

# UNLOCKING THE MYSTERIES OF REVELATION THROUGH BIBLE PROPHECY

## 9 Revelation Solves Death's Mystery

The death of a loved one shakes us up. The question haunts us: “Can I find hope beyond the grave?” Have you looked death squarely in the face and wondered, “What happens five minutes after death?” Is it heaven, hell, or nothingness? It’s confusing—there are so many varied beliefs on the subject of death. But there are rock-solid answers. The Bible provides sane, sensible information revealing not only what happens when you die but also how to face death with hope and confidence. **Revelation 1:18** introduces us to Jesus Christ, who says: “I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death.” Jesus has the key that unlocks death’s door. And Revelation ends with the promise in **Revelation 21:4**: “There shall be no more death.” God will bring about a final, permanent solution. That’s the great hope of the Book of Revelation.

**Two Key Words:** To understand what happens at death, it is important to understand two key words that are often misunderstood. One is **the word “soul”**. In **Genesis 2:7**, we read that man *became* a living soul.” It doesn’t say God *put* a soul *into* man but man *became* a living soul—a living person, as modern translations put it, for that’s what the text means. The Bible never says a person “has” a soul—as if it were a separate entity we possess. I don’t *have* a soul, I *am* a soul, a living creature, a person—and so are you.

The other key word is **“spirit”**. When God made Adam, He breathed the spirit or breath of life into his nostrils, and he became a living soul (person). **Ecclesiastes 12:7** says the exact opposite occurs at death: “Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit will return to God who gave it.” What goes back to God? The spirit - or breath. The Bible never says the soul goes back to God. The word “spirit” comes from the same root as other words pertaining to “breath” or “breathing” such as *inspire* or *respiration*. The Greek word for “spirit” is *pneuma*, which gives us words like *pneumonia*, the respiratory disease, and *pneumatic*, the tires we blow up with air. **Job 27:3** tells us *where* the spirit is: “All the while my breath is in me, and the spirit of God is in my nostrils.” When a man dies, the breath of God, or the power of God—that spark of life—returns to Him.

The Bible teaches that death is but a sleep that lasts until Christ’s second coming. More than fifty times, Bible writers consistently describe death as a sleep. Jesus Himself spoke of death as a sleep when He talked of His friend, Lazarus, in **John 11:11-14**. The Word of God precludes any idea of consciousness after death. **Psalms 146:4** says when a man dies, “His breath [his spirit] goes forth, he [his body] returns to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.” So can a dead man think? No! On the day he dies, his thoughts perish! **Ecclesiastes 9:5-6** says plainly, “The living know that they shall die; but *the dead know not anything*. . . . Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished.”

**Revelation 20:6** says, “Blessed and holy is he who has part in the **first resurrection**. Over such the second death has no power.” The first resurrection is the resurrection of the righteous. The second death refers to final death, eternal death. In other words, this is a resurrection that leads to eternal life. God promises in Let’s see exactly what this hope is based on—and what it’s not based on! It’s vital that we understand what the Bible teaches on the subject.

- 1 Timothy 6:16** Human beings do not have immortality now—only God does.
- Genesis 2:7** “God formed man out of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul,” a living being, a living person, as modern versions say. God did not *put* a soul into man.
- Ecclesiastes 12:7** The body returns to the dust, and the Spirit returns to God. The Bible does not say the soul returns to God, but the Spirit.
- John 11:11-14** Jesus compares death to sleep. The Bible compares death to sleep over 50 times, in texts such as Psalm 13:3, Acts 7:59-60, and Ephesians 5:14.
- Ecclesiastes 9:5** “The living know that they will die, but the dead know nothing.”
- Romans 2:7** We “seek for” immortality, for we don’t have it now. The Bible uses the word “soul” 1600 times, but never once speaks of an “immortal soul.”
- Ezekiel 18:4 & 20** The *soul*, which means *being* or *person* (1 Peter 3:20, for example), is not immortal but can die. Ezekiel repeats: “The soul (person) who sins shall die.”
- Romans 6:23** “The wages of sin is death,” not *life in some other place*. Death is the *absence* of life. The gift of God is eternal life—which He’ll give us *when He comes*.
- Psalm 115:17** “The dead do not praise the Lord.”
- Psalm 6:5** “In death there is no remembrance of (God).”
- Acts 2:29 & 34** David is “both dead and buried.” He did not ascend to heaven at death, but awaits the coming of Jesus and the first resurrection.
- Job 7:9-10, 14:10, 12, 21** The Bible says the dead cannot return to their homes or observe or communicate with their loved ones (2 Samuel 12:22-23).
- John 5:28-29** There are two resurrections—to life, and to damnation (Daniel 12:2).
- 1 Thess.4:15-16** Those asleep in Jesus rise at His second coming.
- 1 Cor. 15:51-54** We *receive* immortality for the first time when Jesus comes again.
- Job 19:25-27** The righteous will be resurrected to see God at the last day.
- Revelation 22:12** When Jesus comes, His reward of eternal life will be with Him.

