

THE MEANING OF LIFE

Long ago, King David asked God,

"What is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You visit him"
(Psalm 8:4)?

People have many things in common with animals.

They breathe the same air.

They eat similar food.

They have many of the same needs.

But, people are different from animals.

Because we are different from animals, we want to know **why we are here.**

What is our purpose on this earth?

Since we know that we only live a few short years, how should we use our time?

Should we live only to satisfy the needs of our bodies?

Should we spend our time looking for the pleasures of this world?

Because we are different from animals, we want to know **where we are going when we die.**

Life on earth is very short.

Job said: *"Man who is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble. He comes forth like a flower and fades away; he flees like a shadow and does not continue"*

(Job 14:1-2).

Are we the same as animals when we die?

Do we just breathe our last breath and then there is nothing?

How can we find the answers to these questions?

The only One who can give the answers is God Who created us.

The answers are found in His Book, the Bible.

In the Bible, God has told us who we are, why we are here on earth, and where we will go when we die.

What is man?

What makes him different from the animals?

The Apostle Paul answered this question when he wrote to the Christians in Thessalonica:

"Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ"
(I Thessalonians 5:23).

Animals have physical bodies only.

But, every person has a spirit within his body.

Our bodies will die, decay, and return to the dust as did the first man Adam
(Genesis 3:19; 35:18; James 2:26).

But, the spiritual part of man will continue to live.

The Bible says:

"Then the dust (our bodies) will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit (the thinking, conscious, eternal soul, which lives within the body) will return to God Who gave it"
(Ecclesiastes 12:7).

Life on earth is very short. (Psalms 90:10)

"The days of our lives are seventy years; And if by reason of strength they are eighty years, Yet their boast is only labor and sorrow; For it is soon cut off, and we fly away."

Death will soon come to each of us.

Therefore, we are not wise if we live only to satisfy the needs of our bodies.

We are also very foolish if we live only for the pleasures of this world.

The Apostle John warned:

"Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world - the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life - is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever"

(I John 2:15-17).

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, asked:

"What is a man profited if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul"

(Matthew 16:26)?

Our purpose on this earth is to bring glory to God by doing all He has told us to do in the Bible.

The wise man wrote:

"Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man"
(Ecclesiastes 12:13).

Where will our spirits go when we die?

What happens when we leave this earth?

After we die, we will go to be judged by God.

"It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment"
(Hebrews 9:27).

Each person will be judged for his own life (Romans 14:12).

"So then each of us shall give account of himself to God."

Each will be judged according to the way he has lived on earth (II Corinthians 5:10).

"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad."

After the Judgment, there are only two possible places to go.

One place is for those who have lived for God and served His Son, Jesus Christ.

It is a place of peace, happiness, and rest.

It is called "**Heaven**"

(John 14:1-3; II Corinthians 4:16 - 5:6; Philippians 3:20; Revelation 21:35).

The other place is for those who refuse to obey God, reject Jesus Christ, and spend their lives in the pleasures of this world.

It is called "**Hell**", "the second death" and the "lake of fire"

(Matthew 10:28; 25:46, 46; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10).

God loves us and wants us to be saved.

He gave His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, to die as a sacrifice for our sins so that we can be saved (John 3:16).

But, God does not force us to be saved.
He wants us to choose for ourselves.

Jesus invites us to come to Him:

"Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls" (Matthew 11:28, 29).

In order to come to Jesus,

we must believe that He is the Christ, the Son of the living God (John 8:24);

we must repent of all our past sins (Luke 13:3);

we must confess our faith in Christ before men (Romans 10:9, 10; Acts 8:37); and

we must be buried in water in baptism and raised up out of the water to live as a new person (Romans 6:3-5; Acts 2:38; II Corinthians 5:17).