

# Asleep in Jesus

1Thessalonians 4:13-18

# Resting From Their Labors

- Esther 9:22 - “...rest from their enemies”
- Psalm 94:13 - “...rest from the days of adversity”
- Isa. 14:3 - “...rest from your sorrow, and from your fear and the hard bondage in which you were made to serve”
- Rev. 14:13 - “Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, Write: 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.' Yes, says the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them.”

# Resting From Their Labors

- Have you noticed that the Lord promised rest in this world from war, sorrow, fear, and even bad days, but He never promised rest from our labors, in this world?
- Any rest we legitimately have here is very temporary and in special places and circumstances
  - Ecc. 3:1 - “To everything there is a season, A time for every purpose under heaven”
  - Ecc. 7:14 - “In the day of prosperity be joyful, But in the day of adversity consider: Surely God has appointed the one as well as the other”
- “Heaven is a place of rest, but only for those who have labored enough in this life to need a rest in the life to come.” *(John Clark)*

# Resting From Their Labors

- We relax in the security of the local assembly because we are comfortable in a place where temptation is kept out for the most part
- We relax in the assembly of the saints because that is where we are comforted by the presence of God away from the pressure of the world.
- In a similar way, the righteous dead do not have to be vigilant or resist temptation any longer.

# Resting From Their Labors

- They have no more work to do, because there is no work to be done in Paradise
  - Ecc. 9:10 - “Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might; for there is no work or device or knowledge or wisdom in the grave where you are going.”
- They no longer have any temptations to resist, because temptation does not exist there
  - Ecc. 9:6 - “Also their love, their hatred, and their envy have now perished; Nevermore will they have a share In anything done under the sun.”

# What Is Written?

- The scriptures often speak of death as a sleep
  - Matt. 27:52 - “and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised”
  - John 11:11-14 - “These things He said, and after that He said to them, Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I may wake him up. 12 Then His disciples said, Lord, if he sleeps he will get well. 13 However, Jesus spoke of his death, but they thought that He was speaking about taking rest in sleep. 14 Then Jesus said to them plainly, Lazarus is dead.”

# What Is Written?

- The scriptures often speak of death as a sleep
  - Acts 7:59-60 - “And they stoned Stephen as he was calling on God and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. 60 Then he knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, Lord, do not charge them with this sin. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.”
  - Acts 13:36 - “For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell asleep, was buried with his fathers, and saw corruption”
  - 2Peter 3:4 - “saying, Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation.”

# What This Is Not

- Not the doctrine of soul sleeping -- souls are unconscious between death and the resurrection
- Not the doctrine of the Witnesses -- there is no consciousness until the resurrection, because the dead cease to exist

# What This Is

- Nowhere do the Scriptures say that the soul of the departed fell asleep
  - Sleep is a metaphor for death
  - Sleep is appropriate because it implies rest
  - Sleep implies an end of participation in the waking world
  - Sleep is a prelude to an awakening; the resurrection
  - The term sleep became a euphemism for death because of the sleep-like appearance of the body

# What This Is

- The dead are not unconscious; they are fully aware
  - Luke 16:22-24 - “So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. 23 And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. 24 Then he cried and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.’”

# What Is Written?

- God will bring them with Jesus, implies they are with Jesus now
  - 1Thes. 4:14 - “For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.”
  - 1Thes. 5:10 - “who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him.”
  - 2Cor. 5:8 - “We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.”

# What Is Written?

- God will bring them with Jesus, implies they are with Jesus now
  - Luke 23:43 - “And Jesus said to him, Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise.”
  - Phil. 1:21-23 - “For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain. 22 But if I live on in the flesh, this will mean fruit from my labor; yet what I shall choose I cannot tell. 23 For I am hard pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better.”

# What Is Written?

- We do not have an earthly form; we are waiting for our eternal form
  - 2Cor. 5:1-4 - “For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. 2 For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven, 3 if indeed, having been clothed, we shall not be found naked. 4 For we who are in this tent groan, being burdened, not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life.”

# What Is Written?

- We do not have an earthly form; we are waiting for our eternal form
  - 1Cor. 15:51-54 - “Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed-- 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. 53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: Death is swallowed up in victory.”

# What Is Written?

- We do not have an earthly form; we are waiting for our eternal form
  - Acts 2:27 - “For You will not leave my soul in Hades, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.”
  - 1John 3:2-3 - “Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. 3 And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.”