

What Happens Five Minutes After You Die? Hebrews 9:27 Has the Answer.

written by Alfred Persson | October 31, 2024



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24 For Christ hasn't entered into holy places made with hands, which are representations of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us;

25 nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest enters into the holy place year by year with blood not his own,

26 or else he must have suffered often since the foundation of the world. But now once at the end of the ages, he has been revealed to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

27 Inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once, and after this, judgment,

28 so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, without sin, to those who are eagerly waiting for him for salvation. (Heb. 9:24-10:1 RPTE)

Hebrews 9:24–28 says Christ's once for all, heavenly self offering is far superior to offerings under the Law of Moses as it was done only once to cover all sins in time and space. Its efficacy spans the whole sweep of human history ("since the foundation of the world," v. 26; cp. "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" Rev. 13:8); that the universal rule "it is appointed for humans to die once, and after this a trial (v. 27) will identify the "many" from all who die who thereafter "eagerly" wait "for Him for salvation" (v. 28).

Its tight death/judgment/second appearing parallel strongly support the claim that everyone unsaved born since the world's foundation stands under the judgment of v. 27, and that the implied criterion is acceptance of the gospel preached to the dead (John 5:25; 1 Peter 3:18-22; 4:6) and this separates ("judges") "the many" who now eagerly wait for Christ for salvation (v. 28), from those who do not.

This "trial/judgment" (κρίσις) is not "the Judgment" at the end of time, it lacks the definite article. It therefore is not neutral judgment with a formal outcome; it implies a formal trial setting involving a judge, plaintiff, and an advocate (1 John 2:1-2)

The author of Hebrews invokes the concept of what the early theologians referred to as "the particular judgment." Its a divine trial, not merely a neutral evaluation of guilt or innocence. This is required by context as it moves from all experiencing this trial after death, to the "many" covered by Christ's sacrifice, who become those "who eagerly wait for Him...for salvation" (Heb. 9:28) Not everyone who dies will see a positive result from a divine trial. Therefore, "those who eagerly wait for Him...for salvation" implies these saw a positive outcome, unlike those not among "the many" not covered by Christ's sacrifice. Jesus excluded who believe in Him in while alive, they "pass from death into life" before they die, from any after death krisis judgment (John 5:24; 11:26; cp. Luke 23:43; 2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23).

Therefore, this text teaches that the opportunity for salvation is universal, not bound by time or space. The existence of those who received a positive outcome from this after death trial/judgment prove the infinite sacrifice of God's only begotten Son extended the opportunity for salvation to the entire universe kosmos (John 3:16) of man's habitation, which includes the dead in Hades.

Notes

κρίσις (krisis). n. fem. judgment, legal case. Refers to the process, event, or result of legal proceedings intended to evaluate punishment. This noun occurs 47 times in the NT and refers to the process or event of judgment. The noun can refer to a "trial" for a crime in human history (Matt 5:21-22). It can also refer to the evidence brought forth within a trial (John 3:19). It can refer to the positive resulting state after judgment, i.e., "justice" (Matt 12:18-20). -Garrett, J. K. (2014). Justice. In D. Mangum, D. R. Brown, R. Klippenstein, & R. Hurst (Eds.), Lexham Theological Wordbook. Lexham Press.