

XIII. What Is The Second Death?

The second death is mentioned in three texts of the Book of Revelation:

“He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.” (Revelation 2:11).

“Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.” (Revelation 20:6).

“And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. 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 20:11-15).

The first death is a physical death, when the spirit leaves the body. The second death is an eternal death. A spiritual death. Being banished forever from the presence of God in an eternal lake of fire. Hell will be cast into the lake of Fire. Hence, hell is like a holding center. Then the guilty go to judgment, are sentenced, then go to the lake of fire which is like a prison. A permanent abode.

“Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;” (II Thessalonians 1:6-9).

This is a very fearful thing and is repulsive to human nature. No one of us comes close to understanding how utterly holy God is, and how great His hatred is toward sin and rebellion. We should make an effort to understand this:

“Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.” (II Corinthians 5:11).

When we begin to understand how holy and perfect God is it makes us wonder how He could let any of us into Heaven!

“And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?” (I Peter 4:18).

Praise the Lord for Jesus Christ our Saviour! We who are saved need not fear the second death. Again:

“Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.” (Revelation 20:6).

XIV. What About Reincarnation?

The word reincarnation comes from the prefix “re” which means “again, anew or once more,” and the word “incarnate” which means “to give a new body to.” Reincarnation is a doctrine taught in Hinduism, Brahmanism, Buddhism, and other “new-age” religions. It is a teaching that life continues to cycle in the form of many different bodies and many different deaths. The transmigration of souls from lower to higher and back and forth is part of their belief. For instance, a fly may have once been a human or a cow or a skunk, etc.

In some parts of the world, this belief has led to very cruel treatment of human beings. A caste system of lepers and poor have been refused charity and medical help because they either have to pay for their sins in some past life or will have to suffer again in their next life. Other times people have starved, worshipping animals that could have been eaten for food. Some believe that a cow may have been a relative from a past life.

The Bible says otherwise, “And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:” (Hebrews 9:27). We only die once!

Jesus taught and showed us what happens when people die “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.” (Luke 16:22-23).

There is no Biblical grounds for reincarnation.

XV. Is There Another Chance After Death?

Can a person be saved after death? Is there a second chance? Is there a purgatory? Is there a baptism for the dead?

There is no chance after death for a person to change their eternal direction. We have seen already in our study that the Scriptures teach a person goes either to heaven or to hell immediately at death (the departure of the soul and spirit from the body.)

What about purgatory? There is no place in the Bible or the Catholic Bible that speaks about purgatory (the place

of purging.) Purgatory is a man-made doctrine that teaches one should suffer for sins for a time until purged and fit for heaven. This can be assisted by living friends and relatives paying for “masses” to be said (Indulgences). None of this is in the Bible.

Some times I Corinthians 3:13-15 is used to teach purgatory. But what does the whole text in context say?

“For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man’s **work** shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man’s **work** of what sort it is. If any man’s **work** abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man’s **work** shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.” (I Corinthians 3:11-15).

The key is the word “**work**.” This is a picture of a believer’s judgment in heaven to determine what rewards he will receive. It is not the trial of their *body* by fire but the trial of a person’s *work* by fire. If a man’s work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss. There will be loss of rewards in heaven, but not the loss of salvation.

What about the baptism of the dead? Some religions teach that a living person can be baptized for a dead person whether relative or friend of the past. This helps to procure that person’s salvation though dead. This is especially practiced in Mormonism. Mormonism has the most complete tables of genealogies because of this. One Mormon lady has been baptized over three hundred times for dead people.

First, baptism does not save a person’s soul. The Apostle Paul said in I Corinthians 1:17, “For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.” (Note: This is the last time the word “baptize” is found in the Bible.)

We are saved by believing on the Lord Jesus Christ. At that very moment we are baptized by Jesus Christ with the Holy Spirit into the body of Christ.

“I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.” (Mark 1:8).

“John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire:” (Luke 3:16).

“For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.” (I Corinthians 12:13).

Do not confuse water baptism with Holy Spirit baptism. This is the presence of the Holy Spirit coming on a person at salvation. Jesus performs this baptism.

“But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.” (Romans 8:9).

“Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?” (I Corinthians 3:16).

What then is the baptism of the dead? The baptism of the dead was a false doctrine already invented in Paul’s day to pervert the doctrine of baptism. Paul mentioned this false practice in I Corinthians 15:29: “Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?” The entire chapter of I Corinthians 15 is in defense of the doctrine of the resurrection, both Christ’s and ours.

There were those who denied that there even was a resurrection (Matthew 22:23) and those who were not sure (I Corinthians 15:35). To them, Paul was saying, “Why do you baptize for the dead then? What does it matter?” He was using a false doctrine to question a contradiction in their beliefs.

It might be like saying to someone who does not believe in hell: “Why did you have your babies baptized?” I am not promoting baby baptism, but am using their false practice to challenge their belief that there is no hell.

There are no more chances to be saved after death to be saved. We must try to persuade them in this life to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Purgatory and baptizing for the dead are false. They do not give a person another chance.

“Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.” (II Corinthians 5:11).

“Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.” (Acts 26:28).

“How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him;” (Hebrews 2:3).

XVI. What about Limbo?

Limbo is a teaching in some churches that describes the abode of just souls kept from heaven through circumstance, such as a lack of baptism. It is especially considered the place where unbaptized babies go. Limbo is actually from a medieval Latin word which means “the region on the border of hell.”

Again, as with purgatory and the baptism of the dead, there is not a shred of evidence of its existence in the scriptures. This is a man-made doctrine. It was never mentioned by Jesus Christ or any of his apostles.

To review what happens to babies that die, please see point number VI of this study.