

Dear Judy,

Thank you for writing us at Christian Questions Radio. You wanted to know who the dead that do not rise were in Isaiah 26:14. You asked if they were purely evil.

To understand the meaning of Isaiah 26:14, we need to look at it in the context of the entire 26th chapter. Isaiah 26:1 opens by proclaiming, "In that day this song will be sung in the land of Judah." We believe that this scripture speaks of a future time, the dawn of the Millennial age, when Israel will be the first to recognize the establishment of Christ's kingdom on earth. Verse 9 reads, "When your judgments come upon the earth, the people of the world learn righteousness." This scripture refers to the Judgment Day where people will be rewarded for righteous behavior and chastised for wrong doings. In that day all who have ever lived will have an opportunity to come forth from their graves and learn righteousness. Even those who have done evil in their past lives will have ample time to make amends for their past sins. (See John 5:28-29.) However, if, after a period of time, they continue to do evil, they will be destroyed in the second death. (See Isaiah 26:10-11.)

Then, in verses 13 and 14 the Prophet turns his attention away from individuals and on to the plight of the former ruling governments of this world.

"O LORD, our God, other lords [governments or systems] besides you have ruled over us, but your name alone do we honor. They are now dead [no longer in existence], they live no more; those departed spirits do not rise. You punished them and brought them to ruin; you wiped out all memory of them." (Isaiah 26:13-14) We believe the "dead" in these scriptures do not refer to people, but to evil governments, systems, or powers ["other lords"] that will never be allowed to rise again, or come back into power. In the Millennial age and beyond, mankind will be ruled from above by Christ and his church. This new government will be merciful and just and will last forever. We learn of this celestial government in Isaiah 9:7. "Of the increase of his [Christ's] government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever."

You wanted to know who "the dead that do not rise" referred to in Isaiah 26:14. We believe they refer to former worldly governments, powers or systems. We hope we have answered your questions. Be sure to sign up for CQ Rewind at www.christianquestions.net. The service is free without obligation and will provide you with scriptural perspective on many questions and topics.

Sincerely,

Christian Questions Radio