

VI. What Happens To Babies When They Die?

“And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD. And Nathan said unto David, The LORD also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die. Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die. And Nathan departed unto his house. And the LORD struck the child that Uriah’s wife bare unto David, and it was very sick. David therefore besought God for the child; and David fasted, and went in, and lay all night upon the earth. And the elders of his house arose, and went to him, to raise him up from the earth: but he would not, neither did he eat bread with them. And it came to pass on the seventh day, that the child died. And the servants of David feared to tell him that the child was dead: for they said, Behold, while the child was yet alive, we spake unto him, and he would not hearken unto our voice: how will he then vex himself, if we tell him that the child is dead? But when David saw that his servants whispered, David perceived that the child was dead: therefore David said unto his servants, Is the child dead? And they said, He is dead. Then David arose from the earth, and washed, and anointed himself, and changed his apparel, and came into the house of the LORD, and worshipped: then he came to his own house; and when he required, they set bread before him, and he did eat. Then said his servants unto him, What thing is this that thou hast done? thou didst fast and weep for the child, while it was alive; but when the child was dead, thou didst rise and eat bread. And he said, While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept: for I said, Who can tell whether GOD will be gracious to me, that the child may live? But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? **I shall go to him**, but he shall not return to me.” (II Samuel 12:13-23).

It is not an injustice for God to take a baby to heaven. Heaven is described as “far better” in Philippians 1:23. In this case, the Lord decided to take the seven-day-old baby to Heaven. God is God in all His judgments.

In this life, we will never understand all of God’s ways and judgments.

“O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!” (Romans 11:33).

One thing we can learn from this story is that babies go to Heaven when they die. David concluded this story by saying, “I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.”

Where was David going when he died? He answered that question in Psalm 23:6, “Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and **I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.**”

This is the only story in the Bible that deals with this subject.

VII. What Happens To Children When They Die?

“Moreover your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, and your children, which in that day had **no knowledge between good and evil**, they shall go in thither, and unto them will I give it, and they shall possess it.” (Deuteronomy 1:39).

This verse teaches us that very young children do not have any knowledge of good and evil. When they reach the age of discernment (some have called it “the age of accountability”), they will then need to be saved from their sins.

I have heard of children being saved as young as four, five, or six years old. “And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.” (II Timothy 3:15). Only God knows where that line is for each child.

Every child is a sinner, having inherited a sinful nature from their parents. Every human being is bent toward sin. Children do not have to learn to do wrong things. They do them by nature:

“The wicked are estranged from the womb: they **go astray as soon as they be born**, speaking lies.” (Psalms 58:3).

“Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and **in sin did my mother conceive me.**” (Psalms 51:5).

“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:” (Romans 5:12).

When children go from being sinners by nature to sinners by choice, they need to be saved. Seeing none of us knows when that is, we need to train up our children right and constantly preach the gospel of Jesus Christ to them:

“Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” (Proverbs 22:6).

“Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right.” (Proverbs 20:11).

“Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.” (Matthew 18:14).

“But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.” (Mark 10:14-15).

Some children can be cursed by God or condemned forever:

“And he went up from thence unto Beth-el: and as he was going up by the way, there came forth little children out of the city, and mocked him, and said unto him, Go up, thou bald head; go up, thou bald head. And he turned back, and looked on them, and cursed them in the name of the LORD. And there came forth two she bears out of the wood, and tare forty and two children of them.” (II Kings 2:23-24).

“And I saw the dead, **small** and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.” (Revelation 20:12-15).

The word “small” (Greek: micros) means to be little in stature or prestige.

VIII. What Happens To Miscarried Or Aborted Babies?

There are twenty-five occasions in the Scriptures where a pregnant woman is described as being “with child:” seventeen times in the Old Testament and eight times in the New Testament. Here are just a few examples:

“And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Behold, thou art **with child**, and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael; because the LORD hath heard thy affliction.” (Genesis 16:11).

“As thou knowest not what is the way of the spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is **with child**: even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all.” (Ecclesiastes 11:5).

“Behold, a virgin shall be **with child**, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.” (Matthew 1:23).

Some verses tell us that God knew all about us while we are developing in the womb:

“**Before** I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and **before** thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.” (Jeremiah 1:5).

“For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchisedec met him.” (Hebrews 7:10).

“For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother’s womb. I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.” (Psalms 139:13-16).

Other verses seem to tell us that God knew us before we were conceived in the womb:

“According as he hath chosen us in him **before the foundation of the world**, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:”

“The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life **from the foundation of the world**, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.” (Revelation 17:8).

See also Jeremiah 1:5.

We have seen clearly that a child in the womb is a human being. Thus we can presume God would take unto Himself all that are miscarried or aborted. The life that God gave will return to Him. Read Ecclesiastes 3:21 and Ecclesiastes 12:7.

IX. What Happened When Old Testament Saints Died?

There is an interesting statement found on eleven occasions in the Old Testament. It speaks of one dead as being “gathered to his people.” This phrase is never used in the New Testament. Here are a few examples:

“Then **Abraham** gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; and was **gathered to his people**.” (Genesis 25:8).

“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 25:17).

“And die in the mount whither thou goest up, and be gathered unto thy people; as Aaron thy brother died in mount Hor, and was **gathered unto his people**.” (Deuteronomy 32:50).

This statement has perplexed Bible students for years. Some believe it just means that the dead body becomes the possession of the living relatives to bury where they want.

Others believe the statement refers to an afterlife reunion with loved ones.

Some of the newer versions (perversions) do not tackle this subject – they merely delete these words without any explanation.

Matthew Henry in his commentary put it, "His body was gathered to the congregation of the dead, and his soul to the congregation of the blessed."

Where was this gathering of Old Testament saints? It was to the place referred to by Christ in Luke 16:19-31. As you read it, notice the six references to Abraham:

"There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. 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; And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence. Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." (Luke 16:19-31).

This word hell comes from "hades" which means "the place of departed souls." It appears to be in two compartments within eyesight of each other. One for the damned, a place of torment. The other for the blessed, a place of comfort.

The Old Testament saints were considered "captives" of that place within the heart of the earth until Jesus came and led them out at His resurrection.

"Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." (Acts 2:27).

"He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption." (Acts 2:31).

"For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." (Matthew 12:40).

"Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.)" (Ephesians 4:8-10).

X. What Happened When Old Testament Sinners Died?

People in the Old Testament days were either converted or unconverted (see Psalm 51:13).

The truths that we saw under the last point also apply here. These departed souls also go into Hades (hell) but into the place of torment where the Rich Man was (see Luke 16:19-31 again).

The Old Testament saints were resurrected when Jesus rose from the grave. They ascended into heaven. Those that were sinners remained in the same place. There is no reference to them ever coming out.