



WEEK 5c: November 3-9 – The Story 31 Week Lectionary

Life after Death – Moses – An Excursus

Prayer: (From *The Lutheran Book of Prayer* – Monday)

“Lord God, in Your presence we find fullness of joy, and by Your right hand, Christ Jesus, You win and deliver peace forevermore. In the midst of this world’s sins and sorrows, give us peace in the knowledge of His salvation and confident hope in the resurrection of the dead. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**”

Today’s Devotion Would Suggest:

Monday – Job 19, Tues. – Exodus 3 & Matthew 22:23-33; Wed. – Psalm 90; Thurs. Deuteronomy 31-33; Fri. Isaiah 65-66; Sat. & Sun. 1 Kings 17:17-24, Psalm 16, Ezekiel 37
If Time Allows: Job 1-40; (Allows Reading the Bible through in 31 Weeks)

Introduction: When the Old Testament talks about life and death it uses terms like: breath, creature, heart, soul, gathered to his peoples or Sheol (the realm of the dead – Genesis 42:32, Deuteronomy 32:22). Moses assumes we understand the concept of God’s breath and life breathed into Adam and Eve’s clay (Adam) bodies. Death is by definition the separation of the body (which decays) from the soul (eternal). The Old Testament demands and pleads for a solution when God says, “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.” This offspring (singular) is the solution to the death. Jesus is the solution to the Old Testament promises. Jesus makes this clear in John 11:25-26, “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?” and John 5:28b-29, “for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out—those who have done what is good will rise to live, and those who have done what is evil will rise to be condemned.”

What Truths does the Old Testament and Moses Teach about Life after Death?

- 1. God is Eternal** – Moses writes in Deuteronomy 33:27, “The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms. He will drive out your enemies before you, saying, ‘Destroy them!’” Moses likewise writes in Psalm 90:2 “Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the whole world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.”
- 2. Our Soul/breath of God is Eternal** – Solomon writes in Ecclesiastes 3:11, “He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart; yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end.” The heart (*lav*) here is equivalent to the soul. Where does Solomon get this teaching? He gets it from Moses who writes in Genesis 1:26, “So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.” We have God’s image which is eternal!
- 3. Death is by Definition the Separation of Body/Flesh (Adam was formed from *Apar-Adam*) and Soul/*Nephesh* (Made by God’s Breath)** See: Ecclesiastes 12:7 says, “and the dust (*Apar*)

returns to the ground from where it came from, and the spirit (*Ruach* – Breath) returns to God who gave it.”

4. **The physical body is alive because God breathes into it!** Genesis 2:7 “Then the LORD God formed a man (*adam*) from the dust (*apar*) of the ground and breathed (*nispat*) into his nostrils the breath (*nispat*) of life, and the man became a living soul (*nephesh*).” Animals also have souls/life but they do not have God’s image or his breath.
5. **Life after death is understood by the Patriarchs:** Leviticus 17:11 says, “For the soul/life (Nephesh) of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it for you on the altar to make atonement for your souls (Nephesh), for it is the blood that makes atonement by the life.” The body surely dies because of sin and returns to dust (Genesis 3:19), but the soul is atoneable according to this passage. This is clear by Moses’ expression: “He was gathered to his people.” Keep in mind this does not refer to burial. Many of the following were buried in different places as opposed to one common cemetery or field/cave (Genesis 23):
 - Genesis 25:8 – Abraham was gathered to His people.
 - Genesis 25:17 – Ismael was gathered to His people
 - Genesis 35:29 – Isaac was gathered to his people.
 - Genesis 49:33 – Jacob was gathered to his people.
 - Numbers 20:26 – Aaron the priest was gathered to his people.
 - Deuteronomy 32:50 – Moses was gathered to his people on the mountain.

In the time of the kings the expression changes to, “He rested with his fathers” at least for the good kings. 1 Kings 2:10 starts (Note: not for King Saul), “Then David **rested with his ancestors** and was buried in the City of David.” Thirty-five times this expression is used in 1 & 2 Kings & 1 & 2 Chr.

Jesus himself teaches life after death quoting Exodus 3 in Matthew 22:23-33! Enjoy the following questions as you explore life after death in the Old Testament. Resurrection and eternal life is all through the Bible:

Questions for the Week: Nov. 3-9 – Chapter 5c

Consider journaling your response to these questions. If you have time consider reading: Job

1. Monday (November 3): Read Job 19. Job is the oldest book of the Bible. Job experiences all aspects of death, but he has confidence of a future Redeemer. How is resurrection fleshly?
2. Tuesday: Read Exodus 3 & Matthew 22:23-33 – How does God make it clear that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are very much alive? Why do you think people misinterpret the Old Testament to think that God’s eternal soul is not eternal & Sheol is not hell but a literal grave?
3. Wednesday: Read Psalm 90 & 91. Both Psalms are written by Moses. What is Moses praying for in these Psalms? How can we learn to pray more honestly? How does Jesus completely answer Moses’ prayers? (Hint: Being glad is not merely a good days work. Being glad is referring to an eternities work!)
4. Thursday: Read Deuteronomy 31-33 and Revelation 15? Moses song is famous, it will be sung in heaven! How is life after death affirmed in the original song and it’s repeat?
5. Friday Read Isaiah 65-66. Isaiah is sometimes called the Gospel of the Old Testament. What picture do you receive here of your own resurrection? Talk about the details with someone!
6. Saturday & Sunday: 1 Kings 17:17-24, Psalm 16, Ezekiel 37– How does David handle the death of his son? What gives him confidence to go on with life (don’t take David’s words as smug)? How does the Psalm promise resurrection to David but also foreshadow Jesus’ own death and resurrection? Ezekiel 37 is not merely a metaphor. Consider how it refers to all believers in Christ Jesus? Are you part of the LORD’s resurrected army?