



September 26, 2025

Death...not the End of the Story!

Warm hellos once again friends, brethren, fellow laborers, spiritual family, and scattered children of God from here on the Gulf Coast of lower Alabama. My wife and I pray and hope this finds you doing well, and that again your week has been blessed.

I reflected back recently on an event in 2020. While returning from dropping our children and granddaughter off at the Pensacola airport, we had a hair raising incident. It had been raining quite heavily off and on while on our way to the airport. Returning, although not raining, the pavement or roadway was still wet. When we entered an entrance ramp to the interstate, we began to slide, as if someone had spilled oil or gasoline onto the roadway which mixed with the water. It was not hydroplaning, having experienced that before. It also reminded me of driving on black ice from when we lived in the north many years ago.

Once my arms settled down and stopped shaking, having gained control of the vehicle, and thanking God for His protection, my mind quickly reverted back to another incident in 2014 in Charlotte, NC where I pastored at that time. Below is parts of a letter I wrote to the brethren we served at that time. It's still as applicable today as it was back then.

- "Two weeks ago on Friday I was involved in a car accident. Multiple times in my life I have faced death and it's never been pleasant. This accident was no exception. I am still working through the pain and related issues, even as I write. My wrists hurt the most, and it is difficult to type. I'm gradually able to sleep a bit longer at night as I heal.

I know some of you have some health challenges that cause pain and discomfort and disability that affect the quality of your life. For most of us, aging does take a

toll as our bodies wear out and we become more vulnerable to various stresses and circumstances.

I've pondered what would have happened if Adam and Eve had partaken of the tree of life? Would they have continued living forever as human beings? Did partaking of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil somehow change their physical bodies and vulnerability to aging?

We can take note of the long life spans of pre-Flood man. "*So all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred and sixty-nine years; and he died.*" (Genesis 5:27) Following the Flood, the life spans of humans rapidly declined. "*The days of our lives are seventy years; And if by reason of strength they are eighty years . . .*" (Psalm 90:10) Various theories have been proposed to explain this, such as the blocking of harmful rays by the water canopy that was in place before the Flood, or the presence of a higher Oxygen content of the pre-Flood atmosphere. We simply don't know for sure.

I've looked at the question of whether man could live forever as a physical human being by examining the effect of the Third Law of Thermodynamics.

Physical systems deteriorate from a higher energy level to a lower energy level over time. It may take a very long time, but the sun and other stars will eventually burn out. The speed of rotation of the Earth will eventually slow. I see this law impacting the life spans of physical beings such as man and animals. No matter how well one takes care of his health he or she will eventually age and die. The Book of Hebrews tells us "*And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment*" (Hebrews 9:27) Death is the natural result of being human, and being subject to the effects of aging, accident and disease.

The apostle Paul writes, "*For the wages of sin is death . . .*" (Romans 6:23) However, we should note carefully, that this death is not the natural death that takes place because we are limited physical human beings with a limited life span.

This death that sin brings is the second or eternal death. That is why sin is so serious and has such sobering consequences.

The good news is, our loving and gracious and merciful God has provided a way to escape this eternal death sentence! The last half of Romans 6:23 states "*but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*" Jesus gave up His past eternal life and remained dead for three days and three nights. (Philippians 2:6-8; Romans 5:6, 8; Mark 8:31; 1 Corinthians 15:3) He paid the death penalty that we and all humans have incurred.

For the majority of mankind their time of judgment will be in the future after they die physically and are resurrected as referred to in Hebrews 9:27.

A good question to ask is what's the difference between judgment and sentencing? Judgment is part of an ongoing process. God is in the process of judging Christians today (1 Peter 4:17).

Drawing a parallel with human courts, judgment involves the gathering of evidence, weighing or evaluating that evidence, and the passing of a final sentence. Anyone, living or dead, whose mind God did not open to spiritual understanding hasn't really begun the judgment process that ends with a decision (sentence) of eternal life or of eternal death (not eternal torment in an ever-burning hell fire which many believe, and simply is not in the Bible).

Of those to be brought to life in the second resurrection, Jesus said it would be "*more tolerable*" for some than for others (Matthew 10:15). If God resurrects these people only to sentence them to death, Christ's comments wouldn't make any sense.

If all were to die the second death, judgment would not be "*more tolerable*" for one than for another. But clearly, their judgment is incomplete, and hence, God brings them back to 'physical life'.

Revelation 20 summarizes this process. *"And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books."* (v.12) The books of the Bible are opened to their understanding and to be used as the basis for teaching God's standards of righteous behavior. Many will come to repentance and willingly participate in the process of judgment which will culminate in many names added to the Book of Life and being given eternal life.

The "resurrection chapter" explains the limitations of this physical body. *"So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body."* (1 Corinthians 15:42-44)

You and I so look forward to that spiritual and spirit composed body that will be like that of Jesus, the firstborn from the dead! (1 John 3:2; Revelation 1:5) We'll then live forever and that old enemy "death" will be defeated! God speed that day!" -

Please don't get discouraged by all that is going on around us. Don't let the daily physical things in your life sidetrack you. These physical things will pass away. These bodies won't last forever. But, that's not the end of the story.

Let's you and I stay strong, vigilant, and spiritually focused on the God who has called us, allowing Him to live in us, looking forward to that coming Kingdom of God! And, like I often say, it IS coming! That's a promise.

Arms up friends! Our sincere prayers and thoughts are with you daily. Thanks in advance for your heartfelt prayers for us.



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