

The Soul is Body and Spirit

Hebrews 4:12 says, "The word of God... **piercing even to dividing soul and spirit.**" **1 Thessalonians 5:23** says, "May the very God of peace sanctify you wholly, and... **your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.**" Part of God's promise is that we will exist under God's protection until the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. We will exist beyond this point, but the danger to our bodies until then is because Satan will try his hardest against us until God removes this threat.

God made Adam's body, and after doing so, He inhaled or breathed the air of life into it. Currently, there are Bible scholars who have different views on the soul. We can consider "the soul" to be the package or container of the person. (**Matthew 22:37-39**) The Bible speaks of different parts of a person, and it is difficult to distinguish whether these parts are completely separate, or whether one comes to light in a situation but is not yet entirely distinct from the physical body, or is merely a member.

Part is physical, part is spiritual. The Bible speaks of different parts of a person physically, of their body with its various members, and it also speaks of the person as something spiritual. The spirit is the person's will. Their moral character affects their actions. This character resides in their soul. The soul and the spirit act similarly. They both experience depression (**Genesis 41:8; Psalm 42:6**); they are troubled (**John 12:27; 13:21**); they are connected with death (**Matthew 20:28; 27:50**). Both are seen in heaven (**Hebrews 12:23; Revelation 6:9**), and they glorify God (**Luke 1:46-47**).

Death is referred to as the giving up of one's soul (**Genesis 35:18; 1 Kings 17:21; Acts 15:26**) or the departure of the spirit (**Psalm 31:5; Luke 23:46; Acts 7:59**). Sometimes the dead are called "souls" (**Revelation 6:9; 20:4**), and sometimes spirits (**Hebrews 12:23; 1 Peter 3:19**).

The Jehovah's Witnesses say that Jesus cannot be God. Their logic is that Jesus was created and cannot be God, but rather that he gained immortality after completing his mission.

They deny eternal punishment in Hell. Because they deny the immortality of the human soul, they also deny the concept of eternal punishment, since no one exists after physical death.

Souls are People

The Bible uses the word soul in different ways, generally referring to people. For example, in **1 Peter 3:20**, eight souls were saved. The king of Sodom said to Abraham, "Give me the people (souls), and take the goods for yourself." **Genesis 14:21; Acts 2:41; 27:37; James 5:19-20; 1 Peter 1:9; Proverbs 25:25; Exodus 31:14; Leviticus 19:8; Genesis 12:5; 3:7.** In these verses, the translators used the word "persons" for the word "soul" in Greek and Hebrew.

God gives us an eternal soul

Genesis 2:7 And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. We must understand that there are at least two parts to the human being: the physical and the spiritual.

Acts 7:59 And they stoned Stephen calling upon God saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Stephen went up to be with God after his death. **John 6:40** And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son and believeth on him should have everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day. **2 Corinthians 5:6-8** Therefore we are always confident, **knowing that whilst we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord.** **7** (For we walk by faith, not by sight); **8** We are confident, I say, and **willing rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.** Paul understood that at the moment of death, as a saved person, he would continue to live, but in the presence of Jesus Christ, the Savior forever. He expresses the same concept again in **Philippians 1:22** But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot not. **23** For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ: which is far better: **24** Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you." We cannot waver on this point. The saved person is alive in their body on earth, and upon dying, continues to exist afterward. The saved person who has died is with the Lord Jesus Christ in heaven.

The Dead Live On

Luke 20:37 Now that the dead are raised, even Moses shewed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. **38** **For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him.** God describes himself as the God of the living. This specifically refers to those who have died in Christ and continue to live in eternity. He mentions

three of the Old Testament patriarchs, who were already dead when Jesus said this.

Hebrews 9:27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment. If we cease to exist at our death, there will be no sense in God judging us. Likewise, the concept of judgment is illogical if God judges some lives to have been bad and others good, but after making this determination, both cease to exist. (**Ecclesiastes 12:7** speaks of death and that the spirit of man returns to God for this judgment.)

Luke 23:43 And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise. The thief next to Jesus on the cross who was saved had Jesus' promise of being with him this very day after his death.

Mark 9:4 And there appeared unto them Elias with Moses: and they were talking with Jesus. The simple observation is that if Jesus spoke with Elijah and Moses during this event in his life, they continue to live in heaven after his death. Denying this leads to many unbiblical fables and fabrications to explain it.

Lazarus and the Rich Man

Luke 16:19 There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: **20** And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, **21** And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. **22** And **it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; 23** And **in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.** The point is that Jesus used this teaching to clarify a continued existence after each person's physical death. In this existence, there are only two options: hell or heaven. The decision between the two depends on the decisions the individual has made about receiving the Savior, Jesus Christ, in their life on earth.

Jesus also used the threat of punishment in hell after death as motivation for individuals to seek God as their Savior. **Matthew 18:8** "wherefore If thy hand or thy foot offend thee, and cast it from thee: It is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed rather than having two hands or two feet **to be cast into everlasting fire.**" If the Bible taught annihilation at death, this teaching of Jesus would be illogical and not the truth of God. Punishment after death is eternal, forever. **Revelation 20:10** They "shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."

The Saints in Heaven

Revelation 6:9 And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: **10** And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? **11** And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled. Then John saw heaven with the living martyrs for Christ. These were killed for their faith. But they still are living in heaven.

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: **17** Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. **so we will always be with the Lord.** Always with the Lord Jesus.

There is a Resurrection

The Jehovah's Witnesses believe in many resurrections, with these dead people "not existing" between their death and their resurrection.

John 5:28 Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, **29** And shall come forth: they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

Actually, there are two resurrections: one for those who have died and are in hell and another for those who have died and are in heaven. But it is clear that after death, each person continues their existence. **Matthew 25:31-46** presents the Lord separating the wicked from the righteous in a final judgment. Why? Because the wicked will suffer, and the righteous will receive God's rewards and restoration for the evil done to them. **1 Corinthians 15:52** also speaks of the resurrection of the saved.

The Unconverted in Hell

Matthew 25:41 Then shall he say unto them on left hand, 'Depart from me, ye cursed, **into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.**' The Bible clearly states that the unconverted will continue to "live" (exist) in a death described as the second death, that is, an existence worse than death. There is no annihilation

or ceasing to exist, but rather a truly terrible existence. It also describes salvation as eternal life.

Matthew 25:46 And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal. (**Revelation 14:10-11**) The fact that they will always continue to exist is part of the existence of both, the saved and the unconverted.

Revelation 14:10-11 The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and **he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone** in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: **11** And **the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever:** and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. Their torment will be constant forever. There is no end to it. This is the opposite of annihilation. (See **Romans 2:8-9**; **Matthew 13:41-42**; **Luke 16:24**)

It is absolutely certain that God will punish the wicked in eternity. But according to their degree of wickedness, God will punish some more than others. This is why **Matthew 16:27** refers to the judgment of our works. (The saved will receive no punishment in heaven, but rewards, and also according to their works.) So Jesus threatened Israel with being punished worse than Sodom (**Matthew 11:24**).

They believe that Annihilation is for Satan

The Jehovah's Witnesses believe that even Satan will cease to exist. **Revelation 20:10** And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are; and they shall be tormented day and night **for ever and ever.** The Bible repeats a concept twice to intensify it. Forever and ever means for never ending eternity.

The false doctrine of annihilation causes human beings to live without respecting God as their Judge, "...If the dead rise not, let us eat and drink, for to morrow we die" **1 Corinthians 15:32**. They become filled with their evil desires.

Is the Soul Immortal?

By David Cox



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Matthew 10:28 And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. Jehovah's Witnesses teach that the soul is solely the physical body, and **when someone dies, they cease to exist** (this is called **annihilation**). According to them, consciousness and spirit do not continue to exist after physical death (**Luke 16** the rich man continued to exist and was tormented by a troubled conscience). They also believe that only God is immortal, and that God grants immortality to individuals who are righteous in His sight. **God is immortal, and this is best understood as eternal; He never ceases to exist, there was never a time in the past when He did not exist.** (**1 Timothy 6:16-17**; **Genesis 21:33**; **Psalms 29:10**; **45:6**; **48:14**; **90:2, 4**; **102:25-27**; **Isaiah 40:28**) Jesus is God and died but never ceased to exist, and in fact rose again, promising us the same resurrection. **1 Thessalonians 5:23** And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God **your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.** Paul spoke of the immortality of the saved in **1 Corinthians 15:53** **Death here is seen as the end of existence by the Witnesses. Only God is immortal.** But this includes the future **and the past.** He has never had a point of non-existence in the past. God is unique in this, and God has power over death and existence. **1 Corinthians 15:53** For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and **this mortal must put on immortality.** **54** So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and **this mortal shall have put on immortality,** then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.