



*What the Bible Says About*  
- DEATH AND THE CHRISTIAN FUNERAL -

“Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of His saints.”

Psalm 116:15

## **TALKING ABOUT DEATH AND DYING**

Some Pithy Sayings:

“Two things are certain, death and taxes.”

“B.I.B.L.E.” = “**B**asic **I**nstructions **B**efore **L**eaving **E**arth”

Psalm 39:4

*Show me, LORD, my life's end and the number of my days; let me know how fleeting my life is.*

Psalm 90:12

*Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.*

## **THE CAUSE OF DEATH**

Genesis 2:4-17

<sup>4</sup> These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens. <sup>5</sup> When no bush of the field was yet in the land and no small plant of the field had yet sprung up—for the Lord God had not caused it to rain on the land, and there was no man to work the ground, <sup>6</sup> and a mist was going up from the land and was watering the whole face of the ground— <sup>7</sup> then the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature. <sup>8</sup> And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. <sup>9</sup> And out of the ground the Lord God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

<sup>10</sup> A river flowed out of Eden to water the garden, and there it divided and became four rivers. <sup>11</sup> The name of the first is the Pishon. It is the one that flowed around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. <sup>12</sup> And the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there. <sup>13</sup> The name of the second river is the Gihon. It is the one that flowed around the whole land of Cush. <sup>14</sup> And the name of the third river is the Tigris, which flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

<sup>15</sup> The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. <sup>16</sup> And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, “You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, <sup>17</sup> but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”

### **Genesis 3:19-24**

*19 By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return.”*

*20 The man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living. 21 And the Lord God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them. 22 Then the Lord God said, “Behold, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil. Now, lest he reach out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat, and live forever—” 23 therefore the Lord God sent him out from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken. 24 He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.*

### **Romans 5:12**

*Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned.*

### **James 1:15**

*Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.*

### **Romans 6:23**

*For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

### **1 Corinthians 15:55-57**

*55 “O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?”*

*56 The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. 57 But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

## **THE DEATH OF JESUS**

### **John 19:28-30**

*28 After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture), “I thirst.” 29 A jar full of sour wine stood there, so they put a sponge full of the sour wine on a hyssop branch and held it to his mouth. 30 When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, “It is finished,” and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.*

### **Hebrews 2:14-17**

*14 Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, 15 and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.*

*16 For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham. 17 Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.*

### **Isaiah 25:7-9**

*7 And he will swallow up on this mountain  
the covering that is cast over all peoples,  
the veil that is spread over all nations.*

*8 He will swallow up death forever;  
and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces,  
and the reproach of his people he will take away from all the earth,  
for the Lord has spoken.*

*9 It will be said on that day,  
“Behold, this is our God; we have waited for him, that he might save us.  
This is the Lord; we have waited for him;  
let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.”*

### **Job 19:23-27**

*23 “Oh that my words were written!  
Oh that they were inscribed in a book!  
24 Oh that with an iron pen and lead  
they were engraved in the rock forever!  
25 For I know that my Redeemer lives,  
and at the last he will stand upon the earth.  
26 And after my skin has been thus destroyed,  
yet in my flesh I shall see God,  
27 whom I shall see for myself,  
and my eyes shall behold, and not another.  
My heart faints within me!*

## **THE CHRISTIAN'S DEATH**

### **John 3:14-18**

*14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up,  
15 that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. 16 “For God so loved the world, that he  
gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. 17 For  
God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world  
might be saved through him. 18 Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does  
not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of  
God.*

### **John 11:25-26**

*25 Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die,  
yet shall he live, 26 and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe  
this?” 27 She said to him, “Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is  
coming into the world.”*

**John 12:23-26**

*<sup>23</sup> And Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. <sup>24</sup> Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. <sup>25</sup> Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. <sup>26</sup> If anyone serves me, he must follow me; and where I am, there will my servant be also. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him.*

## **THE GREAT HOPE OF THE RESURRECTION**

**John 5:25-29**

*<sup>25</sup> "Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. <sup>26</sup> For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself. <sup>27</sup> And he has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man. <sup>28</sup> Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice <sup>29</sup> and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment.*

**Philippians 3:20-21**

*<sup>20</sup> But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>21</sup> who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.*

**1 Corinthians 15**

*<sup>1</sup> Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, <sup>2</sup> and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain.*

*<sup>3</sup> For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, <sup>4</sup> that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, <sup>5</sup> and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. <sup>6</sup> Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. <sup>7</sup> Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. <sup>8</sup> Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me. <sup>9</sup> For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. <sup>10</sup> But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me. <sup>11</sup> Whether then it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed.*

*<sup>12</sup> Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? <sup>13</sup> But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. <sup>14</sup> And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. <sup>15</sup> We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified about God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. <sup>16</sup> For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. <sup>17</sup> And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. <sup>18</sup> Then those also who have fallen*

asleep in Christ have perished. <sup>19</sup> If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied.

<sup>20</sup> But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. <sup>21</sup> For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. <sup>22</sup> For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. <sup>23</sup> But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. <sup>24</sup> Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. <sup>25</sup> For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. <sup>26</sup> The last enemy to be destroyed is death. <sup>27</sup> For "God has put all things in subjection under his feet." But when it says, "all things are put in subjection," it is plain that he is excepted who put all things in subjection under him. <sup>28</sup> When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to him who put all things in subjection under him, that God may be all in all.

<sup>29</sup> Otherwise, what do people mean by being baptized on behalf of the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, why are people baptized on their behalf? <sup>30</sup> Why are we in danger every hour? <sup>31</sup> I protest, brothers, by my pride in you, which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die every day! <sup>32</sup> What do I gain if, humanly speaking, I fought with beasts at Ephesus? If the dead are not raised, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die." <sup>33</sup> Do not be deceived: "Bad company ruins good morals." <sup>34</sup> Wake up from your drunken stupor, as is right, and do not go on sinning. For some have no knowledge of God. I say this to your shame.

<sup>35</sup> But someone will ask, "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?" <sup>36</sup> You foolish person! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. <sup>37</sup> And what you sow is not the body that is to be, but a bare kernel, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain. <sup>38</sup> But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body. <sup>39</sup> For not all flesh is the same, but there is one kind for humans, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish. <sup>40</sup> There are heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is of one kind, and the glory of the earthly is of another. <sup>41</sup> There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for star differs from star in glory. <sup>42</sup> So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable. <sup>43</sup> It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. <sup>44</sup> It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. <sup>45</sup> Thus it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being"; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. <sup>46</sup> But it is not the spiritual that is first but the natural, and then the spiritual. <sup>47</sup> The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. <sup>48</sup> As was the man of dust, so also are those who are of the dust, and as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. <sup>49</sup> Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven.

<sup>50</sup> I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. <sup>51</sup> Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, <sup>52</sup> in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. <sup>53</sup> For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. <sup>54</sup> When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory." <sup>55</sup> "O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?"

<sup>56</sup> The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. <sup>57</sup> But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>58</sup> Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

## **MOURNING WITH HOPE**

**1** *Thessalonians 4:13-18*

*<sup>13</sup> But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. <sup>14</sup> For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. <sup>15</sup> For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. <sup>16</sup> For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. <sup>17</sup> Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. <sup>18</sup> Therefore encourage one another with these words.*

## **PREPARING FOR DEATH LIKE A CHRISTIAN**

**1** *Thessalonians 5:1-11*

*<sup>1</sup> Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers, you have no need to have anything written to you. <sup>2</sup> For you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. <sup>3</sup> While people are saying, "There is peace and security," then sudden destruction will come upon them as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. <sup>4</sup> But you are not in darkness, brothers, for that day to surprise you like a thief. <sup>5</sup> For you are all children of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness. <sup>6</sup> So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober. <sup>7</sup> For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, are drunk at night. <sup>8</sup> But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. <sup>9</sup> For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>10</sup> who died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep we might live with him. <sup>11</sup> Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.*

**Hebrews 9:27-28. 10:24-25**

*<sup>9:27</sup> And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment, <sup>28</sup> so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him. <sup>10:24</sup> And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, <sup>25</sup> not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.*

## **SOME CHRISTIAN WAYS TO TALK ABOUT DEATH**

**“Death” - Genesis 2:17, Romans 6:23**

*Genesis 2:17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.*

*Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

**“Gathered to his people” - Genesis 25:8, 17**

*8 Abraham breathed his last and died in a good old age, an old man and full of years, and was gathered to his people.*

*17 (These are the years of the life of Ishmael: 137 years. He breathed his last and died, and was gathered to his people.)*

**“Depart and be with Christ” - Philippians 1:23**

*I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better.*

**“Depart in peace” - Luke 2:29 (Nunc Dimitis)**

*“Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace, according to your word.”*

**“Taken away from calamity” - Isaiah 57:1**

*The righteous man perishes, and no one lays it to heart; devout men are taken away, while no one understands. For the righteous man is taken away from calamity.*

**“Sleep” - John 11:11 (Matthew 9:24; 1 Thessalonians 4:13; 1 Corinthians 15:18)**

*After saying these things, [Jesus] said to them, “Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I go to awaken him.”*

**“Deliverance from evil” - Matthew 6:13 (Lord’s Prayer, 7th Petition)**

*And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.*

**“Gain” - Philippians 1:21**

*For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.*

**“Green[er] Pastures” - Psalm 23:2**

*He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters.*