

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE DIE?

Note to the speaker:

Emphasize that death is contrary to God's purpose and that the dead are unconscious. Warmly build appreciation for Jehovah's loving arrangement of the resurrection. Help audience see that heartfelt obedience to God is the key to life without end

WHY SHOULD THE QUESTION OF THE HEREAFTER CONCERN US? (4 min.)

Man was made to live not to die

Scientists find aging and death a puzzle (*g95* 10/22 4-5)

The desire to live on is inherent in man (*Ec* 3:11)

All humans are dying, including our loved ones (Read *Ecclesiastes* 3:19, 20)

Death causes pain and suffering to the survivors (*Ge* 37:33-35; *2Sa* 1:11, 12)

Only natural to be concerned about what happens when we die

We need to ask:

What is death?

How did it come about?

Does something in us survive the death of the body?

Is there a future for the dead?

WHAT IS DEATH? (6 min.)

Medically, death may be viewed in different ways (*it-1* 596; *it-2* 246-7)

When a person's heart and lungs stop functioning, he is considered clinically dead

Such a person can be revived if heart and lungs start working again in time

When body cells in life-sustaining organs die, one is biologically dead

Life-force ceases to function in cells, and the dead person cannot be revived

Simply put, death is the opposite of life (*rs* 98)

Death means that all functions of life cease

The Bible clearly describes the condition of the dead

The dead are unconscious (Read *Ecclesiastes* 9:5, 6)

Death is likened to sleep (*Ps* 13:3; *Joh* 11:11-14; *it-1* 597)

The dead are powerless (*Isa* 26:14)

At death, the person ceases to exist (*Ge* 3:19; *Ps* 146:4)

HOW DID OLD AGE AND DEATH COME ABOUT? (10 min.)

Science has no satisfactory answers to what causes aging and death (*g95* 10/22 8-9)

Jehovah God reveals the reason for old age and death (*Ps* 36:9; *100:3*; *ie* 21))

The first human pair were created perfect (*Ge* 1:31; *De* 32:4)

God purposed for man to live forever (*Ge* 2:15)

Obedience was the key to everlasting life (Read *Genesis* 2:16, 17)

Eve disobeyed God at Satan's prompting, and Adam joined her (*Ge* 3:1-6; *Re* 12:9)

This made them sinners (*1Jo* 3:4)

Consequently, they lost the prospect for everlasting life and began dying (*Ge* 3:19; *Ro* 6:23)

Jehovah expelled the first couple from their Paradise home (*Ge* 3:23, 24)

They passed on to their offspring the death-dealing defect in their bodies (*Job* 14:4)

Having inherited a sinful condition from our first parents, we today grow old and die (Read *Romans* 5:12)

DO WE HAVE AN IMMORTAL SOUL THAT SURVIVES DEATH? (10 min.)

What does the Bible teach about the soul? (*ie* 19-20)

The Hebrew word for "soul" usually refers to the entire living being (Read *Genesis* 2:7) (*Jg* 16:16; *Ps* 119:28)

The Greek word for "soul" often refers to the whole person (*Joh* 12:27; *1Th* 5:14; *1Pe* 3:20)

The word "soul" also applies to animals (*Ge* 1:24)

At times, "soul" refers to the life that a person or an animal possesses (*Ex* 4:19; *Pr* 12:10; *Mt* 20:28)

The Bible never describes soul as some immaterial part of a living creature that survives the death of the body

Since "soul" often refers to the person himself, the soul is not immortal (*Ge* 2:7; *Eze* 18:4; *Mr* 3:4; *ie* 22)

Christendom adopted the teaching of the immortality of the soul from Greek philosophy (*ie* 14-16)

When a person dies, "his spirit goes out" (Read *Psalms* 146:4) (*ie* 24)

"Spirit" refers to the life-force sustained by breathing, which is active in all living creatures (*Ge* 7:22)

The spirit goes back to God (Ec 12:7)

Only God can restore the life-force, causing a person to come back to life (Ps 68:20)

Will God bring to life our loved ones who have died? (Job 14:14)

A SURE HOPE FOR THE DEAD (10 min.)

The Greek word for “resurrection” literally means “standing up again” (*ie* 25-6))

Being infinite in wisdom and perfect in memory, Jehovah can bring a person back to life (Job 12:13)

God empowered prophets Elijah and Elisha to perform resurrections (1Ki 17:17-24; 2Ki 4:32-37)

Jesus Christ resurrected Lazarus (Joh 11:38-44)

Jesus made a promise that all in Jehovah’s memory will be resurrected (Joh 5:28, 29; Ac 24:15; *ie* 26-7)

Resurrection is an expression of God’s love (Joh 3:16)

A small number are resurrected to life in heaven to rule with Christ (Lu 22:28-30; Re 5:9, 10; 14:1, 3)

The vast majority of those who have died will be resurrected to life on earth (Read Psalm 37:29; Revelation 21:3, 4)

Obedient mankind will have the earth as an eternal home (Ps 115:16)

Aging and death will be no more

A UNIQUE PROSPECT FOR THOSE LIVING IN THE TIME OF THE END (5 min.)

Very soon Jehovah is going to cleanse the earth of wickedness (Pr 2:21, 22; *ie* 30-1))

We are living in the last days (2Ti 3:1-5)

The survivors of the great tribulation need never experience death (Joh 11:26; Re 7:9-14)

If death overtakes us now, we have the marvelous hope of a resurrection

What must you do now if you want everlasting life in Paradise on earth?

Take in accurate knowledge of God’s will and purposes (Joh 17:3)

Apply what you learn, and build faith (Heb 11:6)

Regularly associate with fellow believers (Heb 10:24, 25)

Share with others what you learn from the Bible (Mt 24:14; 28:19, 20)

You too can look forward to everlasting life in a cleansed earth

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read or commented on)