

To be or Not to be

Aucune traduction disponible Some people believe that death is an unconscious state, a dark place of "not-being", where our souls are either lost in some celestial vacuum or remain inert. The Scriptures speak otherwise, assuring us that we will indeed have conscious awareness after our soul leaves our body.

The Scriptures speak of Abraham as being gathered to his people (Genesis 25:8), meaning that in his death, Abraham would be joining a company of people who preceded him.

“Then Abraham breathed his last and died in a good old age, an old man and full of years, and was gathered to his people.” The fact that one goes to join his fathers heavily implies that soul consciousness continues even after physical death. Another evidence of the conscious awareness of the soul is found in the Book of Job where Job himself asks the age-old question: If a man die, shall he live again? And he answers this is in Job 19:25-26: “But as for me I know that my Redeemer lives… after my skin, even this body, is destroyed, Then without my flesh shall I see God.” Job had the assurance that even though his physical body will eventually go into physical death, he is going to God, an evidence of the soul's conscious immortality.

The Scriptures do not speak of the annihilation of the soul. Rather, there is a longing, a pining nostalgia, a desire to be at home with the Lord. Job was under heavy testing and expressed a desire to leave this world with all its pain, but he believed in the resurrection of the dead and believed he would one day see God.

Likewise, our beloved King David was inspired with the same understanding when he said in Psalm 17:15 : As for me, I will see Your face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake in Your likeness. David expressed a deep faith that the soul will still be conscious and in fellowship with God even after death. This is also taught in Psalm 73:23-25 where Asaph says: Nevertheless I am continually with You; You hold me by my right hand. You will guide me with Your counsel, And afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but You? And there is none upon earth that I desire besides You. Even upon death Asaph saw himself as being with God and conscious.

Conscious immortality is for all souls, those which have found peace with the Lord and those which have not. Daniel 12 : 2-3 explains: And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, Some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting contempt.

While the souls of both the righteous and the unrighteous will rise again, will the souls of the unrighteous have consciousness as well? Isaiah 14:9-11 answers this for us: Sheol from beneath is excited about you, To meet you at your coming; It stirs up the dead for you, All the chief ones of the earth; It has raised up from their thrones All the kings of the nations. They all shall speak and say to you: `Have you also become as weak as we? Have you become like us? Your pomp is brought down to Sheol, And the sound of your stringed instruments; The

maggot is spread under you, And worms cover you.'. In this passage, the soul of the king of Babylon enters into the Hell section of Sheol itself, and all the souls that preceded him in Hell suddenly rise in astonishment as they see this one also entering the domains of Hell. They are able to ask him questions and carry on a conversation. So it should not be missed that these dead ones are portrayed as being conscious.

In the New Testament, conscious awareness after death is taught by Luke 16:19-31 in the story of the rich man and Lazarus. Though it is frequently called "The Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus," this is incorrect. Luke does not say that it is a parable nor does Yeshua (Jesus) begin that story as He often did by saying, "Learn a parable." Parables do not have names like Lazarus and Abraham. This is a true story. Notice that, after the rich man died and after Lazarus died, both of these men were conscious. Furthermore, someone else is mentioned who had also died centuries earlier, Abraham. Abraham and the rich man can carry on a conversation; they are clearly conscious although, physically, they have died. It is important to note that all three people, Lazarus, the rich man and Abraham were all conscious and in conversation with each another. The story of the rich man and Lazarus, then, is another evidence for the teaching of the Doctrine of Immortality and conscious awareness of the soul.

There are three benefits of the Doctrine of Immortality. Immortality provides us the hope of future joy according to Philippians 1:23-24: But I am hard-pressed from both directions, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for that is very much better, yet to remain on in the flesh is more necessary for your sake. In this passage, Paul faced the possibility of physical death, but that gave him the hope of future joy, knowing that upon separation from the body, he is going to be in a conscious, continuous fellowship with the Lord.

The second benefit of the Doctrine of Immortality is the awareness that believers are only temporary residents in this life according to Philippians 3:20: For our citizenship is in heaven; whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.. The believer's citizenship is in heaven. What that means practically is that all trials and tribulations in this life do not need to be taken to the point of defeat, despair or depression. But believers can look upon it and say, "This, too, will pass, I am only a temporary resident on this earth, in this land. I will some day know the full joy of the Lord."

The third benefit of the Doctrine of Immortality is that immortality provides us our motivation for living righteous, Spirit-filled, sanctified lives. A person who does not have the real, living hope of immortality struggles to make the best he can out of life right here. The unsaved struggle and strive, constantly reaching out for those higher standards of living because they do not have the hope of eternal immortality in their hearts. They do not believe in immortality, and because they do not believe in immortality, they try to get the best they can in this life. They constantly struggle with materialism.