



By Design Death

Death is the most mentioned event in the Old Testament.

Death is first mentioned after the creation of the first man and before the creation of the first woman.

Genesis 2:15-17

15 Then the Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it.

16 And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat;

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."

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Death is next mentioned by the first woman before the fall of mankind.

Genesis 3:1-4

3 Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?'"

2 And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden;

3 but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.'"

4 Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die.

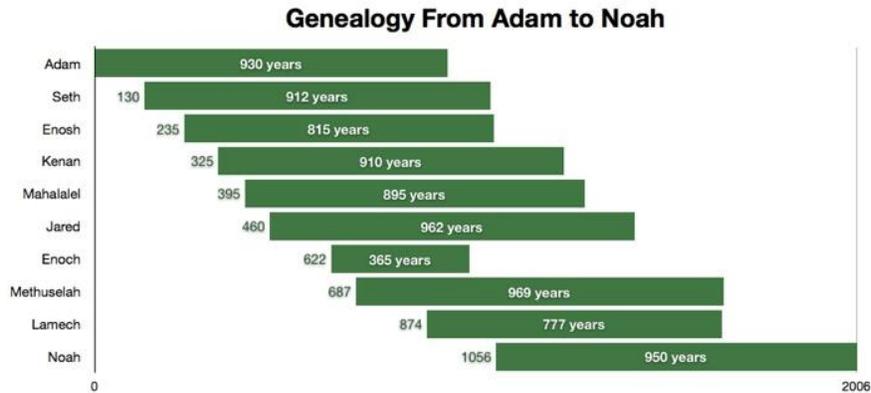
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Abel, the son of Adam and Eve, is the first recorded death in the bible.

Genesis 4:8

8 Now Cain talked with Abel his brother; and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.

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But death spread to all men because all men sinned. In Genesis 5, there is a genealogy from Adam to Noah. Adam to Noah is ten generations. One after another these stories end the same way, "and he died."

(There is only one exception in this genealogy, a man named Enoch. He lived 365 years and God took him.

[Genesis 5:23-24](#)

[23 So all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years.](#)

[24 And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.](#)

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We would all like to be that guy. There is no indication that Enoch got to enjoy being that guy. There is no indication that God let him know that his story was going to end differently.

That was a smart move by God, don't you think? If God told me that I was not going to die, I might be tempted to try a few things that were risky. I might be tempted to be a little arrogant.)

In Romans 5:14-17, Paul said after Adam sinned, death reigned. No matter what Man did to resist death, death always won. For the next 4000 years, the strongest men all became the subjects of death and they had no idea what was going to happen to them after they died. The whole earth is pock-marked with graves to support the fact that death reigned.

[The Orientals said, "The black camel, death, kneeleth once at each door and each mortal must mount to return nevermore."](#)

[Napoleon Bonaparte said, "I die before my time, and my body will be given back to earth and become the food of worms. Such is the fate which so soon awaits the great Napoleon, conqueror of the world conquered by death."](#)

[One Washington D.C. undertaker signs his stationery, "Eventually yours."](#)

Death levels the playing field for all mankind. It is a way we are all equal. We all lose to death. The safest prophecy I can make about your future is everyone one of our stories will end with, "and he died."

And death is by design.

God decided before the fall of man that if the first man sinned and allowed sin to corrupt his soul, He would curse his body and death would spread to all men. Death is by design.

Why?

Why didn't God just curse mankind with all the other curses for sin but let us live forever on earth?

- [Death reminds mankind we are not God.](#)

Mankind was created in the image of God. But mankind and all living creatures were created to live in dependence upon God.

The first man and the first woman sinned because they believed the lie that if they ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, they would be like God. In seeking to be like God, they were seeking to be independent from God.

Death humbled them. It reminded them that they were not God. It reminded them that they would always need God.

Because we are created in the image of God, mankind's ingenuity is incredible. It is amazing what mankind can create to further our survival. Deadly diseases have been eradicated. Human organs can be replaced. Natural disasters can be avoided. Space travel and relocation to another planet is on the horizon.

It was God who said about man before he confused our languages...

[Genesis 11:6](#)

[6 And the Lord said, "Indeed the people are one and they all have one language, and this is what they begin to do; now nothing that they propose to do will be withheld from them. NKJV](#)

Death reminds us we are not God.

- [Death reaffirms the truth of God's Word and the existence of God.](#)

Not only does mankind die, but every living creature dies. Scientist tell us every star will die. Scientist tell us that every current planet that is a host to life will eventually cease to be a host to life.

Everything dies. There is no such thing as biological immortality. You would logically think if the bible was false that mankind would find life with biological immortality.

Men are discovering what God pronounced thousands of years ago about mankind and the worlds He created. It is a truth accepted by the scientific community. Everything that lives is cursed to die.

Death reaffirms the truth of God's Word and the existence of God.

- [Death restrains mankind's sin.](#)

The collapse and corruption of mankind living apart from God is well documented. There was nothing good morally about man living apart from God. Consider what the world would be like if death did not reign.

Death restrained mankind's sin.

- [Death releases mankind from sin.](#)

Sin produced suffering. Death was God's way to release mankind from sin and suffering.

In this season of my life, I am dealing with death more than any other season.

- It is not unusual for one of my high school classmates to call me and ask me to officiate the funeral service for their parent.
- My graduating class from high school had lost 39 of our members as of October 2017.
- My peers in age are becoming widows or widowers one by one and the pace is increasing.
- I attend more funerals than I do weddings.
- Last week, I was informed that 3 people I care deeply about are either dying or someone they love is terminal.

As a Pastor, I have become skilled at doing end of life ministry. It is a skill I never wanted.

My body is telling me every day that death is near. I see it in the color of my hair. My eyesight is fading. My hearing is declining. My skin is getting thin and wrinkling. So far, thanks to modern dentistry, I am holding on to my teeth. But when I look in the mirror I frequently consider my time on earth is running out.

It is hard to comprehend living without any knowledge or hope of a life after death. But that was the general condition of mankind for thousands of years. Those that claimed that they had a revelation of God had no proof to verify their claims. Even though the Jews were giving the law of God, they did not have a clear revelation from God about life after death. During the ministry of Jesus, they were divided. (Matthew 22:23)

Then Jesus came. Jesus made these radical claims.

1. [Jesus claimed He was the Son of God.](#)
[Matthew 16:13-20](#)

13 When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, "Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?"

14 So they said, "Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets."

15 He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?"

16 Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

17 Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.

18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

19 And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."

20 Then He commanded His disciples that they should tell no one that He was Jesus the Christ.

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Jesus claimed He was the Son of God.

2. Jesus claimed that His death would atone for the sins of mankind.

Matthew 26:26-28

26 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is My body."

27 Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you.

28 For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

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Jesus claimed when He died, He would experience the curse of God for sin. The wrath of God for sin would be satisfied through Him.

Jesus claimed because He was the Son of God, He would assume responsibility for the sin of creation.

Jesus claimed that His death would atone for the sins of mankind.

3. Jesus claimed His resurrection would confirm that what He said was true.

Matthew 20:18-19

18 "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death,

19 and deliver Him to the Gentiles to mock and to scourge and to crucify. And the third day He will rise again."

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Luke 24:46-48

46 Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day,
47 and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

48 And you are witnesses of these things.

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Jesus claimed that because He never sinned, death could not hold Him. He would rise from the dead.

Jesus claimed His resurrection would confirm that what He said was true.

4. Jesus claimed that those who believe in Him will share in His resurrection

John 11:25-26

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

26 And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?"

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Jesus claimed that those who believe in Him will share in His resurrection.

Just as death was by God's design, Jesus claimed His victory over sin and death was by God's design.

Do you believe this?

Paul said that just as death entered the world through one man, God's solution for death came through one man.

Romans 5:18-19

18 Therefore, as through one man's offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man's righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life.

19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous.

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Death releases you from sin if you are with Christ after you die.

How should we respond to this truth?

- Thank God for death
- Trust Jesus to share His victory over death
- Tell others about Jesus

The curse of death was God's wrath for sin. We would normally only consider death to be a judgment for sin when we think someone deserves it. The truth is in God's eyes, we all deserve it, because we have all sinned. Every time you hear of death or see death, you should consider God's fierce wrath for sin. You should tell others how to escape God's wrath by telling them about Jesus.