

SWEET SLEEP in JESUS

Two passages that 'mid-Acts-ers' use to teach a 'pre-tribulation RAPTURE' both mention believers who **SLEEP** meaning saints who have **DIED**.

'Mid-Acts-ers' say that **ONLY** those who have been saved through PAUL's ministry will be raised at this 'supposed **SECRET** resurrection', which they believe will occur **BEFORE** the first resurrection (Rev 20:4-5; Rev 22:18, to which we should not 'add words') at the end of Daniel's 70th week.

As a side note, having a resurrection before what scripture says is the **FIRST** resurrection, is not counting right, nor accepting the word of GOD.

Back to the subject **the question is, WHO is asleep in Jesus ???**

Those who SLEEP in Jesus are the DEAD in Christ.

Paul also wrote about them to the saints at Corinth:

1 Cor 15:51-54 Behold, I shew 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 trump:
for the trumpet shall sound, and **the dead** shall 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 shall have put on incorruption,
and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass
the saying **that is written**, Death is swallowed up in victory. (see Isa 25:8)

Paul reminded them that lots of the saints in Corinth were already dead:

1 Cor 11:30 For this cause many are weak and sickly among you,
and **many sleep**.

The ones who are **the dead in Christ** that are **asleep**

are they that will come with Christ when **He returns from heaven:**

- 1 Thess 4:13-18** But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning **them which are asleep**, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.
- 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so **them also which sleep in Jesus** will God bring with him.
- 15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent **them which are asleep.**
- 16 For **the Lord himself shall descend from heaven** with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and **the dead in Christ** shall rise first:
- 17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up **together with them** (the dead in Christ, them that sleep in Jesus) in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.
- 18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.
(also see 1 Thess 1:10, 4:16; 2 Thess 1:7; Phil 3:20):

Were there any believers 'in Christ' BEFORE Paul?

According to the Bible YES, saints were 'in Christ' before Paul.

Shall we believe GOD or the 'mid-Acts-ers' who deny this truth?

Rom 16:7 Salute Andronicus and Junia, **my kinsmen**, and my fellowprisoners, who are of note among **the apostles**, **who also were in Christ before me.**

The 12 apostles were 'in Christ' before Paul, and so were others he named:

Gal 1:17 Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were **apostles before me**; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus.

PETER sent peace by his epistle to those who were 'in Christ'

yet 'mid-Acts-ers' **segregate them away from PAUL's converts:**

1 Peter 5:14 Greet ye one another with a kiss of charity. Peace be with you **all that are in Christ Jesus.** Amen.

JUDE also sent peace by his epistle to those who were 'in Jesus Christ'
 yet 'mid-Acts-ers' **disconnect them from PAUL's converts, too**

even though they are also **sanctified and preserved and called:**

Jude 1:1-2 Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James,
 • to them that are **sanctified** by God the Father, (also see John 17:19; Acts 20:32, 26:18; Rom 15:16; 1 Cor 1:2, 6:11; 2 Tim 2:21; Heb 2:11, 10:10-14)
 • and **preserved in Jesus Christ**, (also see Psa 37:28; Isa 49:6; 1 Thess 5:23)
 • and **called:** (also see Acts 15:17; Rom 1:6, 8:28-30, 9:24-26; 1 Cor 1:2,9,24, 7:17-24; Gal 5:13; Eph 4:1,4; Col 3:15; 1 Thess 2:12; 2 Thess 2:14; 1 Tim 6:12; 2 Tim 1:9; Heb 9:15; 1 Pet 1:15, 2:9,21, 3:9, 5:10; 2 Pet 1:3; 1 John 3:1; Rev 17:14, 19:9)
 2 Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied.

Are **JUST** the dead **who have believed through PAUL's ministry**

the only dead 'in Christ'?

*How about **LAZARUS?** Do you think Lazarus was **asleep in Jesus?** I do!*

Jesus loved Lazarus who got sick and died:

John 11:1-4 Now a certain man was sick, named **Lazarus**, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha.

2 (It was that Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.)

3 Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, **Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick.**

Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead for God's glory:

John 11:4-5 When Jesus heard that, he said,
This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God,
 that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.
 5 Now **Jesus loved** Martha, and her sister, and **Lazarus.**

Jesus explained to His disciples that Lazarus was dead

when He described that Lazarus was asleep:

John 11:11-14 These things said he: and after that he saith unto them,

Our friend **Lazarus sleepeth;**

but I go, that **I may awake him out of sleep.**

12 Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well.

13 Howbeit **Jesus spake of his death:**

but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep.

14 Then said **Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead.**

Lazarus was obviously a believer in Jesus. Lazarus and his sisters

hosted Jesus to supper in their home shortly before the passover:

John 12:1-2 Then Jesus six days before the passover came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead.

2 There they made him a supper; and Martha served:

but **Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him.**

Many Jews believed on Jesus because He raised Lazarus from the dead:

John 12:9-11 Much people of the Jews therefore knew that he was there: and they came not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead.

10 But the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death;

11 Because that **by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus.**

*How about **STEPHEN?** Do you think Stephen was **asleep in Jesus?** I do!*

Jesus was standing from His throne to receive Stephen's spirit

when he was stoned to death, and **fell asleep:**

Acts 7:54-60 When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth.

55 But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and **Jesus standing on the right hand of God,**

(Acts 7:) 56 And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and **the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.**

57 Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord,

58 And cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul.

59 And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, **Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.**

60 And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, **he fell asleep.**

*How about **'THE FATHERS'?***

*Do you think 'the fathers' were **asleep in Jesus?** I do!*

2 Peter 3:4 And saying, Where is **the promise of his coming?** for since **the fathers fell asleep,** all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.

The promises to 'the fathers' including the Gentiles

that were recorded by the prophets were established by Jesus:

Rom 15:8-9 Now I say that **Jesus Christ** was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, **to confirm the promises made unto the fathers:**

9 And **that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy;** **as it is written,** For this cause I will confess to thee **among the Gentiles,** and sing unto thy name.

*How about **MOSES?** Do you think Moses was **asleep in Jesus?** I do!*

Deut 31:16 And the LORD said unto **Moses, Behold, thou shalt sleep with thy fathers;** and this people will rise up, and go a whoring after the gods of the strangers of the land, whither they go to be among them, and will forsake me, and break my covenant which I have made with them.

Jesus said that Moses wrote about Him:

John 5:46 For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for **he wrote of me.**

By faith Moses experienced **the reproach of CHRIST.**

Surely, Moses slept in Jesus:

Heb 11:24-27 By faith **Moses**, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;
 25 Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;
 26 **Esteeming the reproach of Christ** greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward.
 27 By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.

*How about **DAVID?** Do you think David was **asleep in Jesus?** I do!*

Acts 13:36 For **David**, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, **fell on sleep**, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption:

1 Kings 2:10 So **David slept with his fathers, and was buried** in the city of David.

Jesus was David's son:

Matt 1:1 The book of the generation of **Jesus Christ, the son of David**, the son of Abraham.

David called Jesus Christ "Lord". Certainly David 'slept in Christ':

Matt 22:41-46 While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them,

42 Saying, **What think ye of Christ? whose son is he?**

They say unto him, The Son of David.

43 He saith unto them, How then doth **David in spirit call him Lord**, saying,

44 The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool?

45 If **David then call him Lord**, how is he his son?

(Jesus shut the mouths of the Pharisees about Himself and David):

46 And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions.

The prophet Nathan (2 Sam 7:2) prophesied (2 Sam 7:4) to David (2 Sam 7:5) that he would sleep with his fathers:

2 Sam 7:12 And when thy (David's) days be fulfilled, and **thou shalt sleep with thy fathers**, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom.

David also knew that he would see the Lord face to face whenever he **awoke out of sleep** to be in the Lord's likeness:

Psa 17:15 As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness:
I shall be satisfied, **when I awake, with thy likeness.**

John also knew our bodies, as sons of God, would be made like Christ's:

1 John 3:2 Beloved, now **are we the sons of God**, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, **when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.**

Paul knew too, that our bodies will be changed and made like Christ's when He appears from heaven:

Phil 3:20-21 For our conversation is **in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:**
21 **Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body**, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

'Mid-Acts-ers' constantly emphasize Paul's use of the term '**my gospel**'.

They make it out to be something **ENTIRELY DIFFERENT** from what **EVERYBODY ELSE** preached. Paul said the gospel he preached (my gospel)

was about Jesus Christ, David's son thus **connecting** David with Jesus:

2 Tim 2:8 Remember that **Jesus Christ of the seed of David** was raised from the dead according to **my gospel**:

*How about **JOB?** Do you think Job was **asleep in Jesus?** I do!*

Job 7:21 And why dost thou not pardon my transgression, and take away mine iniquity? for now shall **I sleep in the dust;** and thou shalt seek me in the morning, but I shall not be.

Job understood about sleeping until the resurrection when he will get a new body that has everlasting life. It was **NO MYSTERY** as 'mid-Acts-ers' claim that the dead in Christ (those that sleep in Jesus) will be raised and **CHANGED** and they will escape God's wrath:

Job 14:12-14 So man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens be no more, **they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep.**

13 O that thou wouldest **hide me in the grave,**
that thou wouldest keep me secret, **until thy wrath be past,**
that thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me!

14 **If a man die, shall he live again?**
all the days of my appointed time will **I wait, till my change come.**

As did David and John and Paul Job also knew that some day in the future 'ages to come' ... he would get a new body of flesh and see the Lord:

Job 19:25-26 For I know that my redeemer liveth (also see Isa 54:5, Hos 13:14, Gal 4:5, Tit 2:14),

and that **he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth:**
26 And though **after my skin worms destroy this body,**
yet in my flesh shall I see God:

God reassured us that His wrath is not against His beloved saints. Whether we are alive or asleep we will be united with Him when He comes, and we will live WITH Him forever, as heirs of salvation (Heb 1:14):

1 Thess 5:9-10 For **God hath not appointed us to wrath,**
but to **obtain salvation** by our Lord Jesus Christ,
10 Who died for us, that, **whether we wake or sleep,** we should **live together with him. (not a galaxy apart from Him but near Him)**

In the end of the world (Matt 24:3-51) after the 70th week of

Daniel's prophecy will be the resurrection of the dead:

Dan 12:1-2 And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and **at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.** (also see Phil 4:3)

2 And **many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake,**

- some to everlasting life,
- and some to shame and everlasting contempt.

Paul taught the same principle about 'many':

Rom 5:19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

Those that are dead in Christ that sleep in Jesus

- will be caught up and gathered together
- and separated from the lost.

This has been the story all along as Paul testified before Governor Felix:

Acts 24:14-15 But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers,

believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets:

15 And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that

there shall be a resurrection of the dead,

- **both of the just**
- **and unjust.**

In the end the just will be divided from the unjust:

Matt 13:49-50 So shall it be at **the end of the world:**
the angels shall come forth,
and sever the wicked from among the just,

50 And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

Because Christ rose again we can know that the saints will also rise:

- 1 Cor 15:16-20** For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised:
 17 And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.
 18 Then they also which are **fallen asleep in Christ** are perished.
 19 If in this life only we have hope in Christ,
 we are of all men most miserable.
 20 But now is Christ risen from the dead,
 and become the firstfruits of **them that slept**.

Who are 'them that slept'? Who slept in Christ?

These all knew of Christ, and had faith in Him

even when they didn't know His name:

- The fathers slept.
- Moses slept.
- Job slept.
- David slept.
- Lazarus slept.
- Stephen slept.
- The Corinthians slept.
- The Thessalonians slept:

Think about where we began now realizing **WHO** sleeps in Christ:

1 Thess 4:13-18 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning **them which are asleep**, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which **sleep in Jesus** will God bring with him.

15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent **them which are asleep**.

16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be **caught up together with them** in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and **so shall we ever be with the Lord**. (together where HE is, we will be - John 14:2-3)

18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

The scriptures comfort us with the Lord's tender mercy (James 5:11)
about those who have **died in Christ** those who **sleep in Jesus:**

Psa 116:15 Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints.

Until we sleep the sleep of death (Psa 13:3)

we can have sweet sleep.

We don't have to worry about God's wrath

because it is reserved for and will be against His enemies (Nahum 1:2):

Prov 3:24-26 When thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid:
yea, thou shalt lie down, and **thy sleep shall be sweet.**

25 Be not afraid of sudden fear, neither of the desolation of the wicked,
when it cometh. (as detailed by Paul in 2 Thess 1:7-10)

26 For the LORD shall be thy confidence,
and shall keep thy foot from being taken. (also see Psa 118:6, Heb 13:6)

'Mid-Acts-ers' **DIVIDE** the body of Christ away from all the other
saints of God. They **SEPARATE** the church of God by forming a group

INSIDE of PAUL and **EXCLUDING** those believers **OUTSIDE** of PAUL.

God made **ONE body** (Col 3:15, Eph 4:4) and all His saints are in it ---

.... whether we are alive or dead:

2 Cor 5:8-9 We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from
the body, and to be present with the Lord.

9 Wherefore we labour, that, whether present (alive) or absent (dead in
Christ, asleep in Jesus), we may be accepted of him.

This is David Dowell, saying, "Think about it!"