

The Soul and Punishment of the Wicked

Following such a subject as our last lesson, concerning the state of the dead, many people ask the question, if a person dies and remains in the grave, what happens to the soul? Does the soul die too, or does the body remain in the grave and the soul go to heaven? The false teaching concerning the state of the dead has been taught for so long, people are perplexed when they hear the truth, as then it becomes even more of a mystery to them.

But in our lesson today, we want to prove by the scriptures, what a soul is. Then after this we want to show if a soul can die or not. Most people believe a soul can never die nor be destroyed. But we will see what the scriptures have to say about the subject.

Then we will study concerning the punishment of the wicked. Will they burn for millions of years in a fire? The Bible is very plain on all these points, so again there is no doubt or mystery. God wants us to understand all about death and what happens after death.

WHAT CAN A SOUL DO?

1. A soul can hear. Acts 3:22-23

The prophet in verse 22 refers to Christ. *“Every soul which will not hear that prophet...”* A soul then can hear.

2. A soul can get hungry and thirsty. Psalms 107:4-5

In these two verses, David is referring to Israel who wandered in the wilderness for forty years. But notice verse 5, *“Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them.”* From this verse it is very clear a soul can get hungry and it can get thirsty. So if there is such a place as a burning, fiery hell, what are the souls feeding on there? When you understand what a soul is, then you realize a soul can and will die, for we see people dying every day.

WHAT IS A SOUL?

Read Genesis 2:7 very carefully.

As you read this, you will notice that God did not put a soul in man, but *“man became a living soul.”* When God created man, he only put in him the breath of life. Before the breath of life, man was nothing, just a form. But after God put the breath of life in him then man became a living soul. So it takes this body of ours, with the breath of life (oxygen) to make a soul. In other words, we do not have a soul, we are a soul. The meaning of the word *soul* is, “a breathing creature.”

4. Other souls—other than man. Revelation 16:3

As you read this verse, you notice it calls the fish and the things that live in the sea souls. Why? Because they breathe oxygen the same as you and I do. Take the oxygen out of the water and the fish will die; each one is a “breathing creature.”

CAN A SOUL DIE?

5. SLEW THE SOULS. Joshua 11:10-11

This reference tells you very clearly a soul is one that breathes. It also says that Joshua slew all the souls, utterly destroying them. Does that sound as if a soul cannot die. Something is wrong with the modern-day teaching, that when a man dies the soul leaves the body and it lives on. There is no such

teaching in the bible. We are the soul the Bible is talking about. This body with the breath of life is the soul the bible is talking about. *A soul can die.*

6. **What will happen to the soul that sinneth?** Ezekiel 18:4

This tells us very plainly, “...*the soul that sinneth it shall die.*” Could anything be any plainer than that?

ONE HARD VERSE IN THE BIBLE

7. **Turn to Matthew 10:28**

Right away, people refer you to this verse and try to point out that the soul and body are different and separate. Are we going to throw out the window all the references which we have turned to (and there are many more we could turn to) that very clearly reveals that this body of ours (with breath in it) is a soul, just because of this one verse? This verse must harmonize with the others we have considered; and it will if we consider it carefully.

My Greek Interlinear which I have in my office writes Matthew 10:28 as follows: “*And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the future life: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both life and body in hell.*”

This harmonizes with the rest of the scriptures in the bible. There are no contradictions. I can kill you--I can kill your body-- but I cannot destroy your future life. God can however, and he is the one we are to fear.

This thought agrees with the Bible; in Luke 12:4-5, you will see this is true and this is what Matt. 10:28 is refers to.

DOES THE SOUL BURN FOREVER?

8. **Burn up the chaff.** Matthew 3:11-12

Who does the chaff refer to here? It refers to the sinner and it says he will be burned up. He will not burn for ever and ever, but he will be burned up. The wheat (righteous) will be gathered into his garner (kingdom), but the chaff (wicked) will be burned up. Something is wrong with the modern teaching.

9. **Will be as ashes.** Malachi 4:1, 3

The wicked will become ashes after they are burned up. They will be as stubble in the fire, and we know that stubble does not burn forever.

DO THE WICKED REMAIN IN A FIRE OF TORMENT?

10. **Everlasting punishment.** Matthew 25:41, 46

Notice it says “*everlasting fire and everlasting punishment.*” It does not say everlasting torment but everlasting punishment. Now what is the punishment of the wicked? Rom. 6:23 says “*for the wages of sin is death...*” Death is the punishment of the wicked; once they have received the second death, they will never come back to life again.

We need to be careful not to read something into a verse that is not there. We read “*everlasting punishment,*” but not “*everlasting torment.*”

11. **Everlasting destruction.** 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9

This refers to the second death and it speaks of it as everlasting destruction. After the second death they (the wicked) will be as ashes; they will never come back to life again. That will be everlasting

destruction.

12. **Example of eternal fire.** Jude7 - 2 Peter 2:6

Matt. 25:41 tells of everlasting fire. Does that mean it will always burn? As you read Jude 7, you will notice it says that Sodom and Gomorrha were destroyed by eternal fire. But is that fire still burning today? We know it isn't, but still it says that eternal fire destroyed the two cities.

Eternal fire means, that man could not extinguish it and that it burned until there was nothing left to burn on. It consumed everything; it was eternal.

Then 2 Peter 2:6 says this is an example of what will happen to the rest of the wicked when the Lord comes. They too will burn, so there will be torment, suffering, punishment, but the wicked will not burn a million years. How long they will burn, I do not know. We know when a person is burned today, it is not quick, but there is a torment, a suffering, before he dies. So the wicked are going to suffer for their sins too.

NEED NOT BE LOST

13. **Not willing any should perish.** 2 Peter 3:9

14. Converteth the sinner. James 5:20

SUMMARY

At time of death, one does not go immediately to heaven or a burning hell.
The body remains in the grave until the Resurrection. At that time, the person will be judged righteous or wicked.