

Will You Go to Heaven When You Die?

- **Luke 7:11–16**

Context: Jesus comes to Nain, where a widow’s only son has just died, and He brings him back to life—right in the middle of the funeral procession!
The point: Christ is able to restore life after death.
- **Genesis 3:1–4**

Context: Satan (incarnating the serpent at the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the Garden of Eden) deceives Eve by “preaching” the very first “sermon” on the false doctrine of the immortality of the soul. God had instructed Adam and Eve to shun this one forbidden place, or the result would be loss of immortality (their immortality being conditional upon obedience); Satan raises doubt in Eve’s mind as to God’s motives, implying that God doesn’t want the pair to share in His Own immortality.
The point: With the entrance of sin (disobedience), the human soul is mortal and does not live on after death.
- **Acts 2:29, 34**

Context: In Peter’s address to the crowd on the Day of Pentecost, he speaks of the patriarch King David as being dead and buried in a tomb prominently situated there in Jerusalem, and adds that David has not yet ascended to Heaven.
The point: We do not go to Heaven immediately upon dying.
- **John 3:13**

Context: Jesus teaches Nicodemus, a rabbi and member of the Sanhedrin, that humankind doesn’t ascend to Heaven (with very rare exceptions—the live translations of Enoch and Elijah); instead, Christ descended from Heaven to reach us where we are, on sinful planet Earth.
The point: It’s not within human power to ascend to Heaven.
- **Matthew 16:27**

Context: Jesus teaches His disciples that at His Second Coming He will reward everyone according to deeds performed.
The point: People don’t “go to their reward” at death, since the Second Advent—the point at which rewards are meted out—is future.
- **Revelation 22:12**

Context: Jesus informs John through an angel that when He returns, He will have our reward with Him, to give everyone according to work performed.
The point: Our reward awaits the Second Advent.
- **Job 17:13**

Context: Job says that the grave would be his ultimate “house.”
The point: There is no abode for the dead apart from the grave.
- **Ecclesiastes 9:10, 5, 6**

Context: Solomon teaches that in the grave “there is no work, nor device [intelligence, reason], nor knowledge, nor wisdom.” Further, the dead know nothing and aren’t rewarded; their love, hatred, and envy are perished, and they have no share in any contemporary affairs.
The point: Death signifies complete unconsciousness and uninvolved with current affairs.
- **John 11:11**

Context: At Bethany, Jesus tells His disciples that Mary and Martha’s dead brother Lazarus is sleeping, but that He is about to awaken him out of sleep.
The point: Death signifies sleep, out of which Jesus alone must awaken us.

To answer the question, Will you go to Heaven when you die? you must first understand that you don’t go anywhere at death. You simply remain in the grave until Jesus’ Second Coming, when He will reward you with Heaven—if you’ve trusted in Him and remained faithful. Abel will have had the longest wait—about 5,000 years since dying, yet since death is merely a special variation of sleep, when Abel awakens to see the face of his old Friend Jesus, it will seem as though no time has passed! When it comes to the subject of death, Bible truth alone provides genuine comfort.—Jerry A. Stevens, September 28, 2005