

## I. What Is Death?

### A. Death is the departure of the spirit from the body in humans and animals.

“Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?” (Ecclesiastes 3:21).

“For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.” (James 2:26).

When the little maid came back to life, her spirit came back into her: “And they laughed him to scorn, knowing that she was dead. And he put them all out, and took her by the hand, and called, saying, Maid, arise. And her **spirit** came again, and she arose straightway: and he commanded to give her meat.” (Luke 8:53-55).

When Stephen was stoned to death, he gave up his spirit: “And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” (Acts 7:59).

The phrase “gave up the ghost” is found nineteen times in Scripture. The word “ghost” comes from the same word that is translated “spirit.” Notice both words were alike in Luke 23:46: “And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost.”

### B. Death is also the departure of the soul from a human.

There are two invisible beings inside of us: a spirit and a soul.

When Jesus died on the Cross, His spirit went to heaven (see Luke 23:46) and His soul went into hell (see Acts 2:27,31).

The spirit and soul are distinctly different and both leave the body at death: 1 Kings 17:21-22, “And he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the LORD, and said, O LORD my God, I pray thee, let this child’s **soul** come into him again. And the LORD heard the voice of Elijah; and the **soul** of the child came into him again, and he revived.”

Animals do not have souls, only humans do. Animals have spirits.

## II. Why Is There Death?

### A. God promised that man would die if disobedient to His commandment.

“And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: 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.” (Genesis 2:16-17).

### B. Man disobeyed the law of God and sinned.

“And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.” (Genesis 3:6).

“Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.” (1 John 3:4).

### C. Death came by that sin.

“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:” (Romans 5:12).

Man became corrupt because of Adam’s willing disobedience. That corrupted nature has been passed on down to all of us. We have become not only sinners by nature (birth), but also sinners by choice. Not just Adam, but all like him have chosen to sin.

“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;” (Romans 3:23). “For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.” (Ecclesiastes 7:20).

And the wages of sin is death: “For the **wages of sin** is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” (Romans 6:23). “For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.” (1 Corinthians 15:22).

Not only did death come to mankind by Adam’s sin, but the whole creation came under the curse of sin. This is why plants and animals get old, sick, and die.

“And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: **cursed is the ground** for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.” (Genesis 3:17-19).

“For we know that **the whole creation** groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.” (Romans 8:22).

Because death came by sin, the believer in the Lord must reject the theory of evolution or the gap theory. These teach that man, plants, and animals evolved after millions of years of life, death, and changes. The Bible teaches that death came after man sinned, not before.

## III. Who Has The Power Of Death?

### A. God has the power to put to death.

“And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.” (Matthew 10:28).

God has appointed that every person die and be judged someday.

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

“Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.” (Acts 17:31).

### B. The Devil has the power of death.

“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;” (Hebrews 2:14).

When the Lord puts someone to death, it is because of His righteous judgment and the guilt of their sin: “Righteous art thou, O LORD, and upright are thy judgments.” (Psalms 119:137). “And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments.” (Revelation 16:7). “For true and righteous are his judgments: ... .” (Revelation 19:2a).

When the Devil kills it is because he is a heartless murderer. One of his greatest lusts is to kill. “Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, ... .” (John 8:44a).

“The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.” (John 10:10).

Satan is the tempter behind wars, drunk driving deaths, abortions, cold blooded murders, intentional starvation, etc.

### C. Man (appointed government) has the power of death.

Though no man should be a murderer, mankind (in the sense of government ordained by God) must execute capital punishment upon the guilty.

“Whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man.” (Genesis 9:6).

“Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.” (Romans 13:1-5).

“Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well.” (1 Peter 2:13-14).

Even Jesus submitted to the Roman government in regards to capital punishment (though He was an innocent man). See John 19:10-11.