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Death and Life in the End-Times



By Steven J. Hogan

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It’s heartbreaking to see the horrific results of this war in Ukraine. Through the media, the reality and brutality of it is being brought into our homes – and into our hearts. There’s unbelievable damage and destruction, and the horrendous human toll, the shattered lives and refugees. *“Seeing the people, He felt compassion for them, for they were distressed and downcast, like sheep without a shepherd.”* (Matt. 9:36). Might we too feel compassion for them and be praying for them. *“My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations.”* Mark 11:17

Then there are the deaths, the deaths of men and women, of adults and children, of soldiers and civilians. And yes, people have been dying since the creation of the world – that people die is a fact of life. We see

it with family members, friends, and in our churches, and we see it in the Bible and history books. Do you remember reading about the flood, when everyone in the world drowned, except eight people? Did you know that nearly 15 million Ukrainians died during World War II? But this present war is in our time, and it's hard because the horrors of it are fresh in our minds, and because *"innocent"* people are dying – suddenly, senselessly, tragically, and mercilessly.

Did you know Jesus predicted there would be wars like this in the end-times, in the years leading up to His return to earth? And now we actually live in the end-times. Jesus also warned us that there would be earthquakes, plagues (pandemics), famines, and financial problems (Matt 24:4-8, Mark 13:5-8, Luke 21:8-11, Rev. 6:1-8). Then He tells us that large numbers of people will die because of these catastrophic events – *"Where the corpse is, there the vultures will gather"* (Matt. 24:28). What a shocking, sobering verse, one that's right in the middle of Matt. 24, a key prophetic chapter. Just think, there will be all these corpses, these dead and unburied bodies, which leads us to conclude that vast numbers of people will die in the last years of this age.

Revelation 6:8 tells us the same thing, that massive numbers of people will die during this time. *"Behold, an ashen horse; and he who sat on it had the name Death; and Hades was following with him. Authority was given to them* (four living creatures) *over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword and with famine and pestilence and by the wild beasts of the earth."* There's death, and Hades, which is where unsaved people go after they die. A fourth part of the earth is affected, which is either numerical, the actual number of people who die, or geographical, that one fourth of the earth's land mass is severely impacted by these events. Regardless, millions if not billions of people will die and meet their Maker during the final years of this age.

We are talking about the physical deaths of people in the end-times. But God wants us to know that a person's physical death is not his primary problem – it's not dying because of war, disease, starvation, an

earthquake, sickness, or old age. A person's #1 problem is spiritual death which is a result of his sin. *"The wages of sin is death"* (Rom. 6:23). Every person is spiritually dead, is separated from God, and therefore, is not worshiping God and not experiencing His love, joy, and peace. Sin and spiritual death is by far a person's single greatest problem.

Spiritual death is infinitely worse than physical death, for if you are spiritually dead when you physically die then you will be eternally dead – spiritually dead and forever in hell. Jesus said, *"Do not be afraid of those who kill the body and after that have no more that they can do. I will warn you whom to fear: fear the One who, after He has killed, has authority to cast into hell; yes, I tell you, fear Him"* (Luke 12:4-5; Matt. 25:41, 46). Don't worry about whether someone can kill you, but be dreadfully alarmed if you are not right with God before you die and are then cast into hell! *"It's a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God."* Hebrews 10:31

Now if you are spiritually alive when you physically die, then you will be eternally alive, you will be spiritually and forever alive with Jesus in heaven. Jesus said*, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will* (spiritually) *live even if he* (physically) *dies. And everyone who* (physically) *lives and believes in Me will never* (spiritually) *die"* (John 11:25-26). But how can Jesus save us from sin, death, and an eternity in hell? What did He do to enable us to live forever? Let me explain.

Jesus Christ came to earth, became a Man, and was God in the flesh. He lived a perfect life and then died to pay for the sins of people. *"Christ died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God"* (1 Pet. 3:18, Rom. 5:8, 2 Cor. 5:21). *"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life"* (John 3:16). God grants complete forgiveness and an eternal, super-abundant life to all who repent of their sins and believe that Christ died to make the full and final

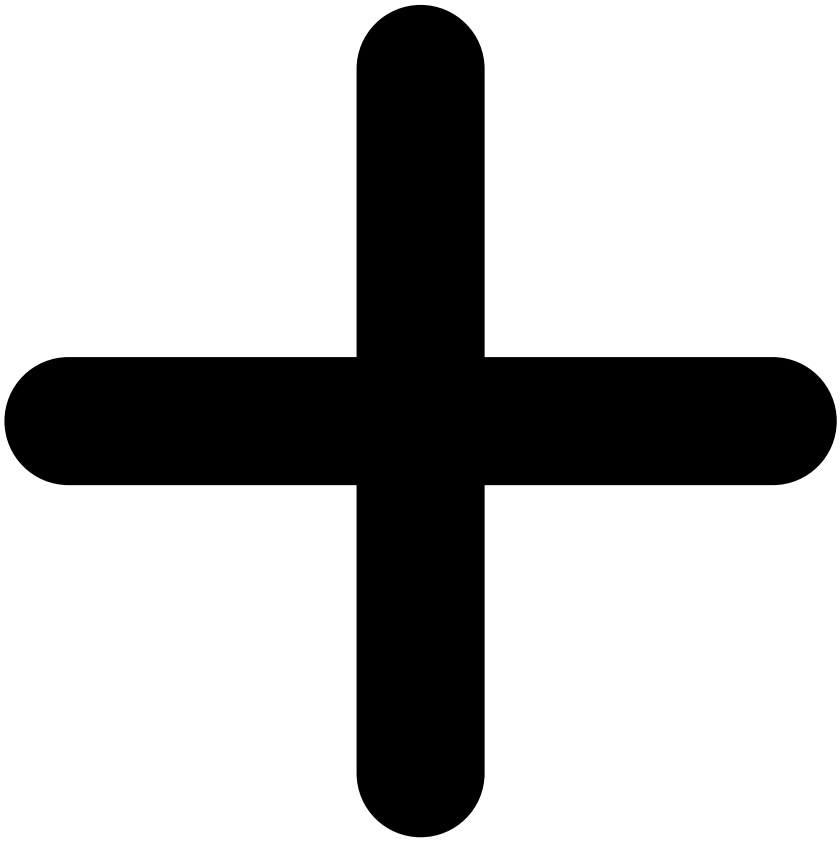
payment for their sins.

All who turn from their sin and turn to Christ for mercy become children of God, are righteous in His sight, and will soon be with God and Christ in heaven. This is the absolute best news in the world! Indeed, Jesus is the only answer to this problem of spiritual death, and therefore, physical death. Jesus told us, *“I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me”* (John 14:6). If Christ isn’t your Savior, if you have not been forgiven of your sins, go to God now and ask Him to save you from sin and death and give you eternal life, and He will. *“He who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.”* John 5:24

Here is more good news! Salvation is not just being saved from sin, death, and hell, but it’s also receiving a brand-new body. Our bodies are sinful, imperfect, and perishable, but when Christ returns, He will give every true believer a glorified, perfect, and immortal body. *“Our citizenship is in heaven, from which we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory”* Philippians 3:20-21

The last years of this age are extremely important! Be thankful that you are alive at this time in history, and that you are on earth for a reason, *“for such a time as this.”* (Esther 4:14). People are dying and will continue to die in the end-times, and in much greater numbers. As a Christian, you have the only answer to a person’s spiritual and physical problem of death, and it’s Jesus Christ. Love and pray for the lost, and be in a church which is committed to telling people the good news about Jesus. And remember Jesus’ promise, that He’s with you to the very end of the age (Matt. 28:19-20). *“This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come.”* Matthew 24:14

P.S. As a Christian, you must not be sullied and dulled by the world, but you are to stay close to God, be holy, and remember that your purpose is to love and serve Him with all your heart. Here is an article that summarizes how God wants you to live, now and to the end of this age – *“What Does God Want Me to Do in the End-Times?”*



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