



What happens when you die?



It's a question that has crossed everyone's mind, because death happens to everyone, regardless of age, race, gender, religion, or status.



If you ask people what they think happens when we die you will find a significant amount of confusion.



Most people get their view of the after-life from Hollywood.



Don't laugh!



A lot of people base their beliefs on TV and movies.



So what does the Bible say?



The Bible describes three different deaths...

#1 Spiritual death,

#2 Physical death, &

#3 Eternal death.

#1 Spiritual death...

➡ Spiritual death can be defined as man separated from God.

➡ It is the spiritual state that all of mankind are born into.



Why?



When Adam chose to disobey God ([Genesis 3](#))...



His nature became sinful &



He became spiritually dead.



After Adam sinned...



He could no longer have unhindered access to God, as he had enjoyed before he sinned because God, is a perfect and holy God who cannot abide, tolerate, or even look upon sin.



Adam's sin not only effected him...



But it also effected and effects all of his descendants.



Mankind, therefore, is born spiritually dead.

 **Romans 5:12** says...

"Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned"

 **Romans 3:23** says...

"for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God"

 **Ephesians 2:1** says...

"And you were dead in your trespasses and sins"

 **Proverbs 20:9** says...

"Indeed, there is not a righteous man on earth who continually does good and who never sins."



It should also be noted that...



God does not want mankind to be separated from Him.



2nd Peter 3:9 says...

"The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance."



God is a merciful, loving and gracious God.



Due to God's love, He told Adam and Eve in **Genesis 3:15** that He would one day send a Redeemer who would pay the penalty for sin, and make it possible for mankind to once again have unhindered access & communion with Him.



The hope of the future Redeemer is what Adam & Eve, & the other Old Testament saints put their faith in to save them.



For example in **Genesis 15:6** and **Romans 4:3**, the Bible tells us that because Abraham had faith in the Lord, this belief was credited to him as righteousness.



Genesis 15:6...
Abram believed the LORD, and the LORD counted him as righteous because of his faith.



Romans 4:3...
For what does the Scripture say?
"ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS CREDITED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS."



In **Genesis 3:21**, the Bible tells us that God also made garments from the skin of animals to cover Adam & Eve's nakedness and to serve as reminder of God's promise to send a Redeemer.



These animal skin garments also serve as a type of how Christ would one day come, and die for mankind's sins, and cover us in His holy righteousness so we could be made, once again, fit for God's presence.



We see in **Genesis 4** how God also instructed Cain & Able to bring a blood sacrifice to the Lord. This blood sacrifice showed that sin had to be punished, and God would one day send a substitute to take our place, to pay for our sins, and to redeem mankind once and for all for all mankind's sins.



The Apostle Paul tells us in **Philippians 2:6-8** & **Romans 6:23**, that God kept His promise and He sent His Son, Jesus Christ to willingly come, and pay the penalty for the sin of all of mankind.



Whoever believes through faith that Christ died in their place for their sins, and places their faith in Jesus Christ to save them from their sins, can and will be saved from spiritual death (**John 3:15-18**) and eternal death.



Philippians 2:6-8...

"Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. ⁸ Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross."



Romans 6:23...

"For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

#2 Physical death...



Adam's first sin also brought physical death to all of mankind.



Before Adam sinned...



God created the human body to have the ability to live forever.



Now, with sin, the body experiences decay where ultimately the body's metabolic processes will be overcome and eventually return to dust from which it was originally made (**Genesis 2:7**).



It is important to understand that...



Physical death does not bring an end to a person's existence.



It merely brings an end to the physical body.



Physical death is something that effects both believer & unbeliever.



Although, Jesus has paid the penalty for sin, and the believer has placed their faith in Christ alone for salvation the believer must still experience physical death, because with sin entering the creation, physical death has become a condition of human existence.



The Apostle John tells us in [Revelation 21](#) that one day, when God creates the new heaven and new earth, there will no longer be any kind of death. Although the believer must face physical death, they can take comfort in the fact that physical death will bring them into the unhindered presence of God ([Philippians 1:20-23](#)).

#3 Eternal death...



Adam's sin also brought eternal death to mankind.



The Apostle John calls eternal death...

➡ The second death in [Revelation 20:11-15](#).



Revelation 20:11-15

¹¹ Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them.

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. ¹³ And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of *them* according to their deeds. ¹⁴ Then 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.



This eternal, or second death...



Is an eternal separation from God in the Lake of Fire from which there is no escape and no relief from the pain and suffering that will be experienced there.



Unbelievers will be cast into the Lake of Fire...

➡ After they appear before Christ at the great white throne judgment.

➡ At this final judgment, unbelievers will be judged according to their deeds, and because of their unbelief their names will not be found in the book of life, and they will be cast for eternity into the lake of fire. (See [Revelation 21:8](#))



Revelation 21:8...

"But for the cowardly & unbelieving & abominable and murderers and immoral persons & sorcerers & idolaters & all liars, their part *will be* in the lake that burns with fire & brimstone, which is the second death."



So what happens when we die?



Well it depends...



When believers die...



Their soul/spirit immediately goes to be with the Lord in heaven.



2nd Corinthians 5:6-8 says...

"⁶ Therefore, being always of good courage, and knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord—⁷ for we walk by faith, not by sight—⁸ we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord." (See also Philippians 1:23)



Their physical bodies remains in the grave "sleeping".



At the rapture, the believer's physical body is resurrected, glorified, and then reunited with the soul/spirit for eternity.



1st Corinthians 15:50-54 says...

"⁵⁰ Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. ⁵¹ Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will 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 will 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."



1st Thessalonians 4:13-17 says...

"¹³ But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. ¹⁴ For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. ¹⁵ For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶ 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 will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord."

⚙️ When unbelievers die...

- ! Their soul/spirit goes immediately to a temporary holding place, to await their final resurrection, & judgment.

📖 **Revelation 20:11-15** says...

"¹¹ Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. 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. ¹³ And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of *them* according to their deeds. ¹⁴ Then 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." (See also Luke 16:22-23)

- ! So all the unbelieving dead will be...

- ➡ Resurrected,
- ➡ Judged at the great white throne,
- ➡ And then being cast into the lake of fire.

💡 Unbelievers, then...

- ✗ Are not sent to hell (the lake of fire) immediately after death
- ✓ But rather they stay in a temporary realm of judgment.

💡 Even though...

- ✗ Unbelievers are not instantly sent to the lake of fire
- ✓ Their immediate fate after death is not a pleasant one
(See Luke 16:24)



Therefore, after death...

- ➡ A person either resides in heaven or in a "temporary" hell.

i At the Great White Throne Judgment...

- ✗ A person's eternal destiny will not change.
- ✓ But the "location" of that eternal destiny is what changes.

i Believers will ultimately be granted entrance...

- ✓ Into the new heavens & new earth (Revelation 21:1).

i Unbelievers will ultimately be sent...

- ✓ To the lake of fire (Revelation 20:11-15).



People's eternal destination is based entirely on whether or not they had trusted by faith in Jesus Christ alone for salvation in this earthly life (Matthew 25:46 + John 3:36).

