

## **TOPIC: DEATH IS NOT THE END**

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### **SUMMARY OF MESSAGE**

Death is not a popular topic. In some countries, their buildings do not have level 14 or 13 due to superstition. Death, however, is certain. Let's run through some points.

#### **1. Understanding Death**

##### **a. The certainty of death.**

One question posed in the ancient of times was this:

*Job 14:14*

*If a man dies, will he live again?*

One philosophy of death is this – it is annihilation. Another way of thinking about death is this: if one is a good man, he may become a human being in the next life. Otherwise, he may become a rat.

Romans 3:23

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

If Adam had not sinned, he would have lived forever. When he sinned, it was the beginning of corruption.

Romans 6:23

For the wages of sin is death.

Heb 9:27

It is appointed for men to die once but after this the judgment.

Two men did not die, i.e. Enoch and Elijah. Bible scholars believe these to be the two witnesses who would turn up but be killed prior to the second coming of Christ. Lazarus and the daughter of Jarius were raised to life but eventually they died.

##### **b. The duration of our lives on earth.**

As a result of sin, man suffers the deterioration and corruption of the body. In Genesis 5, from the time of Adam to Noah, the lifespan has been reduced to an average of hundreds of years. The deterioration continued till the time of Moses and the lifespan was further reduced to one hundred and twenty years.

Genesis 6:3

And the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he is indeed flesh, yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years.

Because of sin, corruption happens and hence some people die before their due time.

Ecclesiastes 7:17

Do not be overly wicked, nor be foolish. Why should you die before your time?

Psalm 90:10

The length of our days is 70 years or 80, if we have the strength.

If we are destined to die at 60 or 70 but we die at twenty, or thirty, we are dying before our due time. How is this so? A few reasons for this:

**i) Overly wicked - It is because of wickedness.**

Gen 38:7

But Er, Judah's firstborn, was wicked in the sight of the LORD, and the LORD killed him.

**ii) Foolish**

Luke 12:20-21

But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided? So is he who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God.

We may have a lot of credit cards but if we make the earth our total obsession, we are fools. If there are idols in our hearts, i.e. such things that possess and obsess us, we become fools.

1 Sam 25 tells us the story of Nabal. He was rich but ignorant that his life was hanging at the edge. At any time, his territory could have been invaded yet he didn't know. Later he died of a heart attack.

Eph 5:15-17

See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time because the days are evil. Therefore do not be unwise but understand what the will of the Lord is.

We are exhorted by Paul to walk circumspectly. Every step is deliberate. It is about walking carefully, not as fools but as wise.

Time has two meanings: 'Chronos' refers to time in sequence and Kairos' refers to the significant moments when God speaks. When He speaks, respond to Him.

Story was told about Belshazzar, a fool who had no regard for God. He used the vessels taken from the temple which had been in Jerusalem and when he called for Daniel, he was told that he was measured and found wanting. He was killed the same night by the Medo-Persians. Romans 1 tells us about the foolish things that man, without the fear of God, could do. The lack of the fear of God is the beginning of foolishness.

Matthew 7:24-27

But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand and the rain descended and the floods came and the winds blew and beat on that house and it fell. And great was its fall.

If you hear the word of God and leave this place as if nothing impacts you, you are a foolish man. Who is the wise man? It is he who hears and does something about what he has heard. We are living in end times where the winds of life will blow very hard. Foolishness may lead us to die before time.

### **iii) We die before our due time also due to the consequence of the law of sin and death.**

- Sickness and diseases cause premature deaths in babies, children and some adults.
- Accidental deaths due to own fault or that of others
- Fights, murders, killings and wars
- Natural calamities resulting in deaths.

### **iv) What happens when we die?**

1 Thess 5:23

Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely and may your whole spirit, soul and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We are a 3-part being. We have a soul living in a physical body. Soul comprises of three functions –

- a) mind – the way we think
- b) emotion – the way we feel
- c) will – the way we respond and make decisions.

We are spirit being and hence we can connect with God. We are aware of the spirit world of angels and demons. We are physical beings subjected to natural laws and natural dynamics.

As in Genesis 2:7, we are made from dust. God created our spirit. God breathed and man became a living soul. When we die, body returns to dust. We are just a few grams of minerals. Therefore, it is a non-issue whether we are buried or cremated. It is a non-issue whatever rituals are performed once the person is dead. Hence, pray for our loved ones. Don't wait till they are dying in hospital. Some of them may not have prayed the full sinner's prayer but they believe in their hearts, like the thief beside Jesus on the cross. God would still save them. God knows their heart.

### **v) The righteous dead.**

- a) Prior to Christ's resurrection, they go to paradise.
- b) After Christ's resurrection, they go to heaven. 2 Sam 12:23

### **vi) The unrighteous dead.**

For the unrighteous dead, the person goes to Hades/Sheol until the second resurrection, i.e. after the 1000 year millennial reign of Christ on earth.

## **Understanding the Underworld**

### **1. Hades (Greek); Sheol (Hebrew)**

- This is the place of the departed unrighteous dead.
- They remain here until the second resurrection.

See Revelation 20:5-6, 11-16

### **2. Paradise**

- This was the place of the departed righteous dead.
- After Christ's resurrection, He descended to paradise to set them free from their captivity under Satan and led them up to heaven.

Eph 4:8-10

<sup>8</sup> Therefore He says:

“*When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, And gave gifts to men.*” <sup>9</sup> (Now this, “*He ascended*”—what does it mean but that He also first<sup>[c]</sup> descended into the lower parts of the earth?

<sup>10</sup> He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.)

Paradise is now empty.

Luke 16:19-26

<sup>19</sup> “There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day. <sup>20</sup> But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate, <sup>21</sup> desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man’s table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. <sup>22</sup> So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham’s bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. <sup>23</sup> And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

<sup>24</sup> “Then he cried and said, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.’ <sup>25</sup> But Abraham said, ‘Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented. <sup>26</sup> And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.’

The rich man and Lazarus were in different places. Each of these places is complete in and of itself. One cannot cross over from one place to another.

### 3. Tartarus

2 Pet 2:4

<sup>4</sup> For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast *them* down to hell and delivered *them* into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment;

This place is for those angels who committed sex with women and produced giants. (Genesis 6:14) Hades and Tartarus will be cast into the lake of fire.

Jude 6

<sup>6</sup> And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day;

### 4. Bottomless Pit

Revelation 9:1

<sup>1</sup> Then the fifth angel sounded: And I saw a star fallen from heaven to the earth. To him was given the key to the bottomless pit.

Revelation 9:11

<sup>11</sup> And they had as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in Hebrew *is* Abaddon, but in Greek he has the name Apollyon.

Those locked and will only be released during the 5<sup>th</sup> (angelic) trumpet of Revelation 9 for a short time are:

‘Locust – Scorpion – Horses’ demonic beings under a demonic principality whose name:

- In Hebrew is Abaddon
- In Greek is Apollyon
- In English is Destroyer

Revelation 20:1-3

<sup>1</sup> Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. <sup>2</sup> He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is *the* Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; <sup>3</sup> and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while.

Satan will be thrown into the bottomless pit. It’s a place in suspension. He cannot go anywhere but will be released later for a little while.

## 5. Lake of Fire – Gehenna

- This is the Ultimate Hell
- At the moment, this place is empty.
- The first two persons to be cast into the Lake of Fire will be the Anti-Christ and the False Prophet.

Revelation 20:10

The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet *are*. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

This will be followed by:

- the devil himself – Rev 20:10
- the goat nations – Matthew 25:41,46
- Principalities of Death and Hades. (Death is a condition in which we die physically; it is also a principality.)

Revelation 20:14

<sup>14</sup> Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

Revelation 20:15

<sup>15</sup> And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

## Good News

Heb 2:14-15

<sup>14</sup> Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, <sup>15</sup> and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

God is true and forever true. The good news is that Jesus has come to destroy the Satan who has power of death. There is no fear for believers because we have conquered death. The fear of death is the mother of all fears.

2 Tim 1:10b

<sup>10</sup> but has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, *who* has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel,

**He has given us immunity from death, from fear of death. How are we set free from bondage of death?**

**1. He removes the fear of judgment to eternal condemnation.**

John 3:16-18

<sup>16</sup> For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. <sup>17</sup> For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

<sup>18</sup> "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

**How does one have this certainty?**

Romans 10:9-10

<sup>9</sup> that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. <sup>10</sup> For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

John 1:12

<sup>12</sup> But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:

If you have not received Him as your Saviour, you don't have peace.

**2. He promises and give us life with Him.**

John 10:10

<sup>10</sup> The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have *it* more abundantly.

1 Cor 15:55

"Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?"

Romans 5:1-2

<sup>1</sup> Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have <sup>[a]</sup> peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>2</sup> through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

What's the bottom-line?

## **Bottom-Line**

### **1. The uncertainty of life – the fear of death to come because of:**

- a) Our fallen-ness / sins – the law of sin and death
- b) the works of the evil one

### **2. The certainty of our eternal future in Christ**

John 11:25

Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live.

Revelation 1:18

<sup>18</sup> I *am* He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death.

Jesus holds the keys of life and death, not the devil.

### **3. The blessedness of life with Christ now as we live.**

The Living Hope - 1 Peter 1:3

<sup>3</sup> Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

Hope in life as contrasted with death. Are you living life or under the shadow of death? Are you constantly having doubts about God or constantly disappointed? In anger, don't give the devil a foothold. Are you losing hope? Are you a victorious Christian? Do you have a clear purpose in life? Is there clarity? Do you have the peace of God? Is there joy? Are you filled with the Holy Spirit? Today is Resurrection Sunday, you need to respond for the filling of the Holy Spirit. Some may need a fresh touch of the Holy Spirit. Some need to be immersed by the Holy Spirit. Jesus comes to give life. We live in a world that is fallen, amongst people who hurt and disappoint. We need a fresh touch.

Will you come to the Lord Jesus today?

End.

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## **Questions for discussion**

1. Are you assured of your salvation? What is your assurance of salvation?

2. Is there anything we could do so as not to die before our due time?

3. Where would you be when you die? What makes you think so?

4. How is it that a Christian should not fear death? What's the good news?

5. What's the bottom-line of the message? What have you gleaned from it?

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No condemnation, no comparison, no competition but only encouragement...