

# Intermediate Life

**Some believe that there are three stages of life for all human beings.**

1. Physical life from birth to death.
2. Intermediate life after death and before judgement.
3. Resurrection and judgement.

**Does this intermediate stage of consciousness really exist?**

First I will quote certain scriptures that clearly state what really happens after death.

**Ecclesiastes 9:5-6** [NIV] *“For the living know that they will die, but the dead know nothing; they have no further reward, and even the memory of them is forgotten. Their love, their hate and their jealousy have long since vanished; never again will they have a part in anything that happens under the sun.”*

**A direct statement from Holy Spirit inspired scripture which indicates no conscious experience after death.**

**Psalms 6:5** [NIV] *“No-one remembers you when he is dead. Who praises you from his grave?”*

**Do not have any conscious contact with the Creator God.**

**Psalms 104:29** [NIV] *“When you hide your face, they are terrified; when you take away their breath, they die and return to the dust.”*

**When we stop breathing we die and our physical body returns to the elements that it is composed of.**

**Ecclesiastes 3:18-21** [NIV] *“I also thought, ‘As for men, God tests them so that they may see that they are like the animals. Man’s fate is like that of the animals; the same fate awaits them both: As one dies, so dies the other. All have the same breath; man has no advantage over the animal. Everything is meaningless. All go to the same place; all come from dust, and to dust all return. Who knows if the spirit of man rises upward and if the spirit of the animal goes down into the earth?’”*

**The spirit referred to is the human spirit, [Job 32:8; 1 Corinthians 2:11], which returns to God who gave it, [Ecclesiastes 12:7].**

**Psalms 146:4** [King James] *“His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.”*

The human spirit **cannot** function after death, and we see from **Job 32:8** it is this spirit in us that makes us human and able to think and plan.

**This human spirit needs a body, and we have to wait until the resurrection to receive this new body, [1 Corinthians 15:42-54].**

**Job 14:14-15** [King James] *“If a man die, shall he live again? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come. Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands.”*

**There is no mention of any conscious experience between death and body change at the resurrection.**

**Acts 2:29, 34** [NIV] *“Brothers, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day.” ... “For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said, ‘The Lord said to my Lord: “Sit at my right hand”’”*

**King David, who had God’s Holy Spirit, [Psalms 51:11], is still in the grave,** only his human spirit is retained by God awaiting the resurrection and a new body.

**1 Thessalonians 4:13-18** [NIV] *“Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. According to the Lord’s own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord for ever. Therefore encourage each other with these words.”*

**Paul likens death to sleep from which we will awake from at the resurrection.**

**When we are asleep we know nothing of what is happening around us, just the same as after we die.**

Let us now examine the scriptures that some believe indicate conscious experience between death and the resurrection at Christ’s Second Coming.

**Luke 16:19-31** [NIV] *“There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores and longing to eat what fell from the rich man’s table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores. The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham’s side. The rich man also died and was buried. In hell, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. So he called to him, ‘Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.’ But Abraham replied, ‘Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony. And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.’ He answered, ‘Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my father’s house, for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.’ Abraham replied, ‘They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.’ ‘No, father Abraham,’ he said, ‘but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.’ He said to him, ‘If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.’”*

Like the story of the unjust steward, [**Luke 16:1-9**], this is a parable directed towards the Pharisees [**v14**] and current Jewish thinking that personal wealth was a sign of righteous living.

**This parable is not intended to teach us anything about the state of existence after death.**

**The subject being addressed by Jesus Christ was the stewardship of personal wealth.**

First let us examine the two characters involved in this parable:

**The rich man** – He was dressed in purple and fine linens that is the same material as the high priest. Such robes cost over £30, an immense sum when a labourer’s wage was about nine pence a day.

He feasted in luxury, the Greek word used is *“lamprōs”* meaning sumptuous gourmet feeding on exotic and costly dishes, and this he did every day.

What we see is indolent self-indulgence.

In the time of Jesus there were neither knives, forks or napkins. Food was eaten with the hands and in the very wealthy houses, the hands were cleaned by wiping them on hunks of bread which was then thrown away.

It was this bread that was thrown away that Lazarus was waiting for.

**Lazarus** – He was a beggar, covered with ulcerated sores. So helpless, he was unable to even ward off the unclean street dogs that pestered him.

Lazarus was a picture of helpless and abject poverty.

The scene then changes to the world after death.

The diseased beggar is rewarded and the rich man is punished.

This was directly opposite to what the Pharisees believed.

**The sin that the rich man had committed was that of looking at the hunger and pain in this world and being so self-centred that he did nothing about it, when the wealth he had could have done so much to help.**

**This was a warning for the rich to remember that the sin of this rich man was not that he did wrong things, but he did nothing.**

**Hebrews 11:6** [NIV] *“And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.”*

To please God we have to have faith.

**James 2:14-17** [NIV] *“What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, ‘Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed,’ but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.”*

**These Pharisees, depicted by this rich man, believed they were pleasing God by the way they conducted their lives, their riches being to them as proof of this.**

**Jesus shows that such a selfish lifestyle will not receive a reward in the Kingdom of God, but unless repented of, will earn only eternal death in gehenna fire.**

The rich man was dry mouthed in terror when he saw his fate.

What Jesus was showing the Pharisees their fate, having received the Old Testament scriptures and were about to see Jesus Christ, as One coming back from the dead, yet **not** repenting of their selfish ways.

**This is the lesson this parable is intended to teach us.**