

CrossRoads Baptist Church  
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Eternity: Heaven or Hell #2

## “Where are the Dead?”

The question of where are the dead has been a wondering question ever since man, sin and death entered into the world. Many theologians, philosophers and religiousness have studied the subject attempting to bring light to this dark subject. Let us look at the Scriptures to see where the dead are now and what are they doing?

### I. The Destination of the Dead

The Roman Catholic Church believes that there is a place called purgatory.

The Scriptures talk about heaven and hell, but never mention purgatory.

So where are the dead now?

In the Old Testament, there are many questions about their belief and understanding of the dead. The word most often translated “grave” is the Hebrew word “Sheol” used 65 times most often referring simply to “the place of the dead.”

In Luke 16 we learn there are two destinations for the dead: paradise and hell. Let’s look at those two Biblical options:.

### II. The Description of the Dead Now

#### A. Where are the Believers now?

##### 1. There are in an Intermediate State.

They are not in the Heaven as described in Revelation because that comes only after the destruction of the old earth and old heaven. Most believe they are in some type of temporary body that makes them recognizable from the earth. Lazarus was seen in Abraham’s bosom and was recognizable as Lazarus. Some believe they are just spirits without a body because Paul said in II Corinthians 5:3-4 that he wanted to be “clothed and not naked.” But most do not believe that spirits exist outside a body of some type although its not that resurrection body.

##### 2. They are conscious.

Whatever state of their body, they are fully conscious. Three times Jesus raised the dead back to life and each time he spoke to them as if they were alive (Luke 7:14; 8:54; and John 11:43). This was also true with Lazarus in Luke 16.

##### 3. They are at rest.

Death is often mentioned as sleep. Over 40 times in the Old Testament it is said that when a man died that he “slept with his fathers.”

When Lazarus died in John 11, Jesus first said, “Lazarus sleeps.” Then later Jesus said, “Lazarus is dead.”

I Thessalonians 4:13 “...concerning those who have fallen asleep.”

What does this mean?

\* This does not mean they are unconscious, but it refers to them being taken out of operation as far as earthly operations.

\* and it refers to their reference to time. Time goes by quickly when you are asleep. The sleeping have no consciousness of time.

##### 4. They are at peace and in a state of blessedness.

Psalm 116:15 “Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.” Luke 16:22 Lazarus is with Abraham at rest, and joy.

##### 5. They are with God.

The best way to describe where the believing dead are now is to say, “They are with God.”

Luke 23:43 “...today you will be with in paradise.”

Philippians 1:23 “...having a desire to depart and be with Christ...”

I Thessalonians 4:14 “God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.”

II Corinthians 5:8 “...pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.”

#### B. Where are the Non-Believers now?

According to Luke 16

1. They are alive and conscious.

2. They are separated from God. Verse 23

3. They are being punished. Verse 24

4. They are in a fixed place. Verse 26

5. They are in an incomplete state.

Hell is still waiting because hell will give up their dead for the judgment according

to Revelation 20:13.

This place is like a holding place for criminals waiting for the day of sentencing. It is a place of ruin, fire and darkness.

But it is a lie.

### **III. The Dangers of Talking with the Dead**

#### **A. Some believe we can talk with the dead.**

Many believe today they can talk to the dead and people get so caught up in their emotions and hurts that they want to tap into this. It can't be done. No one can talk to the actual dead. They may talk with spirits posing as the dead.

When they do talk with these spirits, they are always demonic and evil. Test the spirits. See if that spirit will admit that Jesus is Lord. That He is the virgin born son of Mary, lived a perfect life, died on the cross for the sins of the world, rose again the third day and is coming again to reward the saved and punish the unsaved.

Yet, King Saul talked to Samuel in I Samuel 28. Yes, he did, but it was against the will of God. I Chronicles 10:13 says that Saul sinned against God for doing this.

Let me ask why do you want to talk to a departed family member when you can talk to God?

#### **B. Some believe they have out-of-the-body experiences.**

Some say they have had out-of-the-body experiences. What about them?

Seven people in the Bible have died and returned but none of them wrote a book about it and in fact Paul said it was "unlawful" for him to speak about the things he saw.

#### **C. Some believe in reincarnation.**

The far eastern religions teach us about reincarnation and the belief that we may come back in a better state than our current.

Does the Bible that? I can prove that the Bible does not teach reincarnation. On the Mount of Transfiguration, Moses and Elijah (one who died and one who did not die) appeared about 2,000 years later after they left this world. They were still Elijah and Moses. They were still recognizable. No changes nor were they someone else.

I believe many people, especially young people, believe in reincarnation to the degree that they commit suicide in order to come back with different parents, in a different part of the world and with hopes of better circumstances.