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## Am I Immortal?

**1 Thessalonians 4:14:** (NASB) *For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus.*

Life is a precious, miraculous gift from God. Having life is a sacred charge to live fully, cleanly and in a God-honoring fashion. So, what happens when we die? Does our soul immediately go off somewhere else and continue an unending cycle of life - or do we die - literally get our lights clicked off until a time of resurrection? For most Christians, there has been for centuries, a very clearly stated answer to this question of the events after death. But, what if...? What if there was biblical evidence pointing to a different answer? Stay with us as we look into this challenging, emotional and controversial subject!

### First of all, what does it mean to be immortal?

According to the Webster's Online Dictionary, to be immortal is to be exempt from death, or exempt from oblivion. According to the dictionary, if you are exempt, it does not apply to you. So death does not apply to the immortal. New Testament: **Immortality:** Strongs #861 *aphthrsia* (af-thar-see'-ah); incorruptibility; unending existence **Immortality:** Strongs #110 *athanasia* (ath-an-as-ee'-ah); deathlessness

### Are we inherently immortal?

**Romans 2:7:** (KJV) *To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life: If you are seeking something, does it mean you already have it?*  
**1 Corinthians 15:42:** (KJV) *So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: Something corruptible can decay.*  
**1 Corinthians 15:50:** (KJV) *Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. There is a contrast shown here as well.*  
**1 Corinthians 15:53-54:** *The corruptible "puts on" unending existence (incorruptibility, immortality). Does that mean that which was corruptible already had it? It can be gained but must be "put on."*

Interestingly, Ancient Egyptian Culture was steeped in the thought of life continuing after a physical death...



### Egypt Underworld - Introduction, *National Geographic*

- *We all die and we all wonder what happens after our hearts stop beating? The ancient Egyptians believed in a very elaborate and terrifying afterlife. Struggle through a dangerous underworld...the only guide was a collection of powerful spells called the Books of the Dead. That highly developed culture had a thought that the dead were conscious.*

**Ephesians 6:24:** (KJV) *Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.* Amen. The word immortality is used here poetically, in that their love will never die, is unending and indestructible.  
**2 Timothy 1:10:** (KJV) *But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel: These things were hidden and unavailable until Jesus' sacrifice - this was something new. Through Jesus it was now attainable.*  
**1 Timothy 6:16:** (KJV) *Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen. If only Jesus has immortality...do you?*

### So, was Adam given immortality when he was created?

**Genesis 2:7:** (NASB) *Then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being. This is saying that if God created us with that natural desire, wouldn't He have given us a way to fulfill that desire? But is that a reason to say that you live on forever and ever or can God accomplish this another way?*

**Genesis 2:15-17**



### Why did God say to Adam that he would die if he disobeyed?

**Genesis 3:1-5:** *God said they would die, Satan said they wouldn't - who to believe? Adam did die - but what is death?*  
**1 Corinthians 15:42-45:** *These Scriptures show a transition for the followers of Christ:*

- Sown as something perishable - raised to an unending existence. (Implying one doesn't have that unending existence yet, but one will if a follower of Christ.)



Sown in sin - raised by God's grace through Jesus in honor. (We can't bring honor on our own because we are in a sinful state.)

Sown as a weak and frail being - raised in divine power. (These are complete opposites!)

- Sown from a physical plane of existence - raised to a spiritual plane of existence.

These Scriptures seem to be telling us: You are physical human beings. What you will be raised to is something entirely different from what you are. So, from the definitions of immortality and the description of Adam's fate, does it seem like Adam was mortal or immortal? We would say that he was given life, he was given humanity, but these Scriptures show that there was more than could be gained later, through Jesus. It is called "immortality." If it is something that can be obtained through Jesus, then do you already have it?

Now for a very different perspective:



**Master Path - The Immortal Human Soul, Sri Gary Olsen**

- Soul is our supreme identity, our truest of essences, it is immortal. It is a spark of the supreme deity - call it "God" if you like. It is flawless, blemish- less, pure, it knows all things and can travel to any part of the outlying parts of the universe - it can come to know itself, be itself and see itself. And all of this resides within every human being.*

This is similar to the ancient Egyptian perspective - with an unbroken life after death, there is no sleep of death in between. Death is really just an instant altered existence. We all want more than what we have in our short human life, but how does it work? Does it have to work with the concept of inborn immortality or can it work a different way?

**What is the soul of man?**

Old Testament: **Soul:** Strong's #5315 nephesh (neh'-fesh); a breathing creature

Genesis 2:7: (NASB) *Then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living **being** <5315>.*

**Does this scripture give us the formula? Body + Breath = A Living Soul**

Notice it says that man *becomes* a living soul, not that he was *given* a living soul.

**This was a prophecy of Jesus:** Isaiah 53:12: The soul/being (Jesus') can be poured out unto death as an offering/ransom for others.

**Our souls/beings can be bought back from the grave:** Psalms 49:15: This tells us that the soul comes under the power of the grave or death.

Ezekiel 18:4: *The soul that sinneth, it shall die.*



Why did Job ask the question, "If a man die, will he live again?"

The ancient Egyptian culture taught that death is not the taking away of life, it is simply the altering of life's existence.

New Testament: **Soul:** Strong's #5590 psuche, breath, the animal sentient principle only

These uses of "soul" fit exactly with the definition of a being, as defined in the Old Testament: **Man's soul/being is the man - it is not just his mind or heart or strength:** Luke 10:27: (KJV) *And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy **soul** <5590>, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself. **Jesus' soul/being sorrowed to the point of death:** Matthew 26:38: (KJV) *Then saith he unto them, my **soul** <5590> is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me. **Jesus freely offered his life/soul/being to die as a ransom:** John 15:13: (KJV) *Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his **life** <5590> for his friends. **The loss of life in death is the same as the loss of a soul in death:** Acts 27:22: (KJV) *And now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of any man's **life** <5590> among you, but of the ship. It seems like man is not given a soul, but man becomes a soul. What does it mean to die, then? We will talk about that further.****



Why does Ecclesiastes say that "...the dead know not anything?"



### So, what about animals? Do they have souls? Are they souls?

Genesis 1:20-21: (KJV) <sup>20</sup>And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving **creature <5315>** that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven. <sup>21</sup>And God created great whales, and every living **creature <5315>** that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that it was good. **Animals are called souls. The exact same word is used to describe the animals that was used to describe Adam!** Genesis 1:30: (KJV) And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is **life <5315>**, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so. Genesis 7:22: (KJV) All in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died. Genesis 9:16: (KJV) And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living **creature <5315>** of all flesh that is upon the earth. It is not only at creation, but also thousands of years later after the Flood. All of the above scriptures indicate that man and animal are of the same make-up. In both cases their lives are a result of the combination of their body and God's breath of life and in both cases they are subject to death.



Why did Ezekiel say, "the soul that sinneth, it shall die?"

So what was the difference between mankind and animals if both are described as being "souls?"

Genesis 1:26-27: (KJV) <sup>26</sup>And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. <sup>27</sup>So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. Leviticus 24:17-18: (KJV) <sup>17</sup>And he that killeth any **man <5315 and 120 - "Adam" a man>** shall surely be put to death. <sup>18</sup>And he that killeth a **beast <5315 and 929 - "a brute beast">** shall make it good; **beast <5315 only>** for **beast <5315 only>**. The Jewish law differentiated between the value of human life and that of animals, even though both are described as being a soul. Anyone who takes a human life faces death, anyone who takes an animal life must replace it.

On the Mount of Transfiguration - did Moses and Elijah really come back as spirits with Jesus? It doesn't make sense that they were literally raised from the dead, because that is what Jesus had yet to die for. We believe it was a vision of Jesus in glory with Moses and Elijah signifying the Law and the prophets and how Jesus is the central purpose for both as the ransom for all.

On the cross, did Jesus tell the thief on the cross that when the thief died he would instantly go to heaven? Luke 23:43: And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, today shalt thou be with me in paradise. Problem: Where did Jesus go that day? Did he go to paradise? No, he went into the tomb. Solution: The original Greek does not have punctuation; therefore, where to place the comma was left up to the translators. Because we know that "today" was the destination of the tomb, we believe it would read more clearly if the comma would have been correctly placed: Luke 23:43: And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee today, thou shalt be with me in paradise.

### Is death really death - and what is the resurrection for?

Genesis 2:17: (NRSV) but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall **die <4191>**.

**Die:** Strong's #4191, to die (literally or figuratively); causatively, to kill:

**Die:** Strong's #4194, to die, kill, have one executed

**These two scriptures make the point that the "man" and the "body" suffer the same fate:** 2 Kings 8:5: The dead body and the individual were intertwined - you couldn't have one without the other. The same fate of the man is the fate of the body. Job 14:14: (KJV) If a man **die <4191>**, shall he live again? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come. Ecclesiastes 10:1: (KJV) **Dead <4194>** flies cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savour: so doth a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom and honour. Psalms 6:5: (KJV) For in **death <4194>** there is no remembrance of thee: in the grave who shall give thee thanks? The same "death" applies to both flies and humans! If flies have an immortal soul, then death is not an end. Why is the same word used to describe the death of a fly and the death of a man? Psalms 115:17: There are many Psalms that indicate where there is death, there



is no activity. This is in stark contrast with what the Egyptians believed, where there is immediate activity along with a struggle to reunite the body with the soul.

Did you ever realize...the Old Testament never speaks of an afterlife. Did God not provide that information to His chosen people?

#### Why did Jesus say that his friend Lazarus was "sleeping" in death?

Romans 6:20-23: Sin brings death but the gift of God brings life. How? Through resurrection! Jesus said, *I am the resurrection and the life* in the context of raising Lazarus. Death is not an end, but it is a temporary state from which you can be released. Regardless of Christianity's viewpoints on the subject of immortality, we all agree that Jesus' intervention into the human world changed eternity and gave humanity something greater and eternal to look forward to. John 5:28-29: So there is a coming forth back to life from a state of being absent from life - death - to either a resurrection of life or a resurrection of judgment. But in both cases, they are brought back to life.

#### What about the scriptures that seem to contradict this idea?

**How do we explain this?** Genesis 25:17: (KJV) *And these are the years of the life of Ishmael, an hundred and thirty and seven years: and he gave up the ghost and died; and was gathered unto his people.* Genesis 35:29: (KJV) *And Isaac gave up the ghost, and died, and was gathered unto his people, being old and full of days: and his sons Esau and Jacob buried him. "Gathered unto his people" has several other uses. Are they going somewhere immediately in an altered state of life? The answer:* Deuteronomy 31:16: (KJV) *And the LORD said unto Moses, Behold, thou shalt sleep with thy fathers; and this people will rise up, and go a whoring after the gods of the strangers of the land, whither they go to be among them, and will forsake me, and break my covenant which I have made with them. Gathered together unto their people is a euphemism for sleeping in death.* Job 14:10-12: (KJV) <sup>10</sup>*But man dieth, and wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he? <sup>11</sup>As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up: <sup>12</sup>So man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep. Again the picture of sleeping in death is brought out.* Job 7:21: (KJV) *And why dost thou not pardon my transgression, and take away mine iniquity? for now shall I sleep in the dust; and thou shalt seek me in the morning, but I shall not be. Sleep is a very apt description of the state of what happens right after we die.*

2 Corinthians 5:8: *We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. The Apostle Paul was looking forward to being glorified in heaven. Remember earlier in the program we quoted 1 Corinthians and learned that corruption cannot inherit incorruption. So the physical body doesn't inherit a spiritual life. He was willing to leave his physical body behind and be resurrected to glory with God and Jesus.*

**What about this scripture:** Revelation 6:9-10: (KJV) <sup>9</sup>*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: <sup>10</sup>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? We believe this is a picture, used just like Jesus did with the stones crying out. Let's look at this with the kind of language being used, using the example of Jesus triumphantly entering Jerusalem and his disciples are shouting:* Luke 19:37-41: (KJV) <sup>39</sup>*And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples. <sup>40</sup>And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out. <sup>41</sup>And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it. A similar phrase is used here:* Genesis 4:10: (KJV) *And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground. Did Abel's blood actually have a voice? No, it was a figure of speech. In the Bible, we have to figure out what is figurative, literal, a parable and prophetic!*

What we want to do with a program like this is to stir your thinking up to go back to the Scriptures. Go back to the context and answer the questions. There is something very important and special about how God created man as a soul to be resurrected through the sacrifice of Jesus. Am I immortal? No, but we believe we are "resurrectable" and immortality is attainable through Jesus.

**So am I immortal...?  
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...  
Think about it...!**