



These past few months have been a little difficult for me. I am not speaking of your typical things that happen and you need to take care of and you just deal with them. No, I am talking about something a little different. Something that we do not speak of often. What I would like to discuss is the topic of death.

Over the past few months, many of those that I have loved and have been friends with have passed away. Many of them, praise the Lord, knew Jesus as their personal Lord and Savior and I know that they are with Him, rejoicing, right now. There have been others whom I have been very close to, but unfortunately, could never get them to the place of accepting Jesus as their personal Savior and Lord. I pray, that for them, they may have done that just prior to their last breath... I pray.

I know many of you after reading the above may have already left this essay. For those of you that decided to “stick around” and read a little further, I just want you to know that I do appreciate that. I know that this is a difficult topic to even think about none the less write about or discuss. However, I do think it is important to discuss this “event” that we all, one day, will ultimately experience.

There are many different approaches that we can take. I would like to take the most direct approach. So what is death and what should we think or know about it. Well, obviously, it is the passing from this physical life to the actual “real life” of every single person, whether they know it or not.

What I am referring to is the entering into the “spiritual realm” once we leave this “physical realm” or we can say our physical body. The “spiritual life” is actually who we really are. The Bible tells us that everyone will live for and throughout eternity in that “spiritual life.” However, where we live out that “spiritual life” is the more important question.

As a believer in the Bible, I truly believe that there are one of two places that an individual, who does pass from this life, can and will enter into. The Bible is clear on this. An individual

will, when they do ultimately pass from this physical realm, will either enter into the place of eternal paradise or the place of eternal damnation. The key fact in both of these areas is the word “eternal” – it is forever and ever!!!

Let’s face it, no one really wants to talk about or discuss this aspect of our lives. Yet, it is one of the most important topics to discuss. We know that as a believer in Jesus or as a believer in many other religions, the “afterlife” is a prime area of teaching and discussion. The earliest writings and/or documentation we have of the earliest people that inhabited this earth have all been studied and placed in our history books, chronicles, museums and other places.

We literally have many, many artifacts, relics, “pictures” that are on cave walls and other items of those early beings that tell us what those people thought about both this life and the life that, in their minds, would come when they left this earth. It is amazing when you look at those items and you truly see that belief in the afterlife was a fundamental value that all those people had who had lived on this earth so long ago.

Many of the earliest diagrams of these “cavemen” have pictures of the “afterlife” and of types of supernatural and/or spiritual beings in all different interpretations. Many of these are from thousands and even, some say, millions of years ago. I know that some believers are thinking that our Bible does not go back that far so therefore we cannot look or believe in anything prior to the time of Adam and Eve and the Garden. However, if we read the scriptures in their entirety we can see that there was a time prior to the Garden.

That was the time period when Lucifer came upon this earth because he was thrown out of Heaven. He wanted, or at least thought that he could, take the place of God and rule over everything. We know that is when 1/3 of the angels fell with Lucifer. Where did they fall to? They came to this earth and perverted it with sin.

We must remember that everything that took place upon this earth is not just found in Genesis chapter one. It is found throughout the Old Testament writings. The first five books of the Old Testament was given by God to Moses to tell the people of Israel why they were in that desert region. It was to let them know how and why they were there and that it was God who would see them through to the Promised Land – if they would let Him be their God.

This is what we read in the first chapter of Genesis. God was simply stating the simple facts of how their journey began. It was never meant to be a detailed teaching of all things. It was simply to begin telling the children of Israel why they were where they were – in the Sinai peninsula – preparing them to enter into the Promised Land. It was not to be a teaching about all the things concerning God and how all things came into being. It was to be a teaching to the children of Israel to simply tell them why God was going to use them to show the world who He was and who He truly is.

God gives a very short synopsis of it all in Genesis 1:1-2. Genesis 1:1 states simply, *“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.”* God originally created all things, including this earth and those beings and animals that were then placed upon this earth. The devil came upon this earth with all his sinfulness and all the “fallen angels” who followed him in his perverted try to overthrow God. We read of this infiltration of the forces of darkness in verse 2 as it tells us, *“And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep...”*

Wait a minute. Does God create anything that is “null” or “void?” Of course not. This is therefore, speaking of the time that Lucifer rebelled and was thrown out of heaven. He came to this earth, which had life on it. There were the animals that we call “dinosaurs” and there were also people on this earth that we refer to as neanderthal men or “cavemen,” etc.

There are many different aspects of that time period that have been studied and proven to be factually correct through fossils and other geological things found. However, and this is vital, they were all prior to the point when the Holy Spirit then came to restore order on this “sin-soaked” earth. We see this in the second part of Genesis 1:2, *“...And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.”*

We see that God through the power of the Holy Spirit, threw off the forces of darkness from this earth. Then the Father came forth and spoke the Word (Jesus). The first thing God did was to separate the Kingdom of God (Light; Day) from the kingdom of darkness (Night). - Genesis 1:3-5. God “kicked” Lucifer and the fallen angels and all the demonic spirits off of this earth and they were sent into outer darkness. Notice those terms are capitalized. This tells us that these are actual places.

Then we read that God continued on in the restoration of this earth to the place where He could then finally place Man (Adam and Eve) upon it - Genesis 1:6-28. However, as we know they sinned. Instead of God destroying Man, He chose to give them another opportunity. The process of God choosing out the children of Israel so that God could show the world that they needed to turn back to Him was then expressed through the rest of Genesis, Exodus, Numbers, Leviticus and Deuteronomy.

It is interesting to note that, as I had mentioned, from the earliest times of the “cavemen” and their drawings, we see there was always a belief of an afterlife. That was a fact even when Jesus walked the earth. He came to the Jewish people first but He always preached to the Gentiles. God desires none to perish but all to come to the saving knowledge of Jesus. Yes, the Jewish people believed in God but they then made God to be what they wanted Him to be and not who He truly was. They became their own “God.” But God also loved the Gentiles.

The Gentiles, did not know the true God. Yet they had thoughts of the afterlife and of some type of “gods.” This is found in the mythology and culture that came forth from Rome, Greece and other cultures. We read of their “belief” in the after life. Their lifestyle may have been far from God, however, they all had some kind of belief in an “afterlife.” The religions of Shintoism, Buddhism, Hinduism and even the Islamic faith – all have a belief of some type of an afterlife.

There are many examples of belief in the afterlife found in the Egyptian culture with their pyramids and other items found within the Egyptian tombs. They are, I believe, totally mistaken in their beliefs, but the fact remains that most of the people back in those times, as well as today, have some kind of “faith” in the afterlife.

Unfortunately, in our Western Culture many have been led astray from even the beliefs of these religions. So much to the point that many in the Western world do not believe anything concerning God nor the afterlife. This is a direct strategy of the devil. Yes, all the different religions are an attack and a strategy to keep people from recognizing the truth. However, the great threat is posed by the devil and his lies telling many that there is no such thing as any God or “gods” and that we simply just live, die and that is it.

That is where our faith in Jesus Christ is so very, very important. Reading and understanding the Word of God is so very, very important. There are many ways we can go. Jesus tells us in Matthew 7:13-14 that the gate is wide that will lead to destruction but the way is narrow that will lead to eternal life with the Father. That “way” is only found in and through Jesus.

Yes, there is only one way to eternal life. That “way” is believing that God the Father sent the Son of God, Jesus, to die for our sin; Jesus then took our punishment in hell but... on the third day He took the keys of death and life away from Lucifer and HE ROSE OUT OF HELL!!!

Jesus then took an offering on that first Resurrection Sunday to the Father and presented it onto the Father. Jesus then came back to this earth for 40 days to teach and prepare the Disciples for their ministry of telling the world about salvation through Jesus. Jesus then left so that the Father would send the Holy Spirit, who is still here with us, to help us in sharing this Good News with others as well as to help us live our lives as children of the Most High God.

Hebrews 9:24-26 tells us, *“For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us... but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.”* We were each created by the “hand of God.” Jesus now goes into our hearts and takes away all our sin. Thank you Jesus!!! However, it does not stop there.

Hebrews 9:27-28 tells us, *“And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment... and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.”* All those who believe in all that Jesus did will die - but it is only once. They will pass from this life into eternal life. This means that our physical body will be planted in the ground but our spirit and soul will go to be with our God until that day when our bodies will be resurrected, glorified and reunited with our spirit and soul.

Those that do not accept or believe in Jesus and all that He did will also die from this life. Unfortunately, the Bible is very clear that those that do not believe in Jesus will ultimately “die” **a second time**. They do not simply end up in that place that is known as “hell.” No, at that time their “un-glorified” body will be resurrected and it will “meet” their dead spirit and dead

soul. As mentioned, unfortunately, those who do not believe in Jesus will ultimately “die” a second time. That “second death” is the “lake of fire” for eternity.

We read of this in Revelation 21:8, “*But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whore mongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone: which is **the second death.***” Yes, This is where they will ultimately spend eternity. They will continually be in a place of perpetual torment - forever and ever.

The Good News, however, is for those that do truly believe in Jesus and truly accept Him and keep Him as the Savior and Lord. It tells us in Revelation 21:2-5, “*And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and **God himself shall be with them, and be their God.** And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.*”

This is the fulfillment of the covenant we now have with our God. It is found throughout the Bible – from Genesis to Revelation. But here it tells us that it is finished, it will be completed. It is brought to its fulfillment and it will be experienced by all those who stayed true to their faith in Jesus as their Savior and the Lord – their absolute, supreme and final authority.

Revelation 21:6,7 tells us - “*And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcomes shall inherit all things; and **I will be his God, and he shall be my son.***” Yes, God will forever be our God and we will forever be His people. This is the fulfillment of God’s forever covenant with those who love Him and have Jesus as their Savior and Lord.

We will be His “sons.” This is a “positional term” which means that **everything** that our God is and has will be ours for eternity. We will be rewarded with various “crowns.” However, I believe that will not matter to us. We will throw those “crowns” at the feet of our God for we shall see our God for who He is. We will all simply bow down before Him and worship the one and only true God – the Father, Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

We must realize that we will all die once. One day, this body will falter and it will be planted in the ground... but one day it will be resurrected and be reunited with my spirit and soul. It will be a glorified body that will no longer be affected by anything.

Physical death is inevitable. Romans 6:23a tell us, “*For the wages of sin is death...*” It will come to pass. We all will ultimately physically die because of the result of sin – not just in my own life but because of the sin that is in the entire world for this world will one day “pass away.” However, we will only need to “die once” if we believe and live our lives unto our God and believe in Jesus and all that He did. In that same scripture, it goes on to tell us, “*...the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord*” - Romans 6:23b

Adam experienced spiritual and physical death because of the sin that he committed. (Genesis 5:5). He could not have eternal life at that point when he died. He needed to wait for the “second Adam” to come to die for him and everyone else. That “second Adam” was Jesus Christ – the Messiah, the Son of the Living God, the second person of the Trinity.

For on that cross, Jesus also experienced spiritual and physical death (Matthew 27:50). We know this because the Father turned away from Jesus while Jesus was on the cross because of the sin that was placed upon Him which He willingly took upon Himself for each of us. That is why Jesus declared, “*My God, My God. Why have you forsaken me.*” The Father had to “turn away” because of the sin that was upon Jesus.

The difference is that Adam died because he was a sinner, but Jesus, who had never sinned, **chose to die as a substitute for sinners** (Hebrews 2:9). Jesus then showed His power over death and sin by rising from the dead on that Resurrection Sunday (Matthew 28; Revelation 1:18). Because of Jesus Christ, death is a defeated foe.

The scripture is clear as it states in 1 Corinthians 15:55 and Hosea 13:14, “*O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?*” In Jesus, there is no more “sting” in dying physically because our spirit and soul will go directly into our new life, our spiritual life, that is very real. We will be in eternity with our God.

Yes, it is appointed for every person to die from this life. For those who are “saved” and truly believe in Jesus as their Savior and Lord, our physical death will usher us into the presence of our God for the scriptures tell us, “*To be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord*” (2 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23). Oh what a day that will be!!!

It brings to mind the old Hymnal – “When We All Get to Heaven” by Elizah E Hewitt

Chorus:

When we all get to heaven, what a day of rejoicing that will be!

When we all see Jesus, we'll sing and shout the victory!