

APPOINTED FOR MEN TO DIE ONCE

Introduction

- 1) **Hebrews 9:27** – “And as it is appointed unto men to die once, but after this the judgment”
- 2) Oft quoted passage – deserves our closer study and proper understanding
 - a) There is much it teaches in its context and as an ongoing principle of truth

I) THE MEANING IN THE CONTEXT

- A) This verse is the beginning of a sentence that continues into verse 28
- B) It is found in a larger context of the writer of Hebrews discussing the greatness of the sacrificial death of Christ as our great High Priest (Heb. 7-10)
 - 1) Christ is a better High Priest with a better priesthood (ch. 7)
 - 2) Christ has a more excellent ministry as mediator of a better covenant (ch. 8)
 - 3) He is the mediator of that better covenant by means of His own death (ch. 9)
 - 4) Offering of the body of Christ is a better sacrifice that brought remission of sins (ch. 10)
- C) Chapter nine emphasizes the atoning death of Jesus (vv. 12, 14-16, 22)
- D) This offering of the body of Jesus in death was done only **once** (only one time, not often)
 - 1) Emphasis on “once” – 9:12, 25, 26, 27, 28; 10:10, 12, 13, 18
 - 2) Jesus died only once because it was a better sacrifice that brought complete remission of sins, eternal redemption, and perfection to those being sanctified

II) A CONSTANT PRINCIPLE OF TRUTH

- A) The writer of Hebrews used this constant definitive truth to illustrate that Christ only needed to die **once** in the same manner that all men die
- B) Any teaching that men are able or intended to physically die more than once is false
 - 1) **Reincarnation** is one such false doctrine – one can experience many lives and deaths
 - a) Taught by eastern religions (e.g. Hinduism, Buddhism) and the New Age philosophy
 - b) The wicked are reserved “under punishment for the day of judgment” (2 Pet. 2:9), not recycled into new earthly lives
 - 2) The dead have no more to do with life “under the sun” (Eccl. 9:2-6)
- C) Those raised in Bible times who would have died a second time (Lazarus, Dorcas, etc.) were miraculous exceptions to demonstrate God’s power over death and not typical of normal human experience

III) “BUT AFTER THIS”

- A) Death is **not** the end of it all (see also Eccl. 12:6-7; Lk. 23:43; Jn. 11:25)
- B) “But after this the judgment”
 - 1) The dead are kept by God to await the resurrection (Lk. 16:19-31; Phil. 1:21, 23; 1 Thess. 4:14)
 - 2) The dead raised up in the last day (Jn. 6:40)
 - 3) All dead appear before judgment seat of Christ (Acts 17:31; 2 Cor. 5:10; Rev. 20:11-13)
- C) “After this” will be eternity – everlasting life or eternal destruction (Matt. 25:46)
 - 1) Resurrection and judgment jointly take at the last day leading into eternity (Jn. 5:28-29)

Conclusion

We can all rejoice that Jesus suffered once for our eternal salvation and ascended to the right hand of God until He returns on the day of judgment that awaits all who have died. If we are not prepared, though, there awaits the “second death” (Rev. 20:14; 21:8), an eternal separation from God – no resurrection (2 Thess. 1:8-9). Will you inherit eternal life or death?