

Resurrection Life of Jesus Church

THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

RLJ-1944

JOHN S. TORELL

JANUARY 7, 2024

PART 45: LIFE AFTER DEATH

JESUS' FUTURE DEATH

Most humans don't want to know the day or the time they are going to die. If I knew the exact date I was going home to heaven, it would impact my thinking and certainly distract me as I pondered what projects I should finish.

In contrast, Jesus knew the day was approaching and it had been confirmed on the Mount of Transfiguration by Moses and Elijah. Jesus wanted to prepare the disciples for the eventuality that He was going to be executed. **Matthew 17:22-25; Mark 9:30-32; Luke 9:43-45**

- ❖ Matthew recorded the apostles were mournful. **Matthew 17:23**
- ❖ Mark stated they did not understand. **Mark 9:32**
- ❖ Luke confirmed the understanding was hidden from them and they were afraid to seek clarity. **Luke 9:45**

The disciples and the people who followed Jesus only had one goal – the restoration of Israel. When Jesus tried to prepare them for His upcoming death, it made them sorrowful, dejected and disappointed. They had no concept of life after death. They did not understand the need for salvation to evade hell. **Luke 16:19-31**

SPIRITUAL DULLNESS

A baby has one basic goal set for him – eating. Then establishing a sleeping schedule is added to the mix. As the toddler grows older, he will be trained in basic skills such as walking, talking, reading, mathematics, telling time, social skills, etc. Then there are the school age years and finally he reaches adulthood which presents the choice of attending college or trade school, joining the military, or holding down a job.

The people that continue to study will do so for at least four years in a college. Some continue with a graduate study in order to become a medical doctor, attorney, etc. Typically, it takes 7-10 years complete an undergraduate degree and medical school, with an additional three years for a residency. This means that medical doctor will spend 10-13 years getting ready and will start practicing medicine around the age of 28-31.

If he is a neuro surgeon, eye doctor performing cataract surgery, or even a dentist, he will eventually be forced to stop working depending upon his physical stamina. That means that a doctor will spend 25 years in school and will work in his field for about 35 years.

The average life span in the United States is between 70-80 years. How much time do you spend educating yourself for eternity? **Matthew 6:25-34**



Many Christians have not understood the mindset of the apostles prior to the day of Pentecost. Their sole concern was whether the Kingdom of Israel would be restored like it was during the golden age of King David and King Solomon. **Acts 1:4-8**

If you do not believe in an eternal life, you are not going to prepare for it.

JUDAISM AND ETERNITY

Before the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, the Jewish people did not have any strong teaching on eternity. They simply lived for life on earth. The following excerpt shows the thought process of Judaism:

“Like other spiritual traditions, Judaism offers a range of views on the afterlife, including some parallels to the concepts of heaven and hell familiar to us from popular Western (i.e., Christian) teachings. While in traditional Jewish thought the subjects of heaven and hell were treated extensively, most modern Jewish thinkers have shied away from this topic, preferring to follow the biblical model, which focuses on life on earth.

The subject of death is treated inconsistently in the Bible, though most often it suggests that physical death is the end of life. This is the case with such central figures as Abraham, Moses, and Miriam.

There are, however, several biblical references to a place called Sheol (cf. Numbers 30, 33). It is described as a region “dark and deep,” “the Pit,” and “the Land of Forgetfulness,” where human beings descend after death. The suggestion is that in the netherworld of Sheol, the deceased, although cut off from God and humankind, live on in some shadowy state of existence.

While this vision of Sheol is rather bleak (setting precedents for later Jewish and Christian ideas of an underground hell) there is generally no concept of judgment or reward and punishment attached to it. In fact, the more pessimistic books of the Bible, such as Ecclesiastes and Job, insist that all of the dead go down to Sheol, whether good or evil, rich or poor, slave or free man (Job 3:11-19)¹

Past and current Jews do not comprehend life after death. This is why this topic is not important to them. They do not believe that a person must repent to have eternal life.

¹ <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/heaven-and-hell-in-jewish-tradition>

The concept of a suffering Messiah bringing redemption to the human race is foreign to Jews, who believe there is no need for an atonement. They think that being Jewish will take care of eternity – whatever that may be.

REALITY OF ETERNAL LIFE

When Jesus was arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane, the apostles abandoned Him and fled. **Matthew 26:56; Mark 14:50**

The two men that met Jesus on the road to Emmaus summed up the mindset of the disciples prior to the resurrection. **Luke 24:13-34**

It was not until the day of Pentecost that the apostles and 120 others finally understood the atonement and the need for people to be born again in order to attain eternal life. **Acts 2:29-41**

It wasn't until after Pentecost that the apostles recognized what Jesus meant by being "born again." **John 3:1-7**

Are you born again? Are you working on your spiritual education? What are your plans for eternity with God?

Remember, it's not so important how you begin your life after salvation, but how you finish it!

Do you have an ear to hear with?