “pneumonia” is

a disease of the air breathing lungs. A “pneumatic” tyre is a tyre that has air in it.

The “spirit” that returns to heaven is not a ghost or a person; it is the breath of life. This “spark of life” is a gift from God and enables us to keep living.



Q7 WHAT HAPPENS TO OUR EMOTIONS WHEN WE DIE?

Ecclesiastes 9:6 *Also their love, their hatred, and their envy have now _____*

At death all emotions and feelings cease to exist. A dead person cannot comfort the living or return any love. An emotion centred “soul” does not exist after death. All feelings are gone.

Q8 CAN A SOUL DIE?

Ezekiel 18:4 *... the soul who sins shall _____*

Satan has been very successful in propagating his lie, “You shall not surely die”. Virtually all pagan religions across every continent and culture teach the concept of a soul that lives through physical death. The Bible alone stands out in opposition to the “immortal soul”.

The Bible says the soul ceases to exist at death. All have sinned (Romans 3:23) and therefore all souls must die. While the word soul and spirit are mentioned more than 1700 times in the Bible

The soul ceases to exist when the body returns to the earth and the spirit returns to heaven.



there is not one place that mentions an immortal soul.

Q9

WHO IS THE ONLY ONE WHO HAS IMMORTALITY?

1 Timothy 6:15,16 ... *the King of kings and Lord of lords, who _____ has immortality...*

There is only one being who has immortality – the everlasting God. God has been in existence throughout eternity and will continue as the God of the Universe forever. We can have confidence in putting our trust in the one and only immortal God.

Q10

DO GOOD PEOPLE GO STRAIGHT TO HEAVEN AT DEATH?

Acts 2:29,34 *Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day ... For David did _____ ascend into the heavens...*

Psalms 115:17 *The dead do not _____ the LORD, nor any who go down into silence*



God described David as someone worthy of heaven; “a man after My own heart” (Acts 13:22). In the book of Acts the apostle Peter – some 1,000 years after the death of David – categorically states that David is

not in heaven. David was, and still is, in his tomb resting until the Second Coming of Jesus.

Anyone who is in heaven would be “praising the Lord”. But the Bible says that the dead do not praise the Lord (Psalms 115:17). All emotions and worship cease. Also, Jesus told His disciples they would be with Him when He returned to earth, not as soon as they died (John 14:3). Very clearly, the righteous do not go straight to heaven. The dead rest in their graves until Jesus comes back.

Q11 DOES THE BIBLE TEACH REINCARNATION?

Hebrews 9:27 *And as it is appointed for men to die _____, but after this the judgment*

A research study by Monash University on Australian “Generation Y”, found more than half of Australian young people believe in reincarnation. The Bible says that each of us dies once. We do not live and die over and over again.

Q12 WHAT DID JESUS CALL DEATH?

John 11:11-14 *...and after that He said to them, “Our friend Lazarus _____, but I go that I may wake him up.”... However, Jesus spoke of his death, but they thought that He was speaking about taking rest in sleep. Then Jesus said to them plainly, “Lazarus is _____” (v11,13,14)*

There is only one being who has immortality – the everlasting God.





When Jesus talked about the death of Lazarus, he referred to it as a “sleep”. Lazarus was not in heaven, he was in his tomb “sleeping” in death. Jesus said “come forth” not “come down” (John 11:43). Imagine how unfair it would be if Lazarus was enjoying life in heaven only to have Jesus pull him out of there to live his life back here on earth.

More than 50 times in the Bible death is called a “sleep”. People close their eyes in death and the next thing they know, Jesus has returned; they are reunited with their loved ones, and they are on their way to heaven.

Q13 DID JESUS TELL THE THIEF ON THE CROSS HE WOULD GO TO HEAVEN THE DAY HE DIED?

Luke 23:42,43 *And Jesus said to him, “Assuredly, I say to you, _____ you will be with Me in Paradise.” (v43)*

It appears as if Jesus promised the thief a life in heaven starting the day he died. Certainly many Christians use this text to support such a view. What is important to realise, when looking at this text, is the punctuation. In the original Greek manuscripts there were no full stops or commas in the sentences. As a result, the translators placed the punctuation where they thought it made the most sense.

In the case of the words of Jesus, the context clearly shows that the comma must be placed after the word “today” instead of after “you”.



The statement of Jesus would then read, “Assuredly, I say to you today, you will be with me in paradise.”

We know with certainty, that the thief was not in heaven on that Good Friday, because he did not even die on that day. The soldiers broke his legs late that afternoon because he had not yet died (John 19:31,32). Secondly, Jesus also did not go to heaven that day. After His resurrection Jesus told Mary, “Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father.” (John 20:17). How could He be in heaven on Friday if He had not been there by the following Sunday? If the comma is left in the position of the translators it creates a blatant contradiction within Scripture. Many modern translations have fixed this contradiction by using correct punctuation.

The thief on the cross will be in heaven, but not until he is raised at the Second Coming of Jesus.

More than 50 times in the Bible death is called a “sleep”. People close their eyes in death and the next thing they know, Jesus has returned.

Q14 WHAT HAPPENS TO THE RIGHTEOUS DEAD AT THE SECOND COMING OF JESUS?

John 5:28,29 Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come _____ – those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation

1 Thessalonians 4:15-17 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout ... And the dead in Christ shall _____ first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord (v16,17)

The hope for the Christian is not death, but the resurrection. Death is not something to fear because Jesus has the keys to your grave (Revelation 1:18). He will open your grave at the resurrection and you will rise to meet Him in the air.

The concept of going to heaven when we die makes a mockery of two of the most important truths in the Scriptures. The Second Coming would be pointless and the resurrection would become even more pointless. Jesus said that He will return the second time with a reward for everyone according to their works (Matthew 16:27). This would be a strange scenario if the



righteous were already enjoying their reward in heaven!

The Bible truth about the condition of the dead is wonderful news. Can you imagine if a baby died and went to a new place all alone without the mother and father? Can you imagine how sad it would be to be in heaven and look down on your loved ones hurting and being lonely? No. That is not the way the Bible portrays death. The Bible says that we rest in the grave sleeping. Then what seems like the next instant, Jesus has returned. From that moment we will live with Jesus and our loved ones in a place where there will be no more sin and sadness.



Q15

WHAT SORT OF BODY WILL BE GIVEN TO THE RIGHTEOUS AT THE SECOND COMING?

1 Corinthians 15:51-54 *For this corruptible must put on _____, and this mortal must put on _____*
(v53)

More good news! At the resurrection you will receive a new body. A new life that is perfect, both physically and spiritually. A life that will never die. Some people wonder what God will do with those whose bodies have been torn apart by a bomb, who were lost at sea, or cremated. If God can make a human out of dirt and His breath, then there is no need to worry about putting someone's life back together again. God will give us all new bodies and we will live forever!

Three Points to Remember:

- A soul is a living being – souls live and die
- At death people return to the dust of the ground while the spirit of life returns to God
- The hope for the Christian is the resurrection at the Second Coming of Jesus

The story:

Matthew was having pains in his abdomen so the doctor ordered medical tests that required a general anaesthetic. Matthew was very sensitive to the proceedings because he feared “waking up” during the operation. At the point where Matthew felt he was “going under” he shouted out to the nurses, “don’t start the operation yet. I am not fully out to it”.

More good news! At the resurrection you will receive a new body.



When the nurses told Matthew the operation had already taken place, he was shocked. As he pondered the situation, the thought crossed his mind that this experience must be like death. You don’t even realise you have been asleep and the next thing you realise you are taking part in the resurrection.

Why do you think the Bible concept of death is such good news?

Relational questions:

1. Are you fearful of dying? Why or why not?



2. Why do you think the subject of what happens at death is important from God's perspective?
3. How do you think you would cope with the grief of losing someone you loved? Who would you go to for support and what sort of support do you think you would need?

Your response:

The Bible says that death is a sleep. If you should die before Jesus returns is it your desire to be in the resurrection of eternal life?



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