

What Happens After This Life?

The Olam haba (afterlife) is rarely discussed in Jewish life regardless of the sect of Judaism. The Torah has no clear reference to afterlife at all. It does not have a concept of Heaven or Hell with regard to punishment or reward. Life is about human beings building a loving relationship with God. If we are constantly thinking about what we are going to get in return our focus is not on God but on ourselves.

Maimonides stated that each individual should study Torah and perform its commandments for their own sake, and not ask for what we will get in return. "Ironically-the greatest pleasure in relationships that we can experience in life isn't when we focus on what we can get in return, but rather when that's the furthest thing from our mind" (Ollie Anisfel, J-TV)

What is Kol Chesed HaTorah?

Meaning "Community of the Mercy of Torah", Kol Chesed HaTorah is a communal labor of love and unity. With leadership ranging the Jewish world from Modern Orthodox to Traditional Karaite and everywhere in between and beyond, Kol Chesed is open to all – Jew and ger toshav (righteous non-Jew) alike. Join us for services, classes, or conferences – either online or in-person at our headquarters in Camden, NY or at one of our many family satellite locations throughout the United States.

References:

Anisfeld, Ollie. "Video: Why Doesn't the Torah Mention the Afterlife?" YouTube, Aish.com, 22 July 2018, www.aish.com/sp/ph/Why-Doesnt-the-Torah-Mention-the-Afterlife.html?s=authorart

Forst, Rabbi Binyomin. "Reasons for Commandments." Aish.com, 27 Aug. 2011, www.aish.com/jl/m/pm/Reasons_for_Commandments.html

Harris, Robert. "Why God Needs a Dwelling Place." Jewish Theological Seminary, 4 Mar. 2006, www.jtsa.edu/.

Ludemann, Rabbi John. "What Is the Jewish Concept of the Afterlife?" ABRAHAM'S TENT

What is the Purpose of Life?

KOL CHESED HATORAH

Authors: Rabbi Ludemann & Cari Howell



Photo Credit: rabbisacks.org

Contact Us

We would love to hear from you. If you have any questions or comments let us know.

Kol Chesed
P.O. Box 83
Camden, NY 13316

Email: kolchesed@gmail.com

Web: <http://kolchesed.org>



What is the Purpose of Life?

Our lives are not meaningless. Each of us was created with a purpose and an important mission. The words that God spoke to each one of us at Mt. Sinai provide the direction and wisdom to guide us on that journey and make a connection with Him. As we take hold of the Torah in our lives we become part of an unbroken chain of tradition that reaches across time to the very birth of the nation of Israel. In the same way that our ancestor's actions have guided our paths, our actions are not for our own selves but for those we leave behind. Moses himself told us we are not to look toward the Heavens or across the universe (sea), to find how to live our lives, but to take hold of the Torah (Commandments) and apply it, here and now (Deuteronomy 30:11-21). We are to leave the world and the people in better shape than when we were physically here. How we relate to the world reflects our connection with the God who created it.



Photo Credit: myolivetree.com

See! I give you today (a choice of) a blessing and a curse. The blessing, when you listen to the commandments of God your Lord, which I command you today. (Deut. 11:26-28)

Creating 'Heaven' on Earth

Our purpose is to create a place for God to dwell in this world (Exodus 25:1-2, 8). The ultimate goal is that by observance of the commands of God we will in effect build God a Tabernacle within our hearts. This is done by our actions connecting with our intent. Every encounter we have in this world is an opportunity to elevate it to state of holiness and use it for the divine purpose of our souls. Our goal is to be the best at what we do, and leave a legacy. It is not something that happens when we die. It happens for generations to come. "But for those who love Me and keep My commandments, I show love for thousands of generations" (Exodus 20:6) The world is now, and it is for those you teach, and raise in your place.

What Is The Promise To Israel For Keeping the Commandments?

The blessings for keeping all the commands of the Mosaic covenant can be found in Deuteronomy 28. The curses for not keeping the commands can also be found in this same chapter. The blessings and curses are for this life in the land of Israel. A quick summary of the blessings are below.

- Blessed - fruit of your womb, fruit of your soil, fruit of your livestock.
- Remain in the land and enemies will not conquer.
- All the peoples of the earth will see that the name of the Lord is called upon Israel.
- Rain will fall on the land in the right time in order to bring produce.
- The Lord will establish Israel as His holy people.

One thing that is not mentioned in the list of blessings and curses is the promise of an everlasting life or hell.