

# HOPEFUL DEATH

## What is going to happen when you die?

Ecclesiastes 7:2 It is better to go to a house of mourning than to go to a house of feasting, for death is the destiny of everyone; the living should take this to heart. NIV

## Why don't we normally take the reality of death to heart?

**It is unknown.**

**It is inevitable.**

Hebrews 9:27 Just as people are destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, NIV

**It is what it is.**

Luke 16:19-31 [Jesus said,] “There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. <sup>20</sup> At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores <sup>21</sup> and longing to eat what fell from the rich man's table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores.

<sup>22</sup> “The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried. <sup>23</sup> In Hades, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. <sup>24</sup> 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.’

<sup>25</sup> “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. <sup>26</sup> And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been set in place, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.’

<sup>27</sup> “He answered, ‘Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my family, <sup>28</sup> for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.’

<sup>29</sup> “Abraham replied, ‘They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.’

<sup>30</sup> “‘No, father Abraham,’ he said, ‘but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.’

<sup>31</sup> “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.’” NIV

## I don't want to think about it because I fear what I'll discover.

“You're just this speck. Just this speck. I'm just like the grains of sand on the beach. I'm just this speck. And the Earth really in the cosmic scheme of things is another speck. Which is orbiting the sun — which is a completely unremarkable star. I'm a speck on a speck with a bunch of other specks, orbiting a speck with billions of specks, in the middle of specklessness... **I am nothing.**”

– Bill Nye

“The universe we observe has precisely the properties we should expect if there is, at bottom, no design, **no purpose, no evil and no good, nothing but blind, pitiless indifference.** As that unhappy poet A.E. Housman put it:

‘For Nature, heartless, witless Nature

Will neither care nor know.’

DNA neither cares nor knows. DNA just is. And we dance to its music.”

– Richard Dawkins

“The implications of modern science, however, are clearly inconsistent with most religious traditions. No purposive principles exist in nature. Organic evolution has occurred by various combinations of random genetic drift, natural selection, Mendelian heredity, and many other purposeless mechanisms. Humans are complex organic machines that die completely with no survival of soul or psyche. Humans and other animals make choices frequently, but these are determined by the interaction of heredity and environment and are not the result of free will. No inherent moral or ethical laws exist, nor are there absolute guiding principles for human society. The universe cares nothing for us and we, **have no ultimate meaning** in life.”

— William Provine (1988), “Scientists Face It! Science and Religion are Incompatible”

### **We can be confident in our beliefs.**

John 2:18-19 The Jews then responded to him, “What sign can you show us to prove your authority to do all this?”

<sup>19</sup> Jesus answered them, “Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days.” NIV

### **We can rest in His work.**

Exodus 12:12-13 [The LORD said to Moses] “On that same night I will pass through Egypt and strike down every firstborn of both people and animals, and I will bring judgment on all the gods of Egypt. I am the Lord. <sup>13</sup> The blood will be a sign for you on the houses where you are, and when I see the blood, I will pass over you. No destructive plague will touch you when I strike Egypt.” NIV

1 Timothy 1:15 Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst.

Hebrews 7:25 Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them. NIV

Hebrews 10:11-14 Day after day every priest stands and performs his religious duties; again and again he offers the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. <sup>12</sup> But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, <sup>13</sup> and since that time he waits for his enemies to be made his footstool. <sup>14</sup> For by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy. NIV

### **We can live in hope.**

1 Thessalonians 4:13 Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope. NIV

Revelation 21:4 “He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.” NIV