

The Origin of Death

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Death, or the cessation of life, is described negatively in God's word (Isa. 25:8; 1Cor. 15:54-56). In contrast, the Genesis account of creation describes everything that God made as "good". Therefore, death could not have been part of this creation. Instead, it must have entered at a later date,

Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men... (Rom. 5:12a; NKJV used throughout unless otherwise noted).

Many people have died as a result of Adam's sin, and will continue to die because they are composed of corruptible flesh and blood,

...For if by the one man's offense many died, much more the grace (forgiveness) of God and the gift by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many (Rom. 5:15b; Ed. note in parenthesis).

Now this I (Paul) say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption (1Cor. 15:50; Ed. note in parenthesis).

As a result of Adam's sin, he was changed into corruptible flesh and blood and all his offspring are of the same composition, therefore, "as in Adam all die",

For since by man came death... (1Cor. 15:21a).

For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive (in a resurrection from the dead) (1Cor. 15:22).

Death is the consequence of sin (Rom. 6:23), and God regards death as the enemy of mankind. Therefore, it is incongruous that Adam would be originally created in a flesh and blood form, subject to death,

The last enemy that will be destroyed is death (1Cor. 15:26).

King David understood the connection between sin and death. In other words, because a choice was made to transgress God's command (Gen. 2:16-17) Adam became flesh and blood and died,

You turn man to *destruction* (SHD 1793; broken very small, hence as a subst. "that which is very small"; "You turn man to dust"), and say, "**Return**, (SHD 7725; *be restored* [through repentance of sin]; cf. Gen. 20:7, 14; 42:28; 43:12; Nu. 5:8) **O children of men**"(Ps. 90:3; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

David continued by saying that this flesh and blood condition will not last long, based on how God views time,

For a thousand years in Your sight are like yesterday when it is past, and like a watch in the night

(Ps. 90:4).

David noted that God is angry whenever sin is committed,

For we have been consumed by Your anger, and by Your wrath we are terrified. ⁸You have set our iniquities before You, our secret sins in the light of Your countenance. ⁹For all our days have passed away in Your wrath; we finish our years like a sigh (Ps. 90:7-9).

David acknowledged that man's average lifespan is short as a result of sin. The implication is that God did not want Adam to sin and die (Eze. 33:11),

The days of our lives are seventy years; and if by reason of strength they are eighty years, yet their boast is only labor and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away (Ps. 90:10).

Adam would have been created in the same manner as all the "sons of God" who were in the image of God. These "sons of God" came into existence when Almighty God "marked out the foundations of the earth". The sequence begins with the creation of the first Son of God, who was anointed from among his companions (Ps. 45:7; Heb. 1:9) and became known as Jesus Christ,

The Lord (God Almighty) **possessed** me (SHD 7069; created, begot (cf. Gen. 4:1), attained (cf. Prov. 1:5) at the beginning of His way, before His works of old (Prov. 8:22; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

This truth is corroborated by John,

In the beginning was the Word (cf. Rev. 3:14), and the Word was with (toward) God (Almighty), and the Word was (a) God (a spirit-being referred to as an "Elohim" in Hebrew, of which there are many; cf. Gen. 1:26). ² He was in the beginning with God (Almighty; cf. Jn. 20:17) (Jn. 1:1-2; Ed. notes in parentheses).

The creation of this spirit-being, who would become known as Jesus Christ, was established from the beginning of Almighty God's plan,

I have been established from everlasting, from the beginning, **before there was ever an earth** (Prov. 8:23; emphasis added).

While as yet He had not made the earth or the fields (outer places), or the primeval (beginning of the) dust of the world (Prov. 8:26; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

Jesus Christ was totally involved in the creative process that began in the spirit realm and included the creation of other spirit-beings. In fact, Christ rejoiced in the fellowship he had with them. It is important at this point to mention that terms like "earth" or "world" do not always refer to physical realities,

...When He marked out the foundations of the earth, ³⁰Then I was beside Him, as a master craftsman; And I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him, ³¹Rejoicing in His inhabited world, and my delight was with the sons of men (Prov. 8:29b-31).

Another account dealing with the creation of these "sons of God" confirms they were living in harmony and joy with each other. This indicates that sin had not been

committed yet in the spirit realm,

Where were you (Job) when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell Me, if you have understanding. ⁵Who determined its measurements? Surely you know! Or who stretched the (measuring) line upon it? ⁶To what were its foundations fastened? Or who laid its cornerstone (ref. to Christ: cf. Mt. 21:42; Ac. 4:11; 1Pet. 2:6-7), ⁷When **the morning stars sang together** (cf. Isa. 14:12; Rev. 22:16), **and all the sons of God shouted for joy?** (Job 38:4-7; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

Sons of God are also referred to symbolically as “trees”, whether they are loyal or disloyal. The next scriptural examples describe rebellious “sons of God”, followed by faithful “sons of God”,

I made the nations (of disloyal angels) shake at the sound of its fall, when I cast it down to hell (Sheol; the grave) together with those who descend into the Pit; and **all the trees of Eden...** (Eze. 31:16ff; Ed. notes in parentheses).

Then **the trees of the woods shall rejoice** before the Lord, for He is coming to judge the earth (1Chr. 16:33; emphasis added).

Because Christ is described as both a “Son of God” and the last Adam, the first Adam would also be a “son of God”. Consequently, prior to committing sin, Adam would have been a spirit-being similar to other “sons of God”. The timing of Adam’s creation in the spirit realm is not known currently, or the time of his rebellion and transformation into flesh and blood,

And so it is written, ‘The first man Adam **became** a living being.’ The last Adam **became** a life-giving spirit (1Cor. 15:45; emphasis added).

As death is the result of sin, if Adam sinned he would take on a physical (mortal) body and die,

The sting of death is sin...(1Cor. 15:56a).

Since the cause (sting) of death is sin, had Adam and Eve never committed sin, they would not have taken on a physical existence and ultimately die.

Death equals defeat; not victory. Victory is only possible through repentance of sin, followed by baptism and trusting that Christ’s sacrifice covers all the sins that any individual committed previously,

But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ (1Cor. 15:57).

The Genesis account is cloaked in figurative and symbolic language making it difficult to understand Adam’s original creation correctly. He and the woman who would later become his wife were part of a spirit-family. As with any family, certain terms or phrases can be used to describe it. God applied a phrase to Adam and the woman’s creation that is familiar in the human realm, even though it is not meant literally. This is confirmed by other scriptural examples as well,

And Adam said: This (woman) is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh...(Gen. 2:23a; Ed.

note in parenthesis).

And Laban said to him (Jacob), 'Surely you are my bone and my flesh.' And he stayed with him for a month (Gen. 29:14; Ed. note in parenthesis).

Jacob was not literally made of Laban's bone or flesh. Instead, this phrase was used metaphorically to describe Laban's family. This same principle was used when Adam described the woman that was given to him as a helper. In other words, she was a unique creation of the same family or kind as Adam. Adam was created after the "God kind" which is spiritual,

Then God (Heb. Elohim) said, 'Let us make man in Our image, according to our likeness...' (Gen. 1:26a; Ed. note in parenthesis).

In 1 Corinthians 12:12-31, Paul referred to different aspects of a flesh and blood body to emphasize the importance of caring for one another in the spiritual Body of Christ. This physical comparison is recognized as picturing spiritual realities and not meant literally. In the same manner, a literal rendering of "bone of my bones" in Genesis 2:23 will prevent the reader from understanding the spiritual creation that God described using figurative language (Lk. 8:10).

King Solomon knew that Adam was originally righteous, and therefore would not have been created in a flesh and blood form that would die,

Truly, this only I have found: that **God made man** (SHD 120; Adam, first man) **upright**, but they have (since) sought out many schemes (Ecc. 7:29; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

Paul compared a sinful life to an old man who grows corrupt, but a life of obedience to a new man who walks in righteousness. This new man is synonymous with Adam when he was first created in God's image,

And that you put on **the new man, which was created according to God in righteousness** and true holiness (Eph. 4:24; emphasis added).

If Adam was originally created as a flesh and blood corruptible man, his form of existence would have been synonymous with sin. As God does not create sin, Adam could not have been made in the image of sin, which is flesh and blood. Death is a direct result of sin, and sin originated with the "father of lies", who is Satan (Jn. 8:44). Therefore, every sinner is in the image of Satan who will be transformed into a flesh and blood man and die (Mal. 4:3; cf. Rom. 16:20). Adam was not originally created in this image,

Those who see you (Satan) will gaze at you, and consider you, saying: '**Is this the man** who made the earth tremble. Who shook kingdoms, ¹⁷Who made the world as a wilderness and destroyed its cities, who did not open (would not release) the house of his prisoners (Isa. 14:16-17; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

Jesus Christ came as a flesh and blood (mortal) human being (Jn. 1:14), which is a constant reminder of the bondage associated with sin and death, even though Christ did not commit any sin,

For what the law (of animal sacrifices) could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son **in the likeness of sinful flesh**...(Rom. 8:3a; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, he himself likewise shared the same, that through death he might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil,¹⁵ and **release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage** (Heb. 2:14).

Although Jesus Christ became flesh and blood to fulfill what the animal sacrifice system could not (Heb. 9:12; 10:4), he will not return in the same composition because it represents sin which has now been dealt with once and for all (Rom. 6:10; Heb. 7:27; 9:12; 10:10,

So Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for him he will appear a second time, **apart from sin** (not in a flesh and blood body), for salvation (Heb. 9:28; emphasis added).

When a person breaks the law of God they have earned the curse of the law which is death (Rom. 8:2). God would not create Adam and Eve with the curse of the law in their very existence prior to them committing sin. They were not formed in the beginning as mortal human beings with the death penalty already in them. However, since death is the reward of sin (Rom. 6:23), they were given physical bodies following their sin. This is why mankind must be "RE-deemed". We must be bought back by Christ's offering, through repentance, in order to return to our prior state before the rebellion in Genesis 3:1-6. This process will see its fulfillment in a resurrection from the dead,

Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law (the death penalty; cf. Rom. 6:23a)... (Gal. 3:13a; Ed. note in parenthesis).

It was Christ's purpose – to be born a human being ("born of a woman") with the death penalty in his very existence (i.e. "born under the law"), to RE-deem those who are under the law (under the penalty of death), that we might receive the adoption as sons, eagerly awaiting the resurrection following death,

But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law,⁵ to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons (Gal. 4:4-5).

Until Satan is removed, sin will continue to reign and mankind will remain his prisoner. Our release from everlasting death is only made possible through Christ's sacrifice on behalf of every repentant sinner,

For if by the one man's offense (trespass; sin) death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life (everlasting) through the One, Jesus Christ (Rom. 5:17; Ed. notes in parentheses).

Adam and Eve's sin resulted in a transformation that is described using figurative language,

Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked...(Gen. 3:7a).

Paul noted that because of Adam's sin "many were made sinners" (Rom. 5:19). However, according to God's word, no one is guilty for the sins of their parents (Eze. 18:20). Therefore, "many were made sinners" can only refer to the flesh and blood bodies that Adam and Eve were given as a result of their sin, and that all of their progeny have inherited. Although the progeny do not assume the guilt of their parents, they nonetheless are affected by the consequences of their parent's decisions and actions,

Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam to Moses, **even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam**, who is a type of him who was to come (Rom. 5:14; emphasis added).

David associated his birth from two flesh and blood human beings with sin because of its consequence, which is death,

Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me (Ps. 51:5).

Anyone composed of flesh and blood has the death penalty in their mortal bodies. Paul describes this as one of God's laws,

For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus (through God's Holy Spirit) has made me free from **the law of sin and death** (Rom. 8:2; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

Without God's Holy Spirit working in someone's life, they automatically "serve the law of sin." In other words, the law requires the death penalty due to sin (Rom. 6:23a; cf. 7:25). Why would Adam and Eve be created with bodies that naturally serve the law of sin? If Adam and Eve were created physical, they would have to die even if they didn't commit sin. Also, the law of God could not accomplish what it was intended to do because of the weakness of flesh (Rom. 8:26a), combined with its hostility to God's law,

For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. ⁶ For to be carnally (fleshly) minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. ⁷ Because **the carnal mind** is enmity against God; for it **is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be** (Rom. 8:5-7; cf. Isa. 30:9-10; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

According to God's word, if Adam and Eve were originally made out of flesh and blood, they could not have pleased God,

So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God (Rom. 8:8).

Again, if any human being repents of sin and begins living in newness of life (Rom. 6:4), they will be led by God's Holy Spirit and, although their mortal body will perish, they will inherit everlasting life at the resurrection of the dead,

And if Christ is in you, (although) the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness (provided by Almighty God through the sacrifice of Christ; cf. 1Pet. 1:1) (Rom. 8:10; Ed. notes in parentheses).

Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the holy spirit (Ti. 3:5; emphasis added).

So everyone's flesh and blood composition is directly associated with sin and the only way this body of sin can be removed, or "put off", is by the circumcision of Christ (i.e. humility and willingness to shed his blood on behalf of every repentant sinner); followed by repentance and baptism,

In him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, ¹²buried with him in baptism, in which you also were raised with him through faith (trust) in the working of God (Almighty), who raised him from the dead. ¹³And you, **being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh**, He has made alive together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses (Col. 2:11-13; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

According to the next scripture, God considers any flesh and blood person as spiritually uncircumcised,

And you, being dead in your trespasses and **the uncircumcision of your flesh**, He (Almighty God) has made alive together with Him (Christ), having forgiven you all trespasses (upon repentance) (Col. 2:13; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

In an "uncircumcised" state, no human being can have fellowship with God (Gen. 17:14; Ex. 12:48). As Adam did have fellowship with God, and other spirit-beings described figuratively as "trees" (Gen. 2:16), he could not have been originally created "flesh and blood". Instead, Adam and Eve were originally created in the spirit-image of God, but preferred to believe Satan's lie resulting in their rebellion and death. This death meant becoming mortal flesh and blood human beings.

Everyone who has been born since is likewise composed of this same mortal material that will perish. Because Satan succeeded in deceiving Eve, she and her husband broke the law of God, which is sin, and therefore became mortal and died (Rom. 6:23). Everyone born from Eve is also mortal and will die.

Therefore, Satan through his many deceptions is the originator of both sin and death, and guilty of murder (Jn. 8:44; Rev. 12:9; Isa. 14:4-16; Eze. 28:11-19; 1Jn. 3:8). As murder is a capital offense punishable by death, Satan will forfeit his life at a time of God's choosing,

Moreover you shall take no ransom for the life of a murderer who is guilty of death, but he shall surely be put to death (Nu. 35:31).

Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him (1Jn. 3:15; cf. Rom. 16:20).

The entire creation in heaven and earth awaits the completion of God's plan of salvation, which includes Satan's final judgment (Rom. 8:19-23; 1Cor. 6:3; 2Cor. 5:4-8, 10). Hopefully, every sinner in both these realms will repent of sin and be restored (2Pet. 3:9).

This document is the collaborative work of individuals who believe God's truth should be given freely (Mt. 10:8; 1Cor. 2:12; 2Cor.11:7; Rom. 10:14-21) and the message of the one true God should be made available to all nations (Mt. 24:14) as a prerequisite to the return of Jesus Christ as King of kings (Mt. 17:10; 19:17; Mk. 9:11; Lk. 1:17; Rev. 19:11-16).

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