

The Trip to the Afterlife

Doug Hamilton

Part 4: The Resurrection

We are now in the final lesson of the series on the “Trip to the Afterlife”. Being triune like God, we are body, soul, and spirit. The body is temporal, the soul is eternal, and the spirit of life is the energy force associated with the soul, making it live forever. When we die, the Bible teaches that we go to the place of disembodied souls, which is called *Hades*. This location has two parts, *Paradise* and *Tartarus*, and there is an impassible chasm in between, for which none can cross once entered. According to the Bible, all who have passed from this life are presently in Hades, awaiting the Judgment Day.

Jesus said in *John 5:28-29*, “*Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs shall hear His voice, 29 and shall come forth; those who did the good {deeds} to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil {deeds} to a resurrection of judgment.*” Examining some important points of the text, there is much which can be gleaned. Five points worth considering are the following.

1) “All who are in the tombs”

Jesus is making reference to those who have already died and are in the tomb. They are in the Hadean realm, either in Paradise or Tartarus. They are awaiting the moment of the resurrection. Jesus is making reference to those in Hades, the very place He went to immediately following death (Acts 2:31). This is how He became the holder of the keys of death and hades (Revelation 1:18). Jesus spoke fluent tomb for He would have to make a trip to hades to become Master of it.

2) “Shall hear His voice”

It is God who will call the dead to come to life. It is God the Father’s call which will allow the resurrect bodies from the grave on that Great Day of Judgment. *Matthew 24:36*, “*But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone.*” God the Father, the architect of the plan of salvation, will summon the call to enact salvation.

3) “Shall come forth”

Something of their remaining bodies will come forth from the earth. God, who formed something out of nothing, can certainly take the remains of the original body and resurrect it. It does not matter if they were placed in a pyramid, a plot, cremated, embalmed, lost at sea, for God owns the patent on it all.

4) “Good Deeds” and “Evil Deeds”

There is a connection to the outcome from the lost and saved to their previous live. They were either the doers of good deeds or evil deeds. Jesus mentioned this connection in *Luke 16:25*, “*remember that during your life you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus bad things; but now he is being comforted here, and you are in agony.*”

5) “Resurrection of Life” and “Resurrection of Judgment”

The core focus of Jesus’ mission pertained to the resurrection. *John 6:40*, “*For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.*” He was confirmed the Son of God with power through the resurrection from the dead (Romans 1:5). The message of Jesus’ resurrection was taught in the gospel (Acts 17:2-3). He has supreme power over the resurrection from the dead (Rev 1:18). This is the primary end-goal of the Christian. *Philippians 3:10-11*, *that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; ¹¹ in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.*

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To paraphrase, all the dead will be called out of the grave in one form or another. Based on the life they lived prior to passing will directly impact their final destination in the resurrection. Using this as the foundation for lesson 4.

Two Type of People Resurrected

All who have died will be called forth during the resurrection of judgment, from both sides of hadean realm. There will be a resurrection of the saints, both from the Old and New Testament a resurrection of the lost.

- Acts 24:15, having a hope in God, which these men cherish themselves, that there shall certainly be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked.
- 1 Thessalonians 4:14, For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep.
- Isaiah 26:19, Your dead shall live; their bodies shall rise. You who dwell in the dust, awake and sing for joy! For your dew is a dew of light, and the earth will give birth to the dead.
- Psalm 89:40, What man can live and never see death? Who can deliver his soul from the power of Sheol? Selah
- Hebrews 11:35, Women received {back} their dead by resurrection; and others were tortured, not accepting their release, in order that they might obtain a better resurrection;

New Body for All

The Saints

Paul asked in *1 Corinthians 15:35*, *But someone will say, "How are the dead raised? And with what kind of body do they come?"* Those who are saved by Christ and have passed will receive a new body for their souls to reembody with. This is well borne out in the Scripture.

- Philippians 3:21, who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.
- Romans 8:11, But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you.
- Revelation 21:4, and He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there shall no longer be {any} death; there shall no longer be {any} mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away."

More details of the boy-restoration plan of God for the deceased saints is revealed *1 Corinthians 15:42-44*, *"So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown a perishable body, it is raised can imperishable body; 43 it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; 44 it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body."* Whatever this body is, we know it is imperishable (not subject to decay), it is glorious, and it is spiritual in nature.

The Apostle John wrote in *1 John 3:2*, *Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we shall be. We know that, when He appears, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is.* We shall have a body like Jesus. What kind of body did Jesus have post-resurrection? It had the appearance of flesh (John 20:20), maintaining semblance to the earthly body ((John 20:20) and the ability to

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eat (Luke 24:30-33). Yet, it had supernatural qualities like appearing before people (Luke 24:15), walking through walls (Luke 24:36; John 20:19) and not subject to dying again 1 Cor 15:20, 35). *John 11:25-26, Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me shall live even if he dies, 26 and everyone who lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?"*

The "Aints"

The lost also receive a body, but not for rejoicing in salvation, but tormenting in judgement. The lost are resurrected for the purpose of punishing them with the second death, the Lake of Fire.

- Revelation 2:11, 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death.'
- Revelation 20:6, Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years.
- Revelation 20:14-15, And death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. ¹⁵ And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.
- II Thessalonians 1:9-10, Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; ¹⁰ When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.
- 1 Corinthians 6:9-10, Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, ¹⁰ nor thieves, nor *the* covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God."

What about those who are alive during the resurrection and Great Day of Judgment?

This is what made the whole personal sacrifice for the Christian worthwhile, the new body! The Bible teaches us in me of the following concerning this.

- 1 Corinthians 15:51-54, Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, ⁵² in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. ⁵³ For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. ⁵⁴ But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory."

Those who are dead will be the first to get the new body, then the saints who are still alive will be changed and join the others to spend eternity with Jesus. I am persuaded that for the living, their old body instantaneously dies and is changed in a "twinkling of an eye." *1 Thessalonians 4:16-17, For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of {the} archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. 17 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.*

Standing Before the Judgment Seat of God

We seem to have a mindset in the church that we will not be judged. To a certain extent that is true, but not completely. Christians are presented for judgment, but "passed over" because of the blood of Christ. Jesus is our Passover.

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- Matthew 25:32-33, 32-33, "All the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left."
- Matthew 25:46, "And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."
- 1 Peter 4:17, For {it is} time for judgment to begin with the household of God; and if {it begins} with us first, what {will be} the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God?
- Revelation 20:12, And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is {the book} of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds.

For Christians, It Will Be Glorious.

For Christians, heaven will be the perfect existence among a perfect God and paid for by a perfect Savior. Everything about heaven will be gloriously perfect.

- Revelation 21:2, And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband.
- Revelation 21:3, ...and He shall dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be among them,
- Revelation 21:4, "...and He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there shall no longer be {any} death; there shall no longer be {any} mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away."
- Revelation 21:12, It had a great and high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels; and names {were} written on them, which are {those} of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel.
- Revelation 21:23-24, And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine upon it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp {is} the Lamb. ²⁴ And the nations shall walk by its light, and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory into it.
- Revelation 22:1-2, And he showed me a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb, ² in the middle of its street. And on either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve {kinds of} fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

The Christians will become a living doxology to God for eternity.

There is not time for speculation on what heaven will be like, for that is at best to what we can expect. Most of what the Bible says about heaven and hell is brought forth in figurative language to capture the core essence of antithetical comparison between the two.

More important is what the core purpose of heaven is for the saint would be a better focus. What is the job description of the Christian? We are to glorify Him! We become a living doxology of eternal praise for God! To best understand, a doxology is an ascending

- Matthew 6:13, ...For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.'
- Romans 11:36, For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him {be} the glory forever. Amen.
- Romans 16:27, to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be the glory forever. Amen.
- Philemon 4:20, Now to our God and Father {be} the glory forever and ever. Amen.
- Ephesians 3:21, to Him {be} the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.

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- 1 Timothy 1:17, Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, {be} honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.
- 1 Timothy 6:16, who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light; whom no man has seen or can see. To Him {be} honor and eternal dominion! Amen.
- 2 Timothy 4:18, The Lord will deliver me from every evil deed, and will bring me safely to His heavenly kingdom; to Him {be} the glory forever and ever. Amen.
- Hebrews 13:21, equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom {be} the glory forever and ever. Amen.
- 1 Peter 4:11, Whoever speaks, {let him speak,} as it were, the utterances of God; whoever serves, {let him do so} as by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.
- 1 Peter 5:11, To Him {be} dominion forever and ever. Amen.
- 2 Peter 3:18, but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him {be} the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.
- Jude 25 to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, {be} glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.
- Revelation 22:20-21, He who testifies to these things says, "Yes, I am coming quickly." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus. ²¹ The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen.

Closing Story: God Always Has the Final Word.

Lady Anne Grimston was a wealthy woman born to nobility in the late 1600s. She married a Baron and planned to have a long and happy life. Repeated tragedy struck not long after. Both of her children died at a very young age. Then her older husband died at age 57, eliminating all chance of hereditary title. She was devastated and what little faith she had in God was completely gone.

In her life as an unbeliever, she could not tolerate Christian teachings. She most hated the doctrine of resurrection. Her hate of this Christian teaching was so great, that she once remarked, "*I shall not continue to live. It is as unlikely that I shall continue to live as that a tree will grow out of my body. If, indeed, there is life hereafter, trees will render asunder my tomb.*" She died at age 30 in 1713, leaving instructions to be placed in a marble burial vault with a heavy granite lid place atop. Attached to each corner of the lid were iron chains, anchored to blocks of stone to further keep it closed. The lid was inscribed with the following:

THIS BURIAL PLACE, PURCHASED TO ALL ETERNITY, MUST NEVER BE OPENED

Even in death she was adamant about proving the doctrine of resurrection false. Jesus said in *John 12:24*, "*Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.*" With that in mind, a small tree spouted out of the ground and began to expand its root system. One of these roots worked its way under the heavy granite vault lid and began to lift it. Over the years the problem became worse that the grounds keeper had to cut everything back and place an iron fence around it. More years went by, the roots came back, worked under the vault lid, slowly lifting it, stretching the chains and finally breaking them.

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If you were to go to the site today, growing up from the very heart of her tomb, is one of the largest trees in England. She denied a resurrection, giving it the odds of actually having a tree growing out of her body. It looks like God had the final word concerning His promised resurrection!

You may not be British nobility, but if you're a born-again believer in Jesus Christ, then your body is more than the fleshy mortal consequence of biology. If you are a Christian in the genuine spiritual sense of the word, then your body will not just be a corpse; it will be a seed. So also is the resurrection of the dead. *The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory* (1 Corinthians 15: 42-43).



Lady Grimston's grave in 2018.