

“Why Wait for the Resurrection? Life after Death Right after Death”

How did the notion develop of some new life immediately following death? To whom did that matter? Who among us knew that anyone even thinks about such issues?

How did the Maccabean revolt affect views of the afterlife and its timing?

How does the story of a mother and seven tortured sons (2 Macc 7) contribute to a desire for immediate rewards after death?

If the righteous are rewarded, what happens to the wicked? Do they receive life after death or death after death? What is the difference?

What are the benefits of life immediately after death? What are the benefits of waiting to the Day of Judgment for some sort of resurrection?

According to Ehrman, the Hebrews (Jews) consider immortality of the soul is a gift from god whereas the Greeks (Plato and others) consider immortality of the soul a given. What do we believe? Why does it matter?

According to apocalypticists, what changes may the soul undergo after death?

How does the delay of the parousia influence Christian thinking about the Day of Judgment and resurrection and afterlife?

What does the book of 4 Ezra contribute to our thinking about afterlife and the interim between life and afterlife? And how does 4 Ezra shift belief about afterlife from the nation of Israel to the individual? To what end?

What happens in 4 Ezra to *eternal torment for the wicked*?

What is funny about the tale of Abraham and Michael? How does Abraham regard those he sees in the vision? Why doesn't he want to die? What are the three principal judgments? What does each achieve?

Given the options of annihilation and eternal torment, which sounds more appealing? Why?

What did Jews believe about afterlife according to Josephus? The Essenes? The Pharisees? The Sadducees?

“Jesus and the Afterlife”

What did Jesus say about the afterlife? About the kingdom of god? About heaven? About Hell?

What is the value of gospel parallels in helping us understand Jesus?

What does Ehrman mean with this subtitle: “The Kingdom for Some, but Destruction for Most”?

What is Gehenna? Why is it considered so hideous, outrageous, godforsaken? What does Jesus teach about Gehenna?

Of what significance is verb tense for the Hebrew verb “to be”? (see p. 162)

Who are the sheep and the goats? What happens to them? When? Why? What does that tell us about Jesus’s notions of an afterlife?

What is significant about the phrase “eternal fire”? (p. 165)

Please review carefully the last three paragraphs of this chapter (pp. 166-167).

“The Afterlife after Jesus’s Life: Paul the Apostle”

How much do Jesus and Paul agree about the afterlife?

On p. 171, Ehrman points out that Paul “concluded that the death and resurrection of Christ were the means God had provided for saving the world. The only way for a person to escape judgment—either when God destroyed this world or when the person died—was to have faith in Christ.” What would Jesus say about that contention? How do we know?

Contrast the beliefs of Paul and Jesus summarized on p. 171.

What did Paul think about judgment? When would it occur? Who would judge? What would happen to the wicked? To the righteous? Who were the wicked and the righteous? How is Christ’s “atoning sacrifice in blood” crucial?

What is the role of baptism in determining the afterlife? What does it mean to Paul to be “raised from the dead”?

How did Paul’s notions of afterlife develop between 1 Thessalonians and Romans?

According to Paul in Corinthians, what happens to the body when resurrected? Which body is resurrected? What is Paul's notion of an "interim state" between life and afterlife?

Why is death such a great gain? Why does bodily resurrection matter to Paul? To anyone? Why is that notion in the Apostle's Creed?