**Your Coming Terminal Appointment**

*The Concept of Death in Scripture*

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*And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment.* ([Hebrews 9:27](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+9.27&t=NKJV))

*For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.*  ([James 4:14b](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=James+4.14b&t=NKJV))

Scripture covers three types of “death” as follows:

1) *Spiritual death, i.e*., a death “*in trespasses and sins*” ([Ephesians 2:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+2.1&t=NKJV); [Colossians 2:13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Colossians+2.13&t=NKJV)) – a spiritual separation from God.

2) *Eternal* (*spiritual*) *death, i.e.*, *a never ending death* – an eternity separated from God – in the “*lake of fire*” reserved for those who during their temporal life do not make the conscious decision to place their faith solely in Christ and His propitiatory sacrifice (atoning payment for mankind’s sin that alone can bring *satisfaction* to God, *i.e*., reconciling man with God [[Romans 3:25](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+3.25&t=NKJV); [Hebrews 2:17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+2.17&t=NKJV); [1 John 1:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1John+1.7&t=NKJV); [2:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1John+2.2&t=NKJV); [4:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1John+4.10&t=NKJV); [John 1:29](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+1.29&t=NKJV); [2 Corinthians 5:18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Corinthians+5.18&t=NKJV)]) on the cross of Calvary.

3) *Temporal/physical death, i.e.*, a death that all living beings experience as a process of physical deterioration leading to the eventual cessation of (separation from) temporal life, which is the type of death addressed in the two passages of Scripture listed above under the heading of this study. ([Hebrews 9:27](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+9.27&t=NKJV);

[James 4:14b](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=James+4.14b&t=NKJV))

The word “*death*” (or “*die*”) as used in Scripture (Old Testament: *muwth* and *maveth*; New Testament: *thanatos* and *apothnesko*) primarily refers to a “*separation*”– from a particular environment, either physical or spiritual. And although a couple of individuals in the Old Testament (*Enoch*: [Genesis 5:24](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+5.24&t=NKJV); *Elijah*: [2 Kings 2:11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Kings+2.11&t=NKJV)) did not experience the reality of death from their temporal environment in the “normal” manner, they indeed were *separated* from it. This will also be the case with a multitude of Christians upon Christ’s return to the atmosphere of earth prior to the Messianic Era ([1 Thessalonians 4:15-17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Thessalonians+4.15-17&t=NKJV)).

**Temporal/Physical Death**

Even though every person is surrounded with the concept and reality of physical death (via social media and personal involvement), it is something that most will endeavor to avoid, even to contemplate, at great cost. This is particularly true when one is young. The concept and expectation of physical death is something a young person willingly ignores. Rather, the young often feel (or at least hope) that they will never die. Indeed, one’s personal death is something to be summarily dismissed from human thought by most everyone.

On the other hand, after a person advances in years, or as one may say becomes “old” (an accounting of years that varies from person to person), the concept of physical death becomes more conscious, tangible, and personal in one’s life. Still, most individuals will go to great lengths and expense to delay its inevitability, whether from age or illness or both. Why is this so?

This writer believes the primary reason for such pessimistic thinking regarding the concept of physical death is due to a “fear of the unknown,” which also may be coupled with an awareness of personal failure in this lifetime, a thought which often leads to guilt and a belief in some form of punishment beyond this life.

The reality is that every person – including you – will someday, sooner or later, pass from this temporal life.

*What man can live and not see death? Can he deliver his life from the power of the grave?* ([Psalm 89:48](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Psalm+89.48&t=NKJV))

*Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might; for there is no work or device or knowledge or wisdom in the grave where you are going.* ([Ecclesiastes 9:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ecclesiastes+9.10&t=NKJV))

*Man who is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble. He comes forth like a flower and fades away; He flees like a shadow and does not continue.* ([Job 14:1-2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Job+14.1-2&t=NKJV))

This death, *i.e*., temporal/physical death, along with another, was due to the man’s fall – his disobedience to his Creator – in the Garden of Eden ([Genesis 2:15-17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+2.15-17&t=NKJV)).

**Spiritual & Eternal Death**

As a result of man’s disobedient act in the Garden of Eden, he surely died, a compound death consisting of 1) *temporal/physical death*, a process of physical deterioration leading to the eventual cessation of (separation from) temporal life and 2) *spiritual death*, an immediate separation of man’s spirit from God, the Creator, who is the Supreme Spirit of all that exists and is real ([John 4:24](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+4.24&t=NKJV); [2 Corinthians 3:17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Corinthians+3.17&t=NKJV)), a death “*in trespasses and sins*” ([Ephesians 2:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+2.1&t=NKJV); [Colossians 2:13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Colossians+2.13&t=NKJV)). And these two deaths (separations) were passed on to all of Adam’s descendants down through time.

*Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned.* ([Romans 5:15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+5.15&t=NKJV))

*For as in Adam all die.* ([1 Corinthians 15:22a](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+15.22a&t=NKJV))

For mankind, the fortunate detail about *spiritual death* is that during one’s temporal life it may be nullified, *i.e.*, exchanged for *spiritual life*, a life that once obtained can never be altered or nullified. Otherwise, if the exchange is never made in one’s temporal life, spiritual death becomes permanent, *i.e., eternal* (*spiritual*) *death.*

The term *salvation* is an appropriate classification of the spiritual exchange affecting a person as mentioned in the previous paragraph, of replacing *spiritual death* with *spiritual life*. In accordance with Scripture, it takes place once a person, by and through the convicting power of the Holy Spirit, becomes aware of his true spiritual condition ([John 16:7-11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+16.7-11&t=NKJV)), becomes aware of the price Jesus Christ paid on the cross in order to satisfy God’s wrath against all sin ([1 John 2:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1John+2.2&t=NKJV); [4:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1John+4.10&t=NKJV)), and makes the conscious decision to place his faith solely in Christ and His “work” on the cross for personal, eternal salvation ([John 3:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+3.16&t=NKJV); [Acts 16:30-31](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+16.30-31&t=NKJV); [Ephesians 2:8-9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+2.8-9&t=NKJV)).

Still, to properly understand the concept of *salvation* in Scripture, one must understand the context in which the subject is addressed in Scripture. The point being is that it often, in fact most often, applies not to those who are “lost” or “spiritually dead” but rather to those who have already been “saved,” who are “spiritually alive.” And it is only when a Christian comes to an understanding of the tripartite composition of man – *spirit, soul, body* ([1 Thessalonians 5:23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Thessalonians+5.23&t=NKJV); [Hebrews 4:12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+4.12&t=NKJV)) – and the fact that God’s complete redemptive plan for man also includes, in addition to “spirit-salvation,” the offer of “soul-salvation” ([Hebrews 10:39](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+10.39&t=NKJV); [James 1:21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=James+1.21&t=NKJV)), that he will come to a full appreciation of all that God has to offer him regarding both eternity and that which will take place soon following the return of Christ, *i.e.*, the Messianic Era.

(It is highly recommended that the reader access and read the book, in this site, [Salvation of the Soul](https://www.koffeekupkandor.com/salvation-of-the-soul.php), by Arlen L. Chitwood, in order to properly understand these two aspects of salvation by God for mankind.)

And with any of the three facets of death prescribed in Scripture, there is a related judgment that man, regardless of his spiritual condition, must face. That is indeed what the author of the book of Hebrews meant when in the 9th chapter, verse 27, he wrote, “*And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment*." ([Hebrews 9:27](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+9.27&t=NKJV))

**The Coming Judgments**

The Great White Throne Judgment

For the non-Christian, the individual who during his temporal life refuses to accept God’s sacrifice (payment) for sin, as was manifest in the spiritual death of Christ on the cross (*separation* of God the Son from God the Father for a three hour period of time [[Matthew 27:45-46](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+27.45-46&t=NKJV); [Mark 15:33-34](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Mark+15.33-34&t=NKJV)]), by making a conscious decision to place his faith solely in Christ for his personal, eternal salvation, the time will come when he will stand before God at His “*great white throne*” to receive the “*second death*” judgment of eternal separation from God (the only verdict that can emanate from man’s works) in the “*lake of fire*.”

*Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire*. ([Revelation 20:11-15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+20.11-15&t=NKJV))

The Judgment Seat of Christ

For the Christian, the individual who during his temporal life made the conscious decision to place his faith solely in Christ and His “work” (sacrifice, payment for sin of the world) on the cross of Calvary, and not in any form of “works” by man, for his personal, eternal salvation, the time will come when he will stand before Christ at His “*judgment seat*” to either receive “*reward*” or “*suffer loss* (of reward)” based upon what he “*has done, whether good or bad*” during his Christian life, the result of which will only have relevance during the coming Messianic Era, the thousand year reign of Christ upon the earth.

*For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.* ([2 Corinthians 5:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Corinthians+5.10&t=NKJV))

*For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one’s work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one’s work, of what sort it is. If anyone’s work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone’s work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.* ([1 Corinthians 3:11-15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+3.11-15&t=NKJV))

*. . . For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.* ([Romans 14:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+14.10&t=NKJV))

(*It is highly recommended* that the reader access and read the book, Judgment Seat of Christ by Arlen L. Chitwood, in order to properly understand the coming judgment that all Christians will face. The book’s access link: [Bible One - Judgment Seat of Christ by Arlen Chitwood](http://bibleone.net/JSC.htm).)

**Concluding Comment**

This writer’s hope and prayer for every Christian is that at the end of each Christian’s temporal life, he or she can say, as with the apostle Paul, the following:

*I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.* ([2 Timothy 4:7-8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Timothy+4.7-8&t=NKJV))

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[Your Coming Terminal Appointment by Charles Strong of Bible One](http://bibleone.net/Your-Coming-Terminal-Appointment.htm)