

Awakening

Meanwhile, all the people were wailing and mourning for her. “Stop wailing,” Jesus said. “She is not dead but asleep.” They laughed at him, knowing that she was dead.—Luke 8:52,53

Jairus’ only daughter, a girl of about twelve, had died. Jesus assured Jairus and the people gathered around that the child was only “asleep.” He took her hand and she awakened!

When the brother of Mary and Martha died, Jesus said, “Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep.” Yet Jesus waited four days before awakening him—his body had already started to decay! (John 11:11-14).

It is interesting that Lazarus and the others who came back to life after being dead said nothing about where they were or what they felt during the time they were dead. Surely they could have described a beautiful heavenly home if they had been there, or tried to warn others if they had been in a fiery hell.

David is said to have slept with his fathers (1 Kings 2:10, King James). In 1 Thessalonians 4:13-15 Paul speaks of those who have “fallen asleep” in death. The word *sleep* has long been used to describe the death condition. Abraham “slept” with his fathers who were heathen people.

While death and sleep are not exactly alike, yet they are much the same. When you sleep, you know nothing of what is happening around you. Ecclesiastes 9:5,10 and Psalm 146:4 describe death in just that way.

When a man or beast loses the breath of life, he is dead. It is a

condition of quietness or unconsciousness—it is the absence of life. Mankind was promised an awakening from the sleep of death in the resurrection. Life on the human plane was lost in Eden but will be restored in the next age (Luke 19:10).

Jesus awakened only a few of those who died. This was to illustrate the resurrection in the Millennial age which will give everlasting life to all who are obedient to God’s laws.

We see then that when people die, they are not alive anywhere. They are “asleep in Jesus” in the sense that he is their promised Savior and Redeemer whose sacrifice, called the ransom, provided a way for their future awakening (Daniel 12:2). What a wonderful promise this is!



The Bible describes death as a sleep from which you expect to awake.