

Subject: *The God of Life and Death*

Scripture: *Genesis 5:1-32*

After we read about the first sin of Adam and Eve in Genesis 3, and the ongoing sin of their children and descendants in Genesis 4, we would expect to read a chapter like Genesis 5 that is all about death. It could be called the death chapter. Over and over we find the words, “and he died.” Some have made the resolution to read through the Bible, and when they get to Genesis 5, and read about all these people dying, their resolution dies right here with them.

Death is a definite fact; death is a destructive force; and death is a defeated foe.

- Death is a certainty

Hebrews 9:27 *And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.*

Ecclesiastes 3:1-2 ¹ *To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:* ² *A time to be born, and a time to die...*

Many things about death are uncertain. We don't know when we will die or where we will die or how we will die. But we know for sure that we will die...sometime, somewhere, and somehow.

- Death is an enemy

1 Corinthians 15:26 *The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.*

It is an unwelcome intruder. Death is called “the king of terrors” and “the grim reaper.”

- Death is a reality

We speak of death in ways that soften the reality, for example we say someone passed away; someone left us; or someone's gone. Even the Bible describes death in terms that help us deal with it. For example, death is referred to as sleep. Jesus used this term of Lazarus in John 11.

John 11:11-14 ¹¹ *Jesus saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep.* ¹² *Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well.* ¹³ *Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep.* ¹⁴ *Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead.*

1. GOD'S SOVEREIGN CONTROL OF LIFE AND DEATH

From the very beginning we see that God is the creator and sustainer of life. He is the God of creation, the God of Adam and Eve, the God of Cain and Abel, and all people.

God determined everything about life and death. He was in control when Adam and Eve were created, and He was in control when children were born. He determined when they were born and how long they lived. God has always been directly involved with life and death.

1 Samuel 2:6 *The LORD killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up.*

Job 12:10 *In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind.*

Acts 17:28 *For in him we live, and move, and have our being.*

That's easy to believe until death comes to your immediate family. Job was a man who trusted and obeyed God.

Job 1:1 *There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed (turned from) evil.*

But there came a day when Job's faith was put to the test. He had 10 children and all of them died on the same day. When he got the news that all of his children had died what did he say?

Job 1:21 *And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.*

Almost five years ago our son David was in a horrible wreck, and that verse came to mind.

God is in sovereign control over all these facts:

- Our date of birth and time in history
- Our parents and siblings
- Our place of birth
- Our gender
- Our physical and mental abilities

Exodus 4:10-11 ¹⁰ *And Moses said unto the LORD, O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue.* ¹¹ *And the LORD said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the LORD?*

- Our date of death

God was merciful to Adam and gave him 930 years. God warned Adam not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

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

Adam died immediately in the spirit and ultimately in the body. The Bible tells us about three kinds of death:

- A. *Spiritual death* is separation of the soul from God
- B. *Physical death* is separation of the soul from the body
- C. *Eternal death* is separation of the soul and body from God forever

Adam and Eve sinned and they died. And this pattern of sin and death continued.

Romans 5:12 *Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.*

2. GOD'S SAVING POWER OF LIFE OVER DEATH

There is no need to fear death as "the king of terrors" if you belong to the King of all kings.

Hebrews 2:14-15 ¹⁴ Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; ¹⁵ And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

John 11:25-26 ²⁵ I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: ²⁶ And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.

Romans 8:2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

Here is a good illustration of God's power of life over sin and death. How does a huge jet plane take off when you consider the sheer weight of the plane combined with the weight of the fuel and passengers and their luggage, and the constant force of gravity holding the plane on the ground? It seems impossible, but there is another law at work called the law of aerodynamics in which the force of lift overcomes the law of gravity and the plane takes off.

As we come to the life of Enoch, we find something is different (vs. 21-24). Enoch didn't die because God took him. God demonstrated His power over death and showed us what will happen in the Rapture.

1 Thessalonians 4:15-18 ¹⁵ For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: ¹⁷ Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

There is no need to fear death if we are in Christ. Death is just a doorway into heaven.

1 Corinthians 15:22-23 ²² For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. ²³ But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.

1 Corinthians 15:51-52 ⁵¹ Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, ⁵² In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

1 Corinthians 15:57 But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Our life can end in tragedy or in victory. We can die in Adam or in Christ. We can die in our sins (Jn. 8:24), or we can die in faith (Heb. 11:13, "these all died in faith") and we can die in the Lord (Rev. 14:13, "blessed are the dead who die in the Lord"). "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things have passed away, all things have become new" (2 Cor. 5:21).

Are you in Christ? You can be in a Christian family and not be in Christ...in church and not be in Christ...in Bible study and not be in Christ. To be in Christ you must receive Him by repentance and faith. To be in Christ you must submit to His authority and receive Him as Lord and Savior. To be in Christ you must be born again.