

“The JW Argument ‘There Is No Soul’”

One of the Jehovah's Witnesses' arguments is that if Lazarus was dead and his soul was in Heaven, why would Jesus resurrect him? They argue, why would Jesus take Lazarus away from what surely is a beautiful and wondrous place. Thus, there must not be a soul and when we die we just die. How do I answer this?

Thanks for your letter. The issue of personal survival after death (but before the resurrection) is best dealt with by an appeal to the authority of the Bible. If the Bible is a trustworthy revelation from God, and if the Bible teaches a conscious intermediate state between death and resurrection, then it logically follows that human beings do experience personal, conscious existence after death. So what does the Bible teach on this issue?

The Bible clearly speaks of personal conscious existence between death and resurrection. Indeed, even The New World Translation (1961), written by the Jehovah's Witnesses, seems to imply this. In Revelation 6:9-10 we read:

“And when he opened the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of those slaughtered because of the word of God... And they cried with a loud voice saying: ‘Until when, Sovereign Lord holy and true, are you refraining from judging and avenging our blood upon those who dwell on the earth?’”

Here the author of the Revelation sees the SOULS of those killed on the earth. These SOULS are in the presence of God and clearly conscious because they ask God a question and even receive an answer (see v. 11). But how can this be if they do not really exist between death and resurrection?

Other verses which teach conscious existence between death and resurrection include Philippians 1:23; 2 Corinthians 5:6-8; and of course Luke 16:19-31. There are many other which I will not take the time to list.

The JW's want to know why Jesus would raise Lazarus back to earthly life if he was already in a better place? First, although there may be a connection between Luke 16 and John 11, this is nowhere stated explicitly. Second, the Bible only hints at why Jesus raised Lazarus. It indicates that He raised Lazarus to inspire faith in His disciples (John 11:14), to reveal God's glory to the people (11:40), and to help the people believe that Jesus had come from God (11:42). But WHY Jesus raised Lazarus isn't even the issue. Jesus may have raised Lazarus for very good reasons that He didn't bother to tell us. The real issues are:

1. Is the Bible a trustworthy revelation from God? and
2. Does the Bible teach that we have a soul/spirit that continues to exist between death and resurrection?

If the answer to both of these questions is "Yes," then it really doesn't matter if we can say why Jesus raised Lazarus. He did it, and regardless of the reason why, the story demonstrates that human beings experience personal, conscious existence between death and resurrection.

Hope this helps.

Shalom,

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“I Have Questions About the Trinity”

I still have questions about the Trinity from your article [The Jehovah's Witnesses and the Trinity](#)—here are some of them:

John 17:1-3 The Emphatic Diaglott reads this this way: “Jesus spoke these things, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the HOUR is come: glorify THY son, that the son may glorify thee as thou didst give him Authority over all flesh, so everything which thou hast given to him, he may give to them even aionian life. And this is the AIONIAN life, that they may know thee, the ONLY TRUE God, and him whom thou didst send, Jesus Christ.”

If Jesus Christ is God Almighty, then who was he praying to?

When you quoted Rev. 1:16 and 17, you were taking them out of context, surely, because the first few verses show that God sent his angel (Jesus Christ) to John to give him the Revelation. I am assuming you are going to say that it was Jesus Christ who gave the Rev. to John. If so, then Jesus was quoting the words of God, his Father.

Are you saying that Jesus is God—equal in every way to God—or that he a powerful spirit being as God is? In the page dealing with the Trinity you mentioned that Jesus is the same nature as God, that is why I ask?

I have never believed the Trinity, but if I am wrong in not doing so, I want to find out.

Hello and thank you for your question.

Who is Jesus praying to? He is praying to God the Father. Many people misunderstand the doctrine of the Trinity. The Bible shows that there is one God who has revealed himself in three

distinct and separate persons, God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. What JW's and others misunderstand is that Jesus, the Father and Holy Spirit are all the same person. The Trinity does not teach Jesus is the Father or that the Father is the Holy Spirit or the Son is the Holy Spirit. The Trinity means there exists one God revealed in three distinct persons. As seen at the Baptism of Jesus in Matthew 3, the Father spoke from heaven, the Son arose from the water, and the Holy Spirit descended like a dove.

So who was Jesus praying to in John 17:1-3? It was God the Son praying to God the Father. I hope you go on to read the rest of the verse. 17:5 states, "And now Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began." Jesus shared in the glory of the Father. What a significant statement in light of Isaiah 42:8, where God the Father states, "I am the Lord, that is my name. I will not give my glory to another or my praise to idols." The glory of God is His alone. It is evident that this is the glory that belongs to God alone. Why does Jesus have it? Because He is God.

Let us look at Revelation 1:16-17. We are sure this is Jesus speaking because of the context. Verse 1:13 states, "And among the lampstands was someone like the son of Man." Is God the Father ever called the son of man? No, this is the title of Jesus (Daniel 7:13, Matthew 12:8, 32, and 20:18.) Jesus is not quoting the Father in 1:17-18, He is stating what is true of Himself. Look at the context. Verses 1:17-18 go together. The quote begins at 1:17b, "Do not be afraid. I am the first and the last." Then it connects to verse 18, "I am the living one; I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever!" Is this statement true of the Father or the son? Was the Father once dead and resurrected to life? No, that is clearly true only of God the Son, Jesus who died on the cross and rose from the dead. Jesus would not be quoting a statement from the Father that was not true of the Father. The Father was never dead and

resurrected to life. Context shows verses 1:17-18 are one quote and it is Jesus speaking about what is true of Himself.

Thanks for your question. Keep studying the Bible and the Bible only.

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