

Death and Life and the Bible

Robin C. Calamaio

http://www.freelygive-n.com/Death_in_the_Bible.html

Copyright 2006

Death first. Is death just a part of life? Is it simply an impersonal, random event with no hostile intent? All longevity models (evolution) think so. On the other hand, if death is **imposed** - that changes everything. What a massive understatement. Evolution and Biblical Creationism, are the two primary competitors in Western thought on origins. They are at great odds on this subject. Indeed, the two systems could not be more diametrically opposed. Here is a **comparative** review of these two **belief** systems. Compare point 1 to point 1, 2 to 2, etc.

Evolution:

1. Death has **been present** from the beginning of life.
2. Death is **natural** and absolutely imperative to evolutionary progression.
3. All life **has been dominated** by death from the start.
4. Death did not **"spread"** to humans. As stated earlier, it has been present from life's start.
5. Death may be an enemy from an individual's point of view, but from an evolutionary view, it is a natural, **and necessary**, part of the progression of the species.
6. There is but **one death** for any living thing. Death forever extinguishes the individual life.
7. This existence **is all that is**. All will continue in random development just as all has randomly evolved. As long as there is life, death will be **a universal constant**.

Biblical Creationism:

1. Death was **totally absent** from our completed, original heavens and earth.
2. Death is **unnatural** and was imposed as a judgement by God in response to Adam's sin.
3. Death became a reality for the rest of creation **after** Adam sinned.
4. Death **spread** to all human beings as a result of sin.
5. Death is called **"the final enemy"**. It is destined to be overcome by Christ.
6. Man is potentially subject to, and may experience, **three** deaths.
7. Death, and all its attendant maladies, will be **forever absent** in the new heavens and earth.

Without much explanation, here is what the Bible teaches about death.

Death One: Spiritual Death

Spiritual death - occurs when one sins against God in an accountable way. God alone knows when, and if, this occurs with each person. Some, who are mentally incapable, may never reach a point of accountability. God alone decides this. The first man was told, *"From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in **the day** that you eat from it you shall surely die"* (Gen 2:16,17). Adam did eat of it, and Adam did die. *"Aha!"* I hear you say. *"You want to take the Bible literally - but Adam **did not die that day!**"* Oh, but he did. The day he sinned, in fact the moment he sinned, he died. Adam was instantly separated from God, and that placed him **in spiritual death**. When addressing Christians about their pre-conversion state, Paul said, *"you were **dead** in your trespasses and sins, in which you formally **walked** according to the course of this world ... we too*

all **lived** in the lusts of the flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh, and of the mind, and were by nature, children of wrath, even as the rest" (Eph 2:1-3). We were "**dead**" - yet "**walked**" and "**lived!**" Sin makes one *spiritually* dead to God - even though still alive mentally, emotionally, volitionally and physically.

Death Two: Physical Death

This is the first of the physical deaths, but the second *experience* of death. When Adam sinned, the environment gained dominion over Adam's body. When examining the curses of Genesis 3:14-19, some say God cursed the serpent and the ground - *but not the man and woman*. While it is possible God did not change Adam's body (He just strengthened the environment), I do not believe this to be the case. For example, I do not think Adam and Eve originally relieved themselves behind bushes in The Garden of Eden. Their bodies changed. But whatever the case, the reality of physical death, when that did not exist before, is a curse **on the man**. The Bible teaches that we are Adam's descendants and, unfortunately, we inherit his mortal flesh. Our bodies will succumb to this environment - no matter how well we take care of them.

Death Three: Eternal Death

The Bible calls this death - "the second death" (Rev 2:11, 20:6,14, & 21:8). *It is* the second death *physically*, but for those so subjected, this will be their third *experience* of death. Also, in this "death" nothing dies in the sense of "ceasing to exist" (Mt 25:41 & Rev 20:10). The Bible teaches this is a physical place, occupied by physical beings who will be eternally alive - yet the place is void of any benevolence from God. Alive - yet no life. There are two phases to this place. **Hades** is a "holding tank" for disembodied souls who have physically died **apart** from of Christ. It is a place of torment with no escape. Occupants are mentally, volitionally, and emotionally alive, but remain spiritually dead. Their body will be resurrected on Judgement Day, and transferred to **Hell** - the final destination for everyone outside of Christ (Jn 5:28,29). Jesus refers to Hell as a place of "*eternal punishment*" (Mt 25:46). The most accurate of descriptions and the most vivid of imaginations fall desperately short of describing the reality of this place. Just as I cannot grasp or convey how magnificent Heaven will be, so also I cannot grasp or convey the true dreadfulness of that place. No one can.

Life

From the Evolutionist's viewpoint, this life discussion is quite simple. Life is an accidental occurrence - though it is still a mystery how inorganic materials become alive. But skipping that problem, an organism lives for a time, and then dies. Some hope to one day thwart death by some kind of regenerative force, but once death comes to an individual - that's it.

The Bible paints a totally different picture. There is a remarkable passage in Ecclesiastes. When speaking about man, Solomon states, "*(God) has set eternity in their heart ...*" (Eccl 3:11). Ahh ... this explains so much! Because eternity is **set** in man's heart, death does not compute! It **can't** compute! Eternity and temporalness cannot be equally in play in the same heart! We *say* we know we will one day die, but we do not *really* understand that. I have *proof* for this assertion! Here it is.

If we really understood we were marching toward death, and along the way heard a rumor that someone rose from the dead, we would drop everything and investigate that with the greatest of fervor. No one would need to tell us that *we should* investigate such a report, and no one

would be able to stop us in that quest. In fact, a report of this nature would be broadcast 24/7 and every human being would be clamoring for information - and would pay any price and make any sacrifice to get into that action. When Christians say, “*Jesus rose from the dead,*” that claim does not even raise an eyebrow - unless it is to say, “*Yeah, right. And what have you been smoking lately?*” At least seven separate individuals wrote the New Testament and they all declared the same thing; **Jesus was stone cold dead, and three days after His death, he physically walked out of His tomb alive.** It is even asserted He appeared to more than five hundred people on one occasion (1Cor 15:6). But have you ever even made a *cursory examination* of these claims? Do you even know **who** made these claims - or *anything* about them? Are you even *remotely interested* in searching this out? If not, why not? The answer is exceedingly simple! Since God has set eternity in your heart **you** do not really understand **you** are going to die. You see, YOU are the proof of my assertion above! Now, be truthful. When you first heard of the resurrection of Jesus, did you drop everything and investigate this claim? The month after an Easter service has about the same attendance as the month before.

Before presenting the possible Biblical combinations on life and death for people, a few terms concerning “life” need address.

Born Again - this occurs when one who was spiritually dead, receives Christ. One’s spirit is “reborn” and the connection with God is established (or reestablished if it was indeed active before one’s personal, accountable fall - see Romans 1:19, and 7:9). Thus the spirit is born **again**. With this new birth, **eternal life** begins.

Paradise is the “holding tank” for those who have physically died **in** Christ. It is a place of “comfort” at the very least (Lk 16:25). Occupants are mentally, volitionally, emotionally, **and spiritually** alive. Their bodies will be raised on Judgement Day. **Heaven** is a physical place. It is the “*new heavens and a new earth where righteousness dwells*” (2Pet 3:13). The inhabitant is confirmed in righteousness mentally, volitionally, emotionally, and spiritually, and is physically immortal. Death, and all acolytes, will be eternally removed.

Here Are the Possible Combinations for an Individual:

Physical Birth/ Spiritual Death/ Physical Death/ Hades/ Hell. Some die spiritually, then physically, then go to Hades, to then be physically resurrected - with body and soul sentenced to Hell. This is the fate of everyone who physically dies outside of Christ. So, born once; die three times.

Physical Birth/ Spiritual Death/ Born Again/ Physical Death/ Paradise/ Heaven. These died spiritually, but became Christians (born again) before they physically died. Then they go to Paradise, waiting to be physically resurrected and placed in the new heavens and earth. So, born twice; die twice.

Physical Birth/ Spiritual Death/ Hell. Some die spiritually, but will be physically alive at the return of Christ. It does not appear they will then physically die, so Hades will be skipped, and they will go directly to the Judgement. They will then be damned with an immortal body. So, born once; die twice.

Physical Birth/ Spiritual Death/ Born Again/ Heaven. Some die spiritually, but then become Christians (born again) and will be physically alive at the return of Christ. At His return, these people will be physically changed (made immortal) and go directly to Heaven. Physical death and Paradise will be skipped. So, born twice; die once.

Physical Birth(and the pre-born)/ Physical Death/ Paradise / Heaven. Some physically die before reaching a point of being accountable for sin before God. I believe all

aborted babies are in this category as well as many in the special needs category. Scripture emphasizes that Judgement is based upon **accountable actions** - not inherited nature or circumstances. *“And I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw **the dead**, the great and the small, **standing** before the throne, and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, **according to their deeds**. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them **according to their deeds**. And death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire”* (Rev 20:11-15). All passages relating to a destiny of Hell are contingent on **accountable** misdeeds. Also see Matthew 25: 31-46. And in 2 Samuel 12:23, David understood his dead child to be in good standing before God. In Adam, we *inherit* a mortal body which is subject to death at any given time. So, born once (or pre-born); die once.

Physical Birth(or pre-born)/ Heaven. These are the same non accountable individuals just referenced, who will be here when Christ returns. Their mortal bodies will be made immortal in the twinkling of an eye. They will go directly to the new heavens and earth. So, born once (or pre-born); never die.

Does Death Have an End?

Evolution says, *“**Possibly**. If all life in the universe ceases to be, then death ends. But if life, on any level or locale, continues, then death continues.”* The Biblical Creationist says, *“Yes and no. For Christians, death will be abolished. But for the unredeemed - angels and humans - the second death will be an eternal reality.”*

The Bible teaches that at Christ’s return, several things are going to happen. The fate of death will be part of the picture. *“The last enemy that will be abolished is death”* (1Cor15:26). Does Jesus have this kind of power, authority and inclination - or is this just a metaphysical fantasy? Paul said, *“If we have only hoped in Christ in this life, we are of all men most to be pitied If the dead are not raised, ‘let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die’”* (1Cor 15:19,32). If Evolution is correct - **then this is it and let’s grab for all the gusto we can get!** Everything hinges on the power of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

What About Those Who Hold a Hybrid Position - Part Evolution and Part Creationism?

In Systematic Theology circles, Biblical Creationism is called, “The Naive-Literal View.” At the other end of the spectrum, the atheistic Evolutionist is labeled, “pagan.” Both systems are based upon fantastic claims which many find hard to accept (e.g., matter is eternal, or life spontaneously arose from inorganic material, or, on the other hand, God spoke the universe into existence). So, the **really enlightened ones** propose various scenarios using elements from Creationism and Evolution. They take what they perceive to be best of both sides, in an attempt to meld the chosen elements into a coherent system. Now, an unseen, guiding Hand is inserted into the evolutionary process. But, **when** is that Hand inserted? **Why** is it inserted? **Where** has it been inserted? **What** is inserted? And **who** is the One inserting His/Her/Its hand in the first place? This is similar to the rabbit-in-the-hat trick. When God is needed - pull Him out of the hat. But, when He appears to be an embarrassment, stuff Him back in. These longevity model theists have introduced **supernatural arbitrariness** into a field of (supposed) empirical scientific study. True Evolutionists reject a floating hand of “God” dipping into, and out of, the origins or

natural progression of this world and universe. For them, this is a muddled, twisted, mystical system with no reliable boundaries for systematic empirical research, data gathering, or theory forwarding. Creationists see these Hybridists as “intellects” who have stumbled into all kinds of tar pits. While it may be possible Genesis 1:2 could be seen as a “gestation period “ for the *inorganics* of the earth and universe (with an unspecified length of time - thus old rocks), the *organic story* is quite another matter. **Biological** longevity adherents of all stripes immediately dismiss the Creation account as a literal six day period. Hybridists stuff that material back in the hat - and replace it with some form of a nuanced Evolution. Some opt for an “Age-Day” theism - where each “day” of the Creation account is symbolic for an age of time. Others embrace the “Pictorial Day” theory where each “Creation Day” represents a “topic” of the created order. Others believe God formed a primitive creation, wound it up, and walked away. Everything then developed on its own. Others believe in a more interventionist Creationism where God intervened at key moments to “create.” This is sometimes referred to as “Progressive Creation.” But these *theistic* Evolutionists have at least one common ground with real Evolutionists: ***death was an established reality long before Adam and Eve*** (or whoever was the first Homo sapiens) ***came on the scene***. So death, entering the world ***through one man (Adam)***, is nonsense (Ro 5:12). So, also is the ridiculous assertion that death is one’s “*morally justified payment*” for personal sin (Ro 6:23). To tell “Adam” he would “*return to the ground*” is not a judgement - he was heading there anyway ... assuming there was an Adam in the first place.

The professed “wisdom” of these Hybridizers is neither scientifically *nor* theologically palatable. Their inventions violate fundamentals of both systems. **Evolutionists** view Hybridizers as ***mentally*** negative mutants and hope they are not capable of reproduction - thus possibly passing on mental flaws. **Creationists** view Hybridizers as “intellectuals” who lack understanding on the Bible’s teaching about death - and have also been entangled in much of the plastic “science” forwarded by Evolutionists. Therefore, Hybridist’s theories are summarily dismissed by Biblical Creationists and Evolutionists alike.

Conclusion

Evolution and Biblical Creationism totally disagree on death’s origin, purpose, future, and fate. One’s belief about death firmly plants a person in Biblical Creationism - or else in some version of a contrary longevity model. For a more thorough discussion on this entire subject, go to my Website in the Author Bio for the free e-book, “*Death and the Bible*.”

<http://www.freelygive-n.com>