



# Death

Perhaps the saddest of all facts to face up to in this life is that sooner or later one's physical and mental health will give way to **decay, disease and death**. This inescapable sequence comes to all of us irrespective of colour, class or creed. **Decay, disease and death** may also be seen operating in the natural world all about us, from the lowest rock, plant or metal to the most complex of living creatures. All creation is subject to this dreaded process and everything about us is **dying by degrees** - wearing out before our very eyes.

Yet at the same time, there is another phenomenon at work in the universe. It is the **miracle of life**, abundant life, triumphant life; life that in a million different ways is the antithesis of death; life that overwhelmingly triumphs over the very worst that death can do.

In short, there exists throughout this universe two diametrically opposed processes, **decay and death** on the one hand and **triumphant life** on the other. "Cycles of Mother Nature" they are often called; but that is a sad understatement of a great truth, **that all the miracles of nature are in reality the handiwork of Jehovah (Yahweh)**, the God of Israel, the Creator of the mighty universe.

Yes, it is a fundamental fact that all **creation** owes its existence to Him; and nothing throughout the limitless expanses of the cosmos can continue to function without His authority and power. He can give life and He can take it away. He can build up, and He can break down. He can open and He can close. If you accept His mercy and live in accordance with His will, you will pass through the portals of the tomb and rise to live for all time. Ignore Him, resist Him, reject His offer of mercy and salvation and in the final Judgment you will be condemned and will cease to exist. **"You will then be as though you had not been."** This, in truth, is the essence of Bible teaching.

Let us now turn to the Word of God, the Bible, to find out what He has to say about death. What is death anyway? How did it come about in the first place? What happens to a person when he/she dies? Where do they go? Can the living communicate with the dead? Are the dead in heaven or hell or in some other place? Is death the end of existence, or is there an afterlife? And to address an immediate problem - How can we conquer our inherent fear of death?

## 1. The Penalty For Sin

According to the Scriptures, the penalty for sin is death - **eternal death**. And the only way for sinners to escape that penalty is to accept the Almighty's offer of mercy through His Son Jesus Christ, **Yeshua the Messiah**. The reader should beware of treating this oft-repeated truth with a contempt born of familiarity. Yes, **"the wages (reward) of sin is death"** and **"the soul that sinneth it shall surely die."** No matter what people may say to the contrary, that is what the Scriptures teach concerning the end result of sin. It is folly to ignore these facts.

(Ezekiel 33: 1-20, Romans 5: 12-13, Romans 6: 23)

## 2. Two Deaths

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The Bible speaks of two deaths and it is important to know the difference between them.

- The **First Death** is experienced by the whole human race, with the exception of those believers who will be alive when the Messiah returns to earth.
- The **Second Death**, the **REAL DEATH**, will be experienced only by the rejecters of Yahweh's mercy.

The **First Death** is compared in the Scriptures to a **'deep sleep;'** a sleep from which everyone who has ever died will arise at the resurrection, just as a sleeping child awakes in the morning when called by its parent. The first death, tragic though it obviously is, need not to be greatly feared.

The **Second Death**, however, is a very different matter. It is death in the fullest sense of the word - **the real thing!** It is the final, irreversible annihilation of the soul; the death from which there is no resurrection - no return. The second death is the **'absolute end of existence.'** It is, therefore, greatly to be feared.

(John 11: 11-14 & 24-26, Psalm 13: 3, Revelation 20: 12-15)

### 3. No Consciousness In Death

In death, the first or the second, there is no consciousness at all. This means that there is no **thought**, no **communication**, no **knowledge**, no **pain**, no **joy** and no **praise** in the grave. In fact, **'death is the very opposite of life.'** At death, people do not go anywhere - **they cease to exist.** The physical elements which once composed the body return to the earth, and the **'spark of life,'** the **'breath'** or **'Spirit of God'** returns to God who gave it.

The dead are incapable of communicating with the living, because they are not conscious of anything that happens on the earth. The Bible says: ***"The living know that they shall die, but the dead know not anything."***

(Isaiah 38: 18-19, Ecclesiastes 9: 5-6 & 10, Job 7: 9-10)

### 4. Spiritism

Who then, are the beings who speak through **mediums** at the many spiritist seances held around the world? They are the **"spirits of devils"** masquerading as departed loved ones. They are **'evil angels'** (evil spirits, lying demons, satanic agencies) posing as dead human beings. And all with the diabolic purpose of deceiving mankind into thinking that death is really not death at all - not even a sleep - but a higher form of spiritual existence which the Almighty is unwilling to tell us about.

Beware of that subtle and dangerous deception. The Bible plainly states that ***"the soul that sinneth, it shall die"*** and that ***"the dead know not anything,"*** nor can they communicate with the living. Any person or spirit, therefore, that teaches otherwise is most certainly not of God. See [Sermon](#) on Spiritism.

(1 Timothy 4: 1, Revelation 16: 13-14, 2 Thessalonians 2: 8-11, Isaiah 8: 19-20)

### 5. Where Are The Dead?

If the First Death is likened in the Bible to a **'sleep,'** then where are the dead sleeping? Are they in heaven or hell or in some other place?

The answers to this question is best understood if one considers a simple box, made of wood

and nails. Arrange the wood in a certain way and nail it together and lo! you will have a box. Remove the nails and separate the pieces of wood and of course you will cease to have a box. When dismantled the box didn't go anywhere, did it? It simply ceased to exist as a box. In its place remain a few nails and pieces of wood. Its maker could quite easily reassemble the box and bring it back into existence.

It is the same with the make-up of a human being. The Bible states that, *“The Lord God formed man out of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life: and man became a living soul.”*

Please note that man was not given a **“soul,”** a separate ethereal something which was immortal. Oh no! Man **“became a living soul.”** A **soul**, then is a being composed of two basic elements, the dust of the ground and the breath of life.

At death this process of creation is reversed; a person is dismantled, taken to pieces, as it were. The **breath** (the Spirit of God) leaves the body and the body returns to the dust of the earth. Like the box, that person, that soul, ceases to exist. That person, that soul, does not go up to heaven, or down to hell or to any other place. He/she simply **ceases to exist**. The soul, another term for **‘living being,’** could just as easily be reassembled by its Maker as could that box - and that is what will take place at the **Resurrection** - but it is important to remember that **souls do not go anywhere at death:** neither to heaven, hell or **Purgatory**. They simply cease to exist. This is the Bible teaching on this matter. (Genesis 2: 7, Ezekiel 37: 11-14, John 5: 25-29)

## 6. To Overcome The Fear of Death

And now we come to a vital question:

**How does one overcome the fear of death?**

The answer is simple. Become acquainted with the One who has already conquered death. Yes, accept salvation from **“death’s conqueror” - Jesus Christ**. Put your trust in him, follow him, **verbally acknowledge before some third party that you believe in the risen Lord**, and then take positive steps to **obey the commandments** of God.

If you do these things, then slowly the sweetest of miracles will overtake your mind. Unshakeable confidence will replace fear in your life; joy will replace sadness and peace will replace turmoil. In short, you will no longer fear death.

**Why?**

Because deep within your being you will know that you are a child of the Almighty God, a new person, a **living person**; one who may sleep the **“deep sleep”** of the first death, but certainly not one who will ever taste of the **REAL DEATH**, the second death, that **soul-annihilating event** from which no one will ever return.

(Matthew 10: 28, 1 Thessalonians 4: 13-18, Psalm 33: 18-19, John 3: 16,

**See Sermon** on The Resurrection)

## 7. The Hereafter

One important question remains to be answered. Will death ever come to an end; or will it continue to alternate with life throughout the endless cycles of eternity? Yahweh's Word assures us that one day death will come to an end. It will become obsolete - a thing of the past. Together with sickness, sorrow and pain, it will be debarred from human experience by the power of Yahweh the Almighty God of Israel, and will not even come to mind.

In its place, the ransomed of the LORD, those who have placed their faith in the Almighty and His Son Yeshua (Jesus), will have **Life**, abundant life, eternal life, life in the fullest sense of the term. What's more, the entire universe is going to be remade; and the heartbreaking process of “**decay and death**,” which is painfully apparent in this present world, will end. Says the Most High in Revelation 21:

*1: “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.*

*2: And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.*

*3: 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.*

*4: 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.*

*5: And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.”*

It is quite impossible for the present human mind to fully appreciate the extent of that astonishing statement. But it is true nonetheless. **Yahweh has promised to remake the whole universe and this time there will be no more sickness, sorrow and death.**

In other words, those who enter the Kingdom of God will ‘**live for ever**’ in a new universe where “**disease and death**” no longer exist. You will agree that that is something to really look forward to.

(1 Corinthians 15 especially verses 26 & 51-54, 2 Timothy 1: 10, where these points are proved beyond any doubt)

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**In The Son's Name For The Father's Glory**

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