

Science and the Bible E-Zine

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"Truth: That which is in accord with fact and reality."

This is written so that you may believe the bible because of science rather than in spite of science.

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1) The Scope of Science and the Bible.

There are two major areas within the study of science and the bible. The bible actually does reveal knowledge of scientific fact concerning reality. But also, the bible is subject to in depth investigation using the scientific method of bible study to define, or discover true reality as revealed in the bible.

Science and the Bible is Not: Junk science, or tidbits of science fiction.

Science and the Bible has been given a bad name by the applying ancient antique science from the Greek era in an attempt to prove some traditional interpretation of the bible. Science and the Bible is not junk science, pseudo science brought forth to prove some faulty interpretation of the bible that is contrary to reality.

Science and the Bible is not using an isolated bible phrase taken out of context to make it look like the bible says something scientific when it does not.

Science and the bible is not the many fictitious stories made up by well meaning Christians trying to make their God look good.

Junk science or science fiction¹ ends up giving science and the bible a bad name.

The real science and the bible is not even the many co-incidental illustrations of biblical concepts found in science such as the fact that the adhesion molecules that hold living cells together are actually in the shape of a cross. These may be more an indication of God's sense of humor than science. They co-incidental illustrations may give Christians a warm fuzzy feeling, but hold no scientific significance.

Science and the Bible Includes Genuine Scientific Fact found in the Bible:

On the other hand, when the bible really does mention something that is in the realm of science, the reality of that knowledge is much more overwhelming than those pseudo scientific tidbits end up giving the bible a bad name. There is a dreadful lack of understanding of the genuine scientific facts mentioned in the bible. That lack of understanding has gotten us off to a bad start. Once that bad start is overcome, it becomes obvious that the bible is of supernatural origin. The bible's depth of understanding of reality in the realm of science, its p[re-publication of modern science discoveries, is unexplainable by any other means.

Science and the Bible Includes the Scientific Method of Bible Study:

The genuine pre-publication of independent discoveries by modern science establishes the reality that the bible is far more than just the results of great human minds. This makes it mandatory to scrutinize the ancient scriptures using the scientific method. In this issue the scientific method of bible study will be applied to a doctrinal, rather than scientific, type question.

The application of the scientific method to bible study is not different from the application of the scientific method to any other question where reality is to be tested.

The preferred method of scientific study includes multiple working hypotheses. In trying to discover what the ancient scripture has to say on a particular subject, it is difficult to find a subject on which theologians have not already pontificated. There are usually several different opinions as to what the bible really says. Each of these different ideas are formed into a hypothesis that, if false, can be proven false by testing against the reality of what the bible actually says. There is no need to further elaborate on the scientific method. There are many places on the internet where the

¹ Often bible phrases are used out of context in an attempt to prove the bible expressed some scientific fact before modern science discovered it. A typical example is that phrase found in the book of Isaiah that says "the circle of the earth.." It has been used to argue that the bible published the fact that the planet earth is a sphere when science thought the planet earth was flat. First, it is a myth that science thought the planet earth was flat. The ancient Greeks knew it was a sphere. They even had a good estimate of the diameter of the planet earth. Second, the word "earth" in the original language made no implication that it was talking of the planet. Instead, the earth is the solid stuff you stand on as opposed to the oceans. To imply that phrase is talking of the planet is to prove your lack of understanding of the ancient scripture. The "circle of the earth" in Isaiah 40:22 most likely meant all you see when you stand on solid ground and turn in a circle to get a panoramic view.

Typical science fiction is the story of the NASA scientist using the long day of Joshua to reconcile a discrepancy of ancient time. These pseudo-scientific religious stories may seem to give Christianity a temporary boost, but invariably end up giving believers of the bible a bad name.

scientific method is more fully described.

In this issue, the scientific method of bible study will be turned to analyze the question raised by a reader of this E-zine. What happens when a Christian comes to the end of life on this planet? There are many opinions. Multiple working hypotheses will be employed to determine just what the bible says on the subject.

2) What Happens at the End of a Christian Life on Earth?

What Happens When a Christian Dies?

An Application of the Scientific Method of Bible Study.

By **Max B. Frederick, AnOldScientist**

This article does not answer the question. It only presents four of the possible multiple working hypotheses. Your feedback will be appreciated. To give feedback, go to Question of the Month at <http://www.eyewitnesstothearguments.blogspot.com/>

The Question:

This month, my wife and I spent some time visiting with one of the Ezine readers, a long time family friend who has recently been diagnosed with cancer. At his request a specific question will be addressed: What happens when a Christian dies?

His question goes beyond, "Is there life after death?" An after life is assumed.

Some preachers say when people die, they all fall asleep and are unconscious until the end of time when they suddenly come awake and join the great roundup in the sky where they go on to an eternal reward, or are condemned to eternal torture, depending on earlier circumstances.

Other preachers, especially those preaching funerals, talk of immediate life with their maker in eternal bliss.

Still others cling to some form of teaching containing the concept of purgatory where all that die remain in some form of consciousness, awaiting their final destiny.

Beyond that, others teach that there are different paths to be taken by individuals depending on their status at the time of the departure of their soul from their mortal body.

A casual look at the proof text verses of the bible seem to support each of the positions. In other places the bible seems to contradict each of the positions.

Are they all right? Are they all wrong? Do they all have some truth and some tradition? Just what does the bible say? Does the bible contradict itself? More significant, is the ancient scripture consistent, and theologians misinterpret it to the point that many bible translations may be slanted toward the opinion of theologians?

Possible Answers Posed as Multiple Working Hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: Immediate transformation and continuance of life.

At the end of life on earth, humans remain conscious and are either immediately ushered into another form of life with their maker in eternal bliss, or remain in some unknown holding pattern until they are resurrected to stand judgment.

Hypothesis 2: Suspended animation and rise for the judgment.

When people die, they all fall into some form of suspended animation and are unconscious until some future time when they suddenly come awake and join the great roundup in the sky where they go on to an eternal reward, or are condemned to eternal torture, depending on earlier circumstances.

Hypothesis 3: Temporary holding in a state of consciousness.

All who die, go to a temporary holding place according to the concept of purgatory where all remain in some form of consciousness. What happens after that is unclear.

Hypothesis 4: “The Living,” never die, and “The Dead,” rise for Judgment.

There are different paths to be taken by different individuals, depending on their status at the time of the departure of their soul from their mortal body. “The Living” remain conscious and are immediately ushered into another form of life with their maker in eternal bliss. “The Dead” fall into some form of suspended animation and are unconscious until just before “The Judgment” when they suddenly come awake and are condemned to “the lake of fire” which is “the second death.”.

This hypothesis gets a bit more complicated. “The Living,” and “The Dead,” must be defined. The living are those whose names are in the book of life. The dead are those who were never spiritually alive, even though they were physically alive on earth.

Investigating each Hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: Immediate transformation and continuance of life.

Some bible references seem to talk of immediate spiritual life after physical death:

Jesus said to a dieing man, *“today shalt thou be with me in paradise.”* Luke 23:43.

Jesus also said, *“whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.”* John 11:26.

Hypothesis 2: Suspended animation and rise for the judgment.

Other bible references seem to Contradict hypothesis 1 in that they imply that all fall asleep and remain unconscious until some future time.

Hbr 9:27 And as *it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:*

Rev 20:13 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.

Hypothesis 3: Temporary holding in a state of consciousness.

Still other scriptures indicate there is a temporary holding place where dead people are conscious and remember their life on earth.

Luke 16:22-26 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.

Hypothesis 4: “The Living,” never die, and “The Dead,” rise for Judgment.

There are two classifications of people: *The Dead*, and *The Living*.

Matthew 22:32 ...God is not the God of *the dead*, but of *the living*.

Matthew 8:22 But Jesus said unto him, ***Follow me; and let the dead*** bury their dead.

This hypothesis assumes there are multiple births and multiple deaths available to humans. Each human starts with a natural birth, which results in physical life, but are still spiritually dead in their trespasses and sin until the second (spiritual) birth, which results in being listed among *The Living*, whose names are written in the book of life. The spiritual birth seems to be associated with some form of acknowledgment of the actual existence of a supernatural God and to be listed among His followers.

The difference between the two classes is whether or not their names are written in the book of life. This classification has nothing to do with the life changing event where one becomes absent from the body and the body is typically buried, cremated, or eaten by wild animals.

Philippians 4:3 ...my fellow labourers, ***whose names [are] in the book of life***.

Revelation 3:5 He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and ***I will not blot out his name out of the book of life***, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.

A class change from *The Dead*, to *The Living*, may occur upon a second, spiritual birth, not the first, physical birth. The classification does not change upon physical death. This class change is not mandatory for every human, nor universal among all humans. Some remain among *The Dead*. Others come to be among *The Living*. Therefore, upon physical death, there are two distinct classifications.

John 5:24 ¶ Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is ***passed from death unto life***.

John 11:25 Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, ***though he were dead, yet shall he live***:

1Cr 15:54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this ***mortal shall have put on immortality***, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

Eph 2:1 And you [hath he ***quicken***ed], ***who were dead*** in trespasses and sins;

Col 2:13 And you, ***being dead*** in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, ***hath he quickened*** together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;

Upon physical death, each classification travels a different route:

The Living (Christians) never die. (See Hypothesis 1.)

Those whose names are written in the book of life are classified as *The Living*, and they, shall never die, that is, they remain alive after that physical life changing event associated with a grave, and remain alive all during the eon before judgment day.

John 8:51 ...If a man keep my saying, he shall ***never see death***.

John 11:26 And whosoever liveth and believeth in me ***shall never die***.

The Greek word translated here to be “never” is actually, “in this eon.” This eon is defined as ending on the great day of Judgment. Therefore, Christians are said to be living, and not in need of resurrection during the time from physical death until the day of Judgment. These are variously referred to as being “asleep,” and with God, and coming back with God.

The Dead (non Christians) enter suspended animation. (See Hypothesis 2.)

Those whose names are not written in the book of life, *The Dead*, upon physical death, go into some sort of suspended animation, or non-life, and remain there until the great judgment day.

Hbr 9:27 And as ***it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:***

Rev 20:13 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.

On the Great Judgment Day: (The Great and fearful Day of the Lord):

Both the living and the dead shall be judged at the Lord’s appearing.

2Ti 4:1 ...***the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the living and the dead at his appearing...***

The Dead (those whose names are not written in the book of life, but whose deeds are recorded in the other books,) are condemned (judged) according to their works written in the record books.

The Living (those whose names are written in the book of life) are exempted from the condemnation (judgment.)

In preparation for this great event, there are three categories of people, *The Dead*, *The living* that are “asleep”, and *The living* that are still awake.

At the event, the trumpet will sound, *The Dead* will rise, *The living* that are “asleep” will be already in the presence of God and return with him, and *The living* that are still awake will be caught up together with them all in the clouds. After that all people will be sorted out according to whose name is in the book of life.

Critical Passages:

Hbr 9:27 And as *it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:*

1Cr 15:51,52:

Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and *the dead* shall be raised incorruptible, and *we* shall be changed.

Rev 20:12,13,15:

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 whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire

I Thessalonians 4: 13-17:

But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so *them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.*

For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive [and] remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and *the dead in Christ shall rise first:*

Then we which are alive [and] remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

Notice the following:

The Dead that shall be raised is distinct from the “*we*” that shall be changed.

It is *the dead* that are judged out of “the books” (plural) not the book of life mentioned as a distinctly different book. It appears to be “the books” that contain the works, and “the book of life” that contains the names of those exempt from the condemnation of the judgment.

Christians who are referred to as asleep, are not resurrected, but are “brought back” with God, having been with Him, *The Living* cannot be resurrected.

Hypothesis 2 assumes that The Dead “in” Christ refers to Christians who have died. Hypotheses 1 and 4 assume these to be non-Christians, the dead “relative to” Christ.

If “*the dead in Christ*” refers to the them who are *the dead* relative to Christ, then the return will be in the order of, first, *The Living*, (past) Christians will return with God, next, *The Dead*, (those not in the book of life) will be resurrected, then the physically alive, *The Living*, Christians will be caught up together with them in the clouds. After that they will be sorted out according to whose name is in the book of life.

3) What's in Next or Coming Issues:

Big Bang, Product of God or Imagination of Science? Does the bible contradict scientific fact? Is it possible that the bible is in accord with scientific fact? Is it possible that science just has a different interpretation of the same facts? Read articles as they become available. www.scienceandthebible.net/articles/index.htm.

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