

Series 3: What Happened in the Garden? What was the “Death” promised, and then how was it carried out? How does this pertain to Christ’s Death?

Important Prelude: It is critical in order to understand many things in the Bible for us to get away from our “modern” western/eastern cultural mindset, and “our” thinking interpreted from our modern dictionary definitions. When studying the Bible it is important to allow the Bible to interpret the Bible (proper Bible **Hermeneutics** – interpretation of scripture). We need to keep in remembrance that the truths of the Bible are eternal, and that these truths transcend time and overflow with application for us and all generations. However, also of great importance to remember, in order for us to rightly divide these truths while we study (2 Tim. 2:15), is that the Bible was not written “to us,” nor in our language, cultural, or world setting. In order for us to better try and understand the Bible, we need to try and place ourselves into the setting we are reading, into the times and culture, and into the mindset of how the people being spoken or written to would have understood things. What would an event, or a particular saying or language nuance, mean to the hearer of that time and culture? (Bible study principle called: **Audience Relevance**) (I say these comments not only for how we need to approach the topic under discussion, but further, as an approach we need to keep aware of and use for “all” of our Bible reading, no matter where in the Bible we may be studying.)

Added to this: it very important to always be studying a passage in its historical and grammatical context in order to correctly understand what meaning is really trying to be inferred from the passage we may be reading. As our English language often may only have one, or a few words to describe something, whereas the original Hebrew, Greek or Aramaic languages may have multiple words available, with each offering a variation to the meaning. When reading in our English translation this could lead us to more easily alter a meaning within a passage without being aware of it, which not only may limit the true meaning, but on more occasions then we would like to admit, it actually can lead to wrong interpretations altogether. (A strong promotion to use multiple translations of the English Bible when you study, at the very least.)

Gen 2:17 “but of the tree of knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day you eat of it you shall surely die.”

From this one verse, we need to answer both of the following questions:

- What did God mean when He promised Adam and Eve that they would surely “die” “in the day” they ate?
- And, what actually did happen “in the day” they ate?

** The answers to those two questions will dramatically affect the rest of our understanding of redemptive history, and the full purpose and meaning of the death and resurrection of Christ.

In order for us to begin to answer these questions, it becomes very important for us to fully understand what God meant by “die,” and what He meant by “in the day,” because if that verse was not 100% fulfilled “in the day,” then He would have lied to Adam and Eve, and the Bible declares that is impossible for God:

- This was a royal decree from an Almighty God who does not change His decrees, James 1:17 says, “...with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.” Mal. 3:6, “For I am the Lord, I do not change...” Num. 23:19, “...Has he ever spoken and failed to act? Has he ever promised and not carried it through?” Heb. 6:17-18, “...the unchangeableness of His purpose...he cannot lie...” Heb. 13:8, “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.” Tit. 1:2, “...God, who cannot lie...” Psa. 2 “no delay.” Psa. 89:34, “...not break, nor alter...” 1 Sam. 15:29, “...not a man that He should change.”

First: what understanding does the Bible provide us from how Adam and Eve were created – Gen. 2:15, 3:19, 1 Cor. 15:50a:

- Adam was created “flesh and blood” “from the dust” outside of the Garden **within** the rest of creation – but “**then**” placed in the Garden.
- Adam was created “flesh and blood” “from the dust.” It is very important to understand that he was created **neither mortal nor immortal**, but with the potential for either, depending on his obedience or disobedience. Definitions:
 - Immortality means – not subject/destined to die, nor even able to physically die.
 - Mortality means – both able to die and **subject/destined to physically die**.
 - **Important to understand:** Prior to the Fall they were “able to die,” as they were created from dust, but they were not **subject to die** because they had not sinned, nor **destined to die** because they had access to the Tree of Life.

(Drawing from Ed Stevens “Fall of Adam” paper)

Second: it is very important for us to take a look at **different kinds of death** that are mentioned in the Bible, in order to better assist us in determining what the Bible is trying to tell us in Gen. 2:17 about the “death” that Adam and Eve were threatened with, and what death they did surely die “in that day.” Let’s look at these four kinds of death mentioned in Scripture:

1. **PHYSICAL DEATH:** This of course, is our easiest and most natural concept to understand, simply dying physically – death of the physical body. The soul being separated from its physical body. (Jam. 2:26)

2. **SIN-DEATH:** = defiled conscience awareness, spiritual eyes opened to nakedness and guilt and shame, broken relationship with God, and condemnation. This is referring to our condition or status before God (**spiritually, morally, judicially, and covenantally**) when our relationship to God has been broken by sin. When Adam and Eve sinned, they were immediately under the condemnation of eternal death. They no longer stood innocent and righteous in His presence. They were condemned and had to be expelled/separated from their special habitation in the Garden where they had enjoyed intimate and personal fellowship with God.
- a. By sinning they **immediately died "sin-death"** ("dead in their trespasses and sins" Eph. 2:1, 5), and were under God's condemnation. They were "dead even while they liveth" (1 Tim. 5:6; Luke 15:24 prodigal son). Or, like the statement of Jesus, "Let the (spiritually) dead bury the (physically) dead" (Matt. 8:22). **Adam and Eve did not die physically "on that day," but they did die that very day in their relationship to God (spiritually, morally, judicially, and covenantally, and came under condemnation)**. They had broken the covenant, and were now under condemnation. They no longer stood innocent and righteous in His presence. They were stood condemned and would now need to be removed from the Garden where they had enjoyed close fellowship with God. The Fall killed Adam and Eve in their spiritual relationship to God. A most detrimental death that Adam suffered "on that day" was this sin-death. The focus in redemptive history was on reversing that sin-death/separation from God, and the eternal death/separation from God to which man would ultimately be sealed once he physically died → if he died w/o his sins forgiven.
3. **SECOND (ETERNAL) DEATH:** This is eternal conscious punishment in the unseen spiritual realm for the wicked and unredeemed (unalterable after physical death). It is their eternal separation from God in the Lake of Fire (Rev. 20:14) after physical death. It is termed the "second death," or second separation from God (the ultimate destiny of the unredeemed). This would have been inseparable with sin-death, and would have begun immediately "in the day" Adam and Eve sinned, and would have been their full and final destiny, if God had not intervened with the substitutionary sacrificial system in the Garden, ultimately consummating this provisional atonement through the full, final and perfect atonement sacrifice of Christ.

Before we look into the 4th type of “death” mentioned in the Bible (substitutionary death), I believe it is critical that we get a correct understanding of that time in the Garden “**before**” the Fall.

* **Comprehensive death** – this would have been the “**only**” meaning of the death promised by God to Adam “the day” he sinned. Comprehensive death means full and complete death: **physical, spiritual (sin-death)** and **eternal**. Death meant death – full and total death. There was **no** distinction between any aspect of death. If no intervention by God had been done then “the very day” Adam and Eve ate from the tree they would have experienced a comprehensive death: sin-death, died physically, and their physical death would have been the portal into an eternal sin-death separation from God in the Lake of Fire. The death threatened meant full death. The death promised was a **comprehensive death**.

Quoting from Don Preston: “If we misidentify the “death threatened and then carried out” in the Garden, we will of necessity build our other doctrines from these ill-formed roots and thus incorrectly identify the full work of redemption, the atonement, the resurrection, the eternal kingdom, and so much more. If our *protology* (doctrine of the beginning) is **wrong**, our *eschatology* (doctrine of the end) is destined to be **incorrect**. To wrongly identify the “death promised and then carried out” in the Garden is to then **wrongly construct eschatology**. To wrongly identify the nature and focus of [*Christ’s physical body and literal blood substitutionary atoning sacrifice on (RPS)*] the cross is to **misinterpret the correct story of redemption**. We must start with proper roots/foundation and then place our understanding of all eschatological passages within this proper context and framework or we are **doomed to miss and/or misconstrue their message**. I cannot overemphasize how critical it is to correctly understand what happened in the Garden. However we define what death was threatened and then carried out on Adam and Eve in Genesis will absolutely determine what we believe about the Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ, and subsequently that of all of His saints in the New Testament, and every faithful believer to follow.” (Preston: WSMHA)

Sub Study into “in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die”

What Does ‘in the day you eat’ Mean?

*And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; 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.**”* (Gen. 2:16-17, NKJV)

Quoting from Ed Stevens: “Notice that whatever kind of death God threatened against Adam was to be executed upon him *“in the very day”* he ate from the forbidden tree. There is nothing ambiguous about this language. It is very explicit. Therefore, it cannot be talking about the physical **natural death** of Adam nine-hundred years later. Instead, it can only be talking about a **penal death** that Adam would die “in the very day he ate” (a capital punishment death = you sin, your penalty the same day is to die). No other death at any other time will fit the clear language here.”

“Many commentaries try to explain away this language by suggesting that Adam merely *began to die* on that day, or that he became *mortal* (subject to eventual death), or that the *death penalty* was only imputed against him on that day. But there is not a hint of those ideas in the context. God explicitly warned Adam that if he ate from the forbidden tree, he would die “in the very same day he ate.”” (Stevens: Death of Adam paper)

The phrase “**penal death**” as I am using it here in this context applies ONLY to the comprehensive death that was threatened to occur “on the day they ate” (Gen. 2:17). Thus, the threatened death in Gen. 2:17 is a very specific kind of penal death. There are other kinds of penal death, but “THE” penal death that is threatened here in Gen. 2:17 is very specific.

Here are its characteristics:

- It was a threatened death (i.e., a penal death).
- It was a forced “dying-young” kind of death (not natural death).
- It had to occur on the day they ate, not later (key point here).

- It was not natural death 900 years later – even though their natural death later was a penal consequence of being separated from the Tree of Life, it was NOT “the” penal death that was threatened here in Gen. 2:17.
- It was **comprehensive death** (*spiritual, physical, and eternal*) – If they had been struck dead on that day, they would have experienced **all three kinds of death** on that day. But because the animal died on their behalf, their sin (*spiritual* death) was forgiven, the animal died *physically* in their place, and they did not go into *eternal* death. The substitutionary animal sacrifice covered their comprehensive death (Gen. 3:21).

When Adam sinned, he was obviously *spiritually dead* in his trespasses and sins, as well as under condemnation to die both *physically* (the First Death) and *eternally* (the Second Death). That was the *comprehensive* death that was threatened. It was a *penal* death. And the animal sacrifice covered that comprehensive death threat (Gen. 3:21). Furthermore, the benefits of that substitutionary animal sacrifice were applied not only to Adam and Eve, but to all of their posterity. That is what *Federal Headship* is all about.

And even though the natural death of Adam 900 years later can be labeled as “a” (**generic**) **penal death**, since it resulted from Adam’s separation from the Tree of Life, it was NOT “the” (**specific**) **penal death** that was *threatened* to occur on the very day Adam sinned (Gen. 2:17).

Whatever kind of death was threatened, it had to be the **same kind of death** that was actually carried out *in the very same “24-hour day”* that Adam sinned. Preston in his book argues this case: “Did Adam and Eve **die [physically] the day that they ate** the forbidden fruit? ... The vast majority say, “No, Adam and Eve did not die [physically] the day they ate.”

Interestingly however, when we point out that God said they would die that day, and that **Satan said they would not die that day**, there is an immediate recognition that their view has a serious problem! The denial that Adam and Eve died the day they ate the fruit **makes Satan the one who told the truth** . . . This conundrum, is very real. Who really told the truth, God, or Satan?

It will be readily admitted that the term “day” can be used metaphorically. . . [However] only **context** can determine what “the day” means in any given text. Do we have any contextual help for understanding what “the day” means in Genesis 2:16f? We do indeed.

Note that YHVH told Adam and Eve, “In the day that you eat thereof, you will surely die.” When Satan confronted Eve, he told her, “You will not surely die, but, God knows that **in the day you eat** of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil” (Genesis 3:5). Notice the direct correlation between “**in the day you eat** you will surely die” and “**in the day you eat** you will know good and evil.”

Of course, Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit. The question therefore is, in **what day did they come to know good and evil**? Was that knowledge imparted 900 years later?

Did they continue in their innocence for several more centuries? The answer is obvious, is it not? **They knew good and evil in that very day**, the day marked by the sun, moon, and stars, **a twenty-four hour day**.

The identical term “in the day” is used to say they would die, and they would come to know good and evil. Where is the contextual evidence that “in the day that you eat you will surely die,” can be extrapolated into almost a millennium?

Consider the grammatical problem of saying Adam and Eve did die spiritually [sin-death] that day, but they did not die physically for hundreds of years. This means that the same identical term, in the same verse, has two totally disparate, contradictory, definitions. We are told that “in the day that you eat, you will surely die,” means that **in that very same twenty-four hour period**, they would lose their fellowship life with YHVH and be cast out of His presence. But then, that same identical statement, within the same verse, meant you will die physically hundreds of years from now! What rule of grammar, of linguistics, of semantics, of hermeneutic, allows the identical term, in the identical verse, to mean two totally different things? It appears from our vantage point that **only a preconceived idea of the nature of the death of Adam can force this kind of meaning onto the text**.

[WSMHA, 5-7, boldface and bracketed words added for clarity and emphasis]

While Preston later in his book diverges into other untenable and unbiblical teaching, I would fully agree that it is very clear that the phrase “*in the day you eat*” in the context of Genesis 2-3 absolutely means that Adam must certainly die some kind of death within the same 24-hour day that he ate the forbidden fruit. There is simply no grammatical or contextual justification for the idea that this death could occur sometime later. Whatever kinds of death were threatened (spiritual [sin-death] and/or physical and/or eternal), they all had to occur literally “on the very same day he ate.” So that raises the question: **What kinds of death were threatened and carried out “on the very same day they ate”?**

Another passage to examine in relation to What Kind of Death God Threatened?

In the conversation between the Serpent and the woman (Gen. 3:1-6), we can discern what her concept of the threatened death must have been. The Serpent questioned what God said: “Did God actually say that you could not eat from every tree in the garden?” The woman replied: “We do eat from the trees of the garden, except this one about which God said, *do not eat of it, nor even touch it, lest you die.*” But the Serpent said: “*You will not surely die*, for God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened and you will be like God knowing good and evil.” So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, a delight to the eyes, and would make her wise, she took and ate.”

Notice the four italicized statements above: (1) not to eat of it, nor even touch it, lest you die; (2) *You will not surely die*; (3) *good for food*; (4) *delight to the eyes*. The woman associated three physical actions with the threatened death, **eating**, **touching**, and **seeing**. This implies that she understood the death threat to be physical death, since there is no indication that she already knew what spiritual death was. In fact, since they had not yet sinned, they could **not** have known what spiritual death was. Her spiritual eyes had **not** been opened yet. But she was able to see the delightful-looking tree with her physical eyes. And since she associated the threatened death with those three physical actions (*eating*, *touching*, and *seeing*), it strongly, if not necessarily, implies that her concept of the threatened death was *physical*.

This conclusion is further supported by the fact that when the Serpent reassured her that they would not die by touching it or eating it, she understood that the fruit was *safe to eat* (i.e., “*good for food*” Gen. 3:6). It would not kill them. It does not appear that she had any concept of spiritual death (sin-death) whatsoever. Her only concern appears to have been whether they would *physically* die from touching and eating the fruit.

Furthermore, Eve got this physical concept of death from Adam, and Adam got it straight from God, which necessarily implies that *physical death was included* in the kinds of death that God threatened to execute upon them “in the very day they ate.”

This means that when God showed up “in the cool of the day” they should have been struck dead on the spot, in the same way Ananias and Sapphira were struck dead on the very day they lied to Peter and the Holy Spirit (Acts 5). God did that very kind of thing to Ananias and Sapphira, so why did he not kill Adam and Eve “on the very day they sinned”? Below we explain how there actually was a physical death on behalf of Adam and Eve on the very day they sinned.

How Was That Physical Death Carried Out?

*“The LORD God made garments of **skin** for Adam and his wife, and clothed them.”* [Gen. 3:21, NAS95]

So, why didn’t they die physically “on the very day” that they sinned? An animal was slain “on that very day” on behalf of Adam and Eve to provide “garments of **skin**” for them (Gen. 3:21). But that was not the only thing the animal death did for them. God’s main concern was NOT about their physical needs, as any clothing from any material could have sufficed for that, but of the utmost concern was their spiritual wellbeing and **forgiveness from the condemnation of their sin**. If that animal had not died as their substitute, then Adam and Eve would have been struck dead on the spot when God showed up “in the cool of the day” (as Ananias and Sapphira were). That was a penal death [capital punishment] – NOT a natural death (i.e. dying from a natural cause). That animal died Adam and Eve’s *penal death* for them, i.e., the death they would have died “on that day” if the animal had not died in their place. That animal did not die their *natural death* for them.

(NOTE: Jesus Christ did not die on the Cross to save us from *natural death*. He died to save us from our sin and its condemnation, which would have killed us by God’s decree instantly “on the day” we sinned unless He died in our place. He died our PENAL death for us – NOT our NATURAL death.)

Chandler and McKeever explain how the physical death of that animal in the garden on the very day they sinned brought **provisional forgiveness** to Adam and Eve, and was the beginning of the substitutionary sacrificial system which pointed straight to Jesus who provided the full and final *once-for-all atonement* through His physical death on the Cross. Notice Chandler's emphasis on the idea of a 'sacrificial substitute,' or 'substitute victim,' which 'represented the death owed by the man': "In harmony with God's preplanned arrangement for **atonement**, physical death was required 'in the day' of the sin, and was just as surely given! An animal was slain from which clothes were taken in the form of skins. It must be so that the slain animal was the **substitute victim** for Adam and Eve. Physical death came into Eden 'in that day,' but it came upon man's **sacrificial substitute**. When the animal was slain, it represented **the death owed by the man**." [Darwin Chandler. "The Fate of Innocence," *Expository Review* (vol. 1, no. 10, Oct. 1982) boldface added]

"Throughout the rest of the Old Testament, this **pattern of atonement** for sins is followed: **physical death of a perfect animal** (i.e., without blemish or spot) on behalf of the sinner, although the blood of these bulls and goats could not take away sins (Heb. 10:4). This pattern culminated in the real thing, which God had promised in the beginning – Gen. 3:15 – the **physical death of the perfect Lamb of God** on the Cross on behalf of his people." [Stacia McKeever, "What Does Jesus's Death Accomplish?" *Answers in Genesis* website article. boldface added]

Why did Adam and Eve still have to physically die?

The reason they still died *natural death* 900 years later is because they lost access to the Tree of Life (eternal life on earth). And they lost access to the Tree of Life because of their sin. The Tree of Life would have enabled them to live forever on earth in its fallen condition. That would have been eternally miserable. God's ultimate desire was to have man in heaven – NOT left on earth forever. But now, because of their sin, what would **now** be *natural* for man would be to physically die after the allotted days of their life [dust returns to dust], and then his soul go to Sheol (aka Hades) to await a kinsman-redeemer (Christ) who would at the resurrection ransom them out of Sheol by His once-for-all substitutionary physical death on their behalf. He died a *penal death* for them (as well as for us). He did not die their *natural death* for them (or us). Jesus did not die to save us from physically dying a "natural death" after our allotted days. He died to save us from our sin and its condemnation, which would have resulted in our penal death "the very day" we sinned, taking our physical life and ushering us into the spiritual realm into our eternal death if not remedied by his substitutionary death on our behalf.

We need to put this in the context of what would have happened if Adam had remained faithful to the test. What would have happened to Adam if he had never sinned? Many Church writers all the way back to Augustine have answered this question in the following way: Faithful Adam would not have died physically at the end of his probationary period (supposedly 1000 years). Instead, his body would have been changed to immortal, then glorified and taken to heaven. He would not have died *natural* death (no physical death).

In other words, if Adam had remained faithful to the end of his test, he would have gained immortality and heaven without having to die physically. He would have been rewarded with an escape from physical death (by a bodily change) and then be taken to heaven. When he sinned, he forfeited that benefit.

After Adam sinned, he was removed from the Garden “lest he put forth his hand, take, and eat from the Tree of Life and live forever” (Gen. 3:22). Even after he sinned he could have physically lived forever on the earth if he had continued access to the Tree of Life. But that was not what God had planned. God’s ultimate purpose was to have His faithful obedient believers in heaven with Him. So, He removed access to the Tree of Life so that man would now have to die and go to Sheol to await the redeemer (Jesus Christ) who would pay the substitutionary ransom to raise us out of Hades and take us to heaven.

Adam and Eve would now have to *naturally* physically die as a “direct consequence” of eating from the forbidden tree and being put out of the Garden → *being cut off from being able to continue to eat from the Tree of Life*.

- Example: if you owned a garden and told a worker to remove all of a certain plant in your garden by pulling them out by the roots from the soil [source of life] to be cast out of the garden onto a cement walk or road away from their source of life – the result of your decree for the plants to be removed would not “immediately physically kill them.” However, as a direct result of being “cut-off from the source of life,” the plants would all now dry up and die over time depending on the strength of the sun, lack of rain and nutrients, temperature changes on the root systems, exposure to insects, animals and a variety of other things. This process could take some time, depending on the plant, but they will “all now physically die and turn back into dust.” Thus, is the course of all mankind now. We are made from dust and have been barred from the Tree of Life on this earth (It is now in heaven. Rev. 22:2), and after the days of life God has allotted to each of us, our physical bodies will return to the dust from which they are made (Gen. 3:19).

- While the substitutionary death of the animal slain by God paid the *penal* death, and *provisionally* atoned for their sin, physical death would still be a natural consequence of being cut-off from the access to the tree of life → physical death would eventually and *naturally* follow (i.e. they were made from the dust, and now being cut-off from the Tree of Life, would eventually age and physically deteriorate until they return to the dust (Gen. 3:19)).

Adam and Eve were Forgiven “before” they left the Garden

The Protoevangelium, or first statement of the gospel (Gen. 3:15), provides proof that God had forgiven them. The promise of a descendant to crush the Serpent shows that God gave them a future. They were not going to die on that day. The animal was slain in substitute for them, and its skin was a visible reminder of its substitutionary sacrificial death on their behalf. Thus, Adam and Eve left the garden in a forgiven state.

Gulley notes that “As soon as there was sin, there was a Savior.” As soon as they sinned, God proclaimed the gospel to them (Gen. 3:15) and offered a sacrifice for their provisional forgiveness as they looked toward the future Coming One who would fulfill that physical substitutionary sacrificial typology once-for-all by His physical death on the Cross. [Gulley, *Creation, Christ, Salvation*, Systematic Theology vol. 3, 416].

God was not tardy in expressing his redemptive intentions toward his human creation. As soon as He showed up in the cool of the day, he brought them to account for their sin. Unlike Ananias and Sapphira, who lied about their misdeeds and were struck dead on the spot (Acts 5), Adam and Eve confessed their sin, after which God promised them a future, and “made garments of skin to clothe them” (Gen. 3:11-21). And Adam exhibited saving faith in God’s promise of redemption by naming his wife “Eve” (Life). In view of their confession, repentance, and faith in the coming redeemer, God made a sacrifice on their behalf, showing that they were forgiven. That is how God carried out his threat of physical death on the very day they sinned. *A substitute was slain on their behalf.*

That clearly shows that God was not merely concerned about their physical well-being, but also even more anxious about their spiritual condition. The fact that he did not strike them dead immediately, and send them to the Lake of Fire (the Second Death), tells us that he had their spiritual welfare clearly in mind. And what better way to announce a Savior (Gen. 3:15) and *typify* His salvation than to slay an innocent animal on their behalf right there in the garden on the very day they sinned (Gen. 3:21). It is just like God in his infinite wisdom and mercy to devise a redemptive plan and institute it immediately as soon as sin and death entered the world.

Why would He wait hundreds or thousands of years to begin the typological sacrificial system if sin and death had already begun to wreak its havoc from the moment Adam and Eve ate the fruit? We would expect their sin to be dealt with immediately through the sacrificial system. And in the very next chapter (Genesis 4) we see Cain and Abel bringing an offering to God at the eastern gate of the garden. How did they learn to do that? Apparently from watching their parents, Adam and Eve. And how did Adam and Eve learn to do it? Obviously from watching God slay an innocent animal on their behalf to clothe them with its skin (Gen. 3:21).

We can only imagine the shock and awe that must have gripped their emotions as they watched that innocent animal “*die the death*” that they deserved. They “died with” that animal and “put on” its skin, just like we die with Christ and put on His righteousness (Col. 2:12; Gal. 3:27). *That is substitutionary sacrificial language!*

Thus began the typological sacrificial system right there in the garden on the very day they sinned. As soon as sin showed up, God provided a *physical* sacrificial remedy which pointed straight to Jesus the Lamb of God who takes away our sins by His *physical* death on the Cross.

Furthermore, the various works on temple typology have noted the priestly and sacrificial symbolism portrayed here in this encounter between God and Adam (Genesis 3). In order for a High Priest to enter the Most Holy Place and ***come back out alive***, he had to take blood with him. Nor did his entrance into the Presence of God effect ***forgiveness*** unless he offered that blood on the mercy seat. Hebrews 9:22 says it this way, “without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.” That was the foundational principle, not only of the substitutionary sacrificial system, but of any approach of sinful man to the Presence of God.

In view of this, we have to wonder how those sinners (Adam and Eve) could survive the encounter with God without their sins being covered. Adam and Eve obviously did not have any blood to offer to God when He showed up. They should have been struck dead on the spot. Anyone who entered into the Presence of God without blood would suffer the fatal consequences. So, how did Adam and Eve survive that encounter? ***There must have been a sacrifice!*** Sure enough, that is exactly what we see in Genesis 3:21. God provided the blood for them, which covered their sins and allowed them to leave his Presence ***alive*** and ***forgiven***.

Now we know why God spared their lives, forgave their sins, promised a redeemer, gave them a future, and clothed them with beautiful, comfortable, durable “garments of skin.” ***Adam and Eve left the garden forgiven!*** The Genesis 3 context clearly shows that they *confessed* their sin to God, and clearly exhibited their *faith* in His promise to send a redeemer. God would not have given them a future, and *promised* a redeemer, unless they had *saving faith*. And it was on the basis of that faith that he offered a *substitutionary sacrifice* for them, and *forgave* them.

We would never have existed if God had not forgiven them right there in His Presence on the very day they sinned. They would have been struck dead, leaving no posterity to carry on. *But God did not let the sun go down on His wrath against their sin.* The sacrifice for their sin was not left to another day. It was offered by God himself right there while they were in His Presence on the very day they sinned. Thus began the substitutionary sacrificial system. *As soon as there was sin, there was a sacrifice!* Adam and Eve came out of that Holy Place ***alive*** and ***forgiven***. And the rest is history. Praise God!!!

The fact that they did not die a physical *penal* [capital punishment] death “on that very day” proves that their sins were forgiven by the sacrifice of that lamb which died physically in their place “on that very day.” And the fact that we today do not die physically “on the very day that we sin” also proves that we are forgiven our *penal* death by the substitutionary physical death of Jesus on the Cross. The fact that we still die a physical *natural* death later does not at all mean that we are not forgiven, or that physical death was not a part of the consequences for sin. It only means that we no longer have access to the Tree of Life which could have sustained our physical lives forever (Gen. 3:22).

We all still die physically for the same reason that Adam still died physically 900+ years later → without access to the Tree of Life → dust returns to dust, even though his sins were forgiven by the substitutionary death of that lamb, or our sins were forgiven by the substitutionary death of Christ.

Restoration of Fellowship

Notice what the following writers have to say about the forgiveness and restoration of fellowship of Adam and Eve: Because [God] always seeks to **forgive** and **restore** what was lost, each covenant contains the element of forgiveness, either implicitly or explicitly, and each covenant—after the Fall—aims to **restore what was lost**, and that restoration can only come about by God’s gracious gift. ... The church has long understood the skin garment episode (Gen. 3:21) as an adumbration of Christ and his sacrifice, in much the same way as the later Levitical animal sacrifices anticipate that of the Son. Surely this is correct.

[Jeffrey J. Niehaus, “The Common Grace Covenants,” in vol. 1 of *Biblical Theology*, Accordance electronic ed. (Wooster: Weaver Book Company, 2014), 77-80.]

God subsequently clothes them to signify their inaugurated **restoration to him** (Gen. 3:21). [G.K. Beale, *A New Testament Biblical Theology*, Accordance electronic ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011), 41. boldface added]

God revealed a way in which human sin could be **forgiven** and the broken relationship **restored**. God himself provided a substitute (an animal) whose blood (life) would atone for sin (Genesis 3:21). This began the sacrificial system. This revealed that once atonement had been made it was again possible for humankind to **enter God’s presence** which was manifested at the ark. However, this was done only through a mediator, the high priest, who represented God’s people (Exodus 28:12, 29). The sacrifices and the atonement conducted by the priests of Israel foreshadowed a coming sacrifice and a high priest who would make **atonement once for all**. [Randall Price, *Rose Guide to the Temple*, 4. boldface added]

From the beginning, some of the first notable changes that would attest to a new [covenantal] arrangement were a different location (Gen. 3:24), additional descendants in the first family (4:1–2), and a **sacrifice-based relationship of blood atonement** with God (4:3–5). The **blood sacrifice** was the only **acceptable means of reconciliation** for those faithful ones who sought to remain in personal **fellowship** with Him. ... This alteration of relationship (now indirect) was portrayed in the first act of personal redemption as personally accomplished by the Lord for Adam and Eve (**Gen. 3:21**). [Ervin Starwalt, “Issue 8: April 1999.” *Conservative Theological Journal* 3 (Apr 1999): p. 109. boldface added]

Quoting from Ed Stevens: “The Protoevangelium (Gen. 3:15), God's promise to bring forth a kinsman-redeemer from the seed of Eve who would crush the serpent's head, is further acted out in the substitutionary sacrifice that God performed in front of Adam and Eve. This certainly had to be the beginning of the sacrificial system, and the origin of the sacrificial lamb motif that recurs constantly throughout both testaments. For instance, we see Abel offer a lamb from his flocks, Job offering sacrifices, the ram (lamb) caught in a thicket on Mount Moriah for Abraham to sacrifice, the Passover lamb in Egypt, the statement of John the Baptist about Jesus being the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world (John 1:29, 36), and preeminent of all, those marvelous texts in Revelation (5:6, 13:8) where John saw “a Lamb standing as if slain,” ...”the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.””

All mankind who would come from Adam and Eve – Federal Headship (Romans 5:12-19)

The doctrine of justification is inseparably bound up with **Federal Headship** and provisional (conditional) forgiveness. In fact, that is exactly what justification by faith really is. It is **justification** (*forgiveness*) by **faith** (meeting the *provisional or conditional requirement* of faith). Faith is the terms of the contract. Forgiveness provisionally or conditionally requires Faith. Forgiveness is not given to the descendants of Adam (our Federal Head) without meeting the terms (provisions, conditions) of that contract.

The descendants of Adam could only be forgiven if they have a “faith like Abraham (or Adam)” who believed the promise of a coming redeemer (Rom. 4:3, 13-16). That is part of what we mean by “provisional forgiveness.” The descendants of Adam (our Federal Head) have to get forgiveness the same way Adam got it (through faith in Christ). Forgiveness (justification) was always and will always be “conditioned (or provisioned)” on the basis of **faith in Christ**.

That is what Federal Headship is all about. That is why Adam was provisionally forgiven based on his faith in the coming redeemer. And because he was the federal head of us all, it means that we likewise cannot be forgiven without meeting the provisions (conditions) of that faith requirement. We have to get forgiveness the same way Adam and Abraham did – by faith in the Coming One. Thank God that He made that provision for us Gentiles who have a like-precious faith! That is why the Federal Headship is so critical for our doctrine of salvation (soteriology). Without it, we would have no hope of being saved like Adam and Abraham were.

There is another aspect to the phrase “**provisional forgiveness.**” Not only is it conditional upon having a faith like our Federal Head Adam, but it is also “provisional” in the sense that it was **temporary and typological until Christ** came to fulfill it “once-for-all” by His physical death on the Cross. Thus, it was provisional in two senses: (1) Conditional upon having a faith like Adam; and (2) Temporary and provisional until Christ provided the full and permanent sacrifice for our forgiveness.

The Death in the Garden and Provisional Forgiveness:

God threatened comprehensive death “on the day Adam sinned.” When the animal died as a substitute for Adam, he derived at least two benefits from it:

- (1) *Longevity of Life*: Adam did not die a *penal death* (capital punishment) on the day he sinned, but instead lived out the rest of his life and died a *natural death* 900 years later.
- (2) *Provisional Forgiveness*: Adam received *provisional forgiveness* and a promise of once-for-all full and final redemption through one of his descendants, so that Adam left the garden in a *provisionally* forgiven condition.

The Effects on All Mankind from the Federal Headship of Adam

ALL of the benefits of the substitutionary death of that animal in the Garden, including both ***provisional forgiveness*** and the ability to **live out the rest of their lives and die a *natural death***, apply to ALL of Adam’s descendants – that is what Federal Headship means. It is clear that ALL of Adam’s descendants do not die on the very day they sin. Even the non-believers are able to live out their full lives and die a natural death. This is clear evidence that they possess the same benefit that Adam received when that animal died in his place. Everyone received this benefit because they were descendants of Adam (our Federal Head).

The reason this matters is because the other benefit of that animal’s substitutionary death was ***provisional forgiveness***. If ALL of Adam’s descendants (under his federal headship) received ALL of the same benefits of that animal sacrifice that Adam received, then it means that ALL of them (including the non-elect) received *provisional forgiveness* as well. They were

entitled to ALL of the same benefits that Adam (their federal head) received. And since Adam received *provisional forgiveness*, it means that ALL of his descendants received provisional forgiveness also, as long as they met all the same conditions that Adam did in order to receive those benefits.

Forgiveness: “Provisional” – not Universal, Unconditional or Permanent

Definitions to Keep in Mind:

- *Provisional* – contingent, conditional, provided that certain conditions are met, (only temporary and contingent)
- *Universal* – not contingent upon or conditional upon any other factors (full and final and unconditional)
- *Full and Final Forgiveness* to those who satisfy the conditions that were set for it.

So, what was that *provisional forgiveness*? It certainly was **not** the full and final forgiveness that only Christ could provide. And the word “provisional” implies that there are certain **conditions** to be met in order to receive that kind of forgiveness. This implies that all people would still have to go to Sheol and wait until the arrival of Christ to receive their full and final forgiveness and go to heaven. At the coming of Christ everyone in Sheol were raised out of Sheol-Hades and were judged according to their deeds. Those who met the conditions of forgiveness would receive their reward. The rest would go away into everlasting punishment.

So there is a very significant difference between provisional forgiveness (through the animal sacrificial system) versus full and final “once-for-all forgiveness” (through Christ alone). Evidently all of Adam’s descendants received *provisional forgiveness*, the same as Adam, but it was “provisional,” meaning that it was conditional upon their faith in the promises of redemption through the Coming One (just like Adam believed). So it was NOT an unconditional forgiveness (i.e., universal reconciliation). Nor was it a forever forgiveness. It was only provisional and temporary until the Judgment Day, at which time it would be determined whether they met the conditions (had faith like Adam did).

So we see that the substitutionary death of that animal has a direct relationship to the **Federal Headship of Adam**, especially in regard to **how the benefits of that animal death apply to ALL of his descendants**. All of the benefits (including *provisional forgiveness*) must apply to ALL of Adam's descendants, they cannot be split up, otherwise the Federal Headship is broken (which would fatally contradict Apostle Paul).

Summary of Federal Headship:

Jesus Christ is our Federal Head, just like Adam was (Rom. 5:12-19). Christ made permanent what the sacrificial system only temporarily (provisionally) provided.

Looking back to the garden where God instituted the animal sacrificial system, it is important to understand that there are two distinct benefits involved in that garden animal death: (1) *Escape from PENAL death on the day they sinned*; and (2) *Forgiveness of sins on the conditional basis of faith*.

We need to distinguish between those two different benefits of that garden animal sacrifice, as well as how those benefits were applied to Adam's descendants under his **Federal Headship**:

- (1) All humans descended from Adam (Federal Headship) automatically got the *escape from penal death*, regardless of whether they believed and offered sacrifices, or not. That was an unconditional benefit to all of Adam's descendants. Whatever the Federal Head got, all those in Adam received it also.
- (2) But even though the *forgiveness of sins* was available to all of Adam's descendants through his Federal Headship, it had conditions attached to it. The sacrifices had to be offered in faith, or there was no forgiveness ("without faith it is impossible to please God" (Heb. 11:6)). Every descendant of Adam (our Federal Head) who **offered sacrifices in faith like Adam** was forgiven. And all of those sacrifices were temporary and provisional and pointed straight to Christ who fulfilled it "once for all" (1 Pet. 3:18; Gal. 3:13; Eph. 2:16-18; Col. 1:21-22).

So, we see there is a difference between the **unconditional benefits** (*escape from penal death*) versus the **conditional benefits** (*forgiveness of sins*).

The Mosaic sacrificial system had the same temporary value as the pattern introduced by God in the garden when he slayed those animals on Adam and Eve's behalf. Those sacrifices still only provided temporary (provisional) forgiveness if they were offered in faith like Adam had. They all pointed to Christ who fulfilled the temporary purpose of those sacrifices by providing permanent forgiveness of sins to all who believe in faith through his once-for-all literal blood and physical body death on the Cross.

(End of Sub Study)

Now let's go back and look further at the 4th type of death spoken of in the Bible:

4. **PHYSICAL DEATH BY SUBSTITUTE**: When God killed a sacrificial animal to provide skins for Adam and Eve to cover their nakedness, that sacrificial Lamb died in their place. They **"died with"** the lamb on that day, and **"put on"** the skin of that lamb to cover their guilt and shame. This is sacrificial language. Whoever pays for the sacrifice gets the benefits of that sacrifice (escape from death and forgiveness of sin).

So, when the lamb *died physically on that day*, they "died with" it, just like we **"die with" Christ** on the day of our conversion (Rom. 6:8; Col. 2:20; 2 Tim. 2:11; cf. Rom. 6:4-5; Gal. 2:19-20; 1 Pet. 2:24). They "put on" the skins of the sacrificial lamb in the same way we **"put on" Christ** in our conversion (Gal. 3:27; Rom. 13:14; Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:9-12; Rev. 3:5, 18, 19:8; 2 Cor. 5:21; Rom. 5:19; Phlp. 3:9), which covers our sin and enables us to stand uncondemned and righteous in God's presence.

The skin of that animal not only covered their guilt and shame, but also pointed to their new immortal bodies they would "put on" which God had reserved for them in heaven (1 Cor. 15:38, 53; 2 Cor. 5:1-5). The very Son of God Himself would be the true "Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world." The prophet Isaiah (53:7-8) points to this very thing (**"like a lamb...cut off...for the transgression of my people to whom the stroke was due"**). Rev. 5:6 pictures Christ before the heavenly throne as **"a lamb** standing as if Slain," and Rev. 13:8 as **"the lamb** slain from the foundation of the world."

God provided the sacrificial Lamb for Himself (Gen. 22:8). When we “die with” Him and “put on” the garments of Christ, we are given hope of life in heaven with a new immortal body. God promised a redeemer (Gen. 3:15), and the sacrificial system was instituted on that very day to bear witness to the coming Son of Adam who would be the Lamb of God to take away the power of sin and death. He **died for us** (Rom. 5:8; 1 Thess. 5:10). They “died with” that lamb “on that day,” and thus began the redemptive drama through the substitutionary sacrificial system.

There would have been no way for a Holy, Just and Righteous God to continue to deal with sinful fallen man if there had not been some substitutionary physical death to cover the sins of the person, for Hebrews 9:22 tells us that, “...without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.” And while that animal God slew in the Garden could not remove the sins of man, it was the substitutionary type which reflected the Antitype of Christ to come Whose blood would pay for and remove sin for all who would believe in faith.

God Himself instituted the substitutionary sacrificial system right there in the Garden from the very first sin. This was absolutely necessary for a Holy and Righteous God. Upon sinning, God’s Holy and Just Wrath would need to judge and condemn sin and cleanse it from His presence – so God took the life of an animal in their place. It pointed to Christ as the perfect lamb who would die as a sacrifice in the place of the sinner.

In effect, Adam and Eve (and all mankind) were bailed out of “immediate **eternal** death” from God, and the accounting for their wages of sin would be either:

- “Carried forward” to the time when Christ would satisfy and remove the demands of justice for all those having **their faith in** His substitutionary sacrifice.
- Or, if rejecting that only perfect sacrifice of Christ, they would face the full force of their sin judged upon themselves at the judgment after physical death (Heb. 9:27).

We can only imagine the horror that gripped the emotions of Adam and Eve as they watched God slay the sacrificial lamb in front of them "on that day" (the specific animal is not named in passage, but I do not think it farfetched to believe it was a lamb). They saw its death tremors, as the last drops of blood spurted out of its veins, and it died. Adam and Eve "died with" that lamb on that very day. They knew that the death which the lamb suffered was what they themselves deserved. The innocent lamb died in their place, in order that they could be provisionally forgiven, spiritually clothed/covered and still physically live.

They were now **fully mortal** (**subject to death, and destined to die physically**). Upon physical death their "souls" would now have to go to Hades/Sheol, waiting for the time of resurrection and judgement, and their flesh bodies would return to the dust permanently. Someday, at the time of the End when the Son of Adam would crush the serpent's head (Gen. 3:15; Rom. 16:20), God would **raise** their disembodied souls out of Hades/Sheol and give them **new immortal bodies**, with which to live in heaven with Him (2 Cor. 5:1-5).

Those skins were testimony to both their guilt and their forgiveness. They were signs of a covenant based on substitutionary sacrifice. Adam and Eve, and all mankind now, would still have to die physically because we all born with bodies of dust, we all sin, and do not have access to eat from the Tree of Life. However, those skins typified that a sinless human substitute would come to actually physically die in their place and give them real covering for their spiritual nakedness and the very kind of immortal body that they needed to live in heaven with God (2 Cor. 5:1). The Bible even tells us that a body made from the dust was never made to dwell in the spiritual realm, but always was in need to be "changed" (or replaced) at some point in order to do so (1 Cor. 15:43-51).

The story of Cain and Abel should also speak to us of what man knew of the required death sacrifice of an animal to atone for sin. Neither Abel, nor any other man, could invent a death sacrificial system, nor have God accept it, unless God had ordained or instituted it Himself. The Bible has never permitted man to worship God any which way he chooses. Where would Cain and Abel have heard or seen animal sacrifices to know what God required...would it not have been from their father Adam, who saw God Himself institute the first substitutionary animal sacrifice in the Garden? Abel died a righteous martyr at the hands of Cain. He was a "type" of the "Son of Adam" (Christ) to come.

** Taking one more look back at Gen. 2:17 it is very helpful to look and see what God did “not” say:

- 1) God did **not** say that you would begin to die.
- 2) God did **not** say you would be sentenced to death.
- 3) God did **not** say you would become mortal.

No, He said, “...for **in the day** you eat of it **you shall surely die**.”

Comprehensive death – this would have been the “**only**” meaning of the death promised by God to Adam “the day” he sinned. Comprehensive death means full and complete death: physical, spiritual (sin-death) and eternal. Death meant death – full and total death. There was **no** distinction between any aspect of death. If no intervention by God had been done then “the very day” Adam and Eve ate from the tree they would have experienced a comprehensive death: **sin-death, died physically**, and their physical death would have been the portal into an **eternal sin-death** separation from God in the Lake of Fire. The death threatened meant full death. The death promised was a **comprehensive death**.

In Study Series 1, 2a and 2b, we learned of God’s nature being absolutely Pure, Righteous and Holy. That being so, what would that have meant “**without**” Christ or mediation the day they sinned? It would have meant that “in the day” Adam and Eve ate they would have died a **comprehensive death** (physical, spiritual (sin-death) and eternal).

Without a mediation for a future sacrifice of Christ to propitiate sin, God’s Holy nature and character would have instantly and justly judged them “in that day” for their sin: with their eyes now opened through their sin-death they would have been physically killed, eternally sealing their souls in condemnation in the Lake of Fire (eternal death).

So, if Christ and the mediation/redemption of a future propitiation for sin was never imposed by the purpose of God, then the threat in Gen. 2:17 of **death** “in the day” they ate would have been all “**three in one.**” It would have been a comprehensive and final death. There would be no separation of death into three aspects/stages, but the full promise of God was: “**in the day**” you eat of it you shall surely die, and this would have been the exact case – fully and finally. **Without a sacrifice for sin** there is no separation of physical/sin-death (spiritual)/eternal death. God’s promise was all encompassing of the word and essence of the meaning – **death would mean the comprehensive threefold death “in the day” they ate if there was never to be a propitiating sacrifice for sin.** This is why it was of **absolute necessity** for God to have instituted the sacrificial system at the very point of that first sin – to provide *provisional* forgiveness for mankind until a perfect human sacrifice could come and pay for and remove sin for all those who in faith believe. All those who would not believe would be sealed in their unbelief upon their natural physical death, upon which they would be judged and held accountable to pay the wages for their own sins (Heb. 9:27).

**** Our study to this point has shown why it is critical to correctly understand **what Death** did they die in the Garden? The condition and entire future of mankind, and the revelation and culmination of **redemptive history** throughout the rest of the Bible, **is dependent upon it.** If errors get rooted within someone’s belief system here in the beginning, and many are potential, then it will naturally lead someone extending those suppositional errors into their views on other topics and beliefs...thus the leading to why we have so many denominations, with so many subgroups within those groups. **Thus you can see the vital importance of much time, cross referencing, and research spent right here in the beginning, in order to try and lay the strongest anchor points of truth possible from these scriptures before moving into the rest of the Bible.****

What were the effects of the Fall?

Adam & Eve, Satan, and what happened in the Garden:

God made Adam/Eve (mankind) to have free wills. They truly were created free to choose to either to obey or disobey God. However, when they freely chose to rebel, their wills “then and there” lost the ability to be truly free and were now “**slaves to sin**,” and all who would ever be born from them would all be **born slaves to sin** by their nature, and no longer either willing or wanting to choose good.

After Adam and Eve sinned **mankind was never the same**:

- When Adam and Eve sinned they were **cast out of the Garden**, and all of fallen mankind came **under the wrath of God**. (John 3:36)
- Not one single person was good or righteous, but all were full of wickedness (Rom. 3:10; 12; Prior to the flood Gen. 6:5 says man was so depraved that, “...every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.” Even after the flood God declares in Gen. 8:21, “...the imagination of the heart of man is evil from his youth;...” (YLT))
- They **could no longer understand the spiritual things**, and **were at enmity with God** (Rom. 3:11; 8:7) (Easton’s Bible dictionary, Enmity: a feeling or condition of hostility; hatred; ill will; animosity; antagonism.)
- All mankind was under **sin-death** and were **dead/separated** from God in trespasses and sins. (Eph. 2:1, 5)
- They became captive and **slaves of sin and Satan** (Rom. 6:6; 16-18; John 8:34, “...**slaves** of sin”; Luke 4:18, “...proclaim freedom to the **captives**...”; Col. 1:13, “He has delivered us from the power (**dominion**) of darkness...”; Eph. 4:8-10, “...When he ascended to the heights, **he led a crowd of captives** and gave gifts to his people...”; 2 Tim. 2:25-26, “...escape the snare of the devil, having been taken **captive** by him to do his will.”)

Satan's position:

- He became the “**god of this age**” and has blinded mankind. (2 Cor. 4:4)
- **Ruler of this world.** (John 12:31, 14:30, 16:11)
- **Kingdoms of this world belonged to Satan.** (Matt. 4:8-10; Luke 4:5-7)(Rev. 11:15 states at the 7th trumpet the kingdoms of the world would come back to Lord – clearly indicating that they were not His prior to that.)
- The **whole world** lies in the **power of the evil one.** (1 John 5:19)
- **Prince of the Power of the Air.** (Greek: Aer – Reference to the unseen in-between realm between the visible realm of the earth and the unseen heavenly realm.) (Eph. 2:2)
- He had substantial **power and influence and control in the world**, and the spiritual realm of the “**Air**” that we are only given glimpses of in the Bible. (Dan. 10:2, 12-13, 20; 1 Thess. 2:18; Jude 9, even Michael the archangel would not rebuke Satan from his own power and authority.)
- **He held the power of death.** (Heb. 2:14)(Later, we will explore more fully what this meant. Hades/Sheol)

Scripture seems to provide a typology of Satan as a being who had been right in the very presence of God, at **the pinnacle of His angelic creation** (Read Ezek. 28:13-15).

Why was Satan seemingly convinced within himself that he could get away with such a rebellion as he did against God? So seemingly sure of it that we see that he was even able to convince 1/3 of the angels to follow him – all of them seemingly convinced by him that they could actually succeed with such a rebellious plan against God?

I believe it was because they too knew the truth of the unchanging Perfect, Pure, Righteous, Holy character of God – and they staked their entire eternity on their understanding that there was no possibility of God being able to continue to commune in a relationship with man if he sinned. Satan, and all the rebellious angels, very well knew the fact that not the slightest imperfection could dwell in the heavenly realm in His presence, and it seemed they believed that, “**in the day you eat you shall surely die**” was a **decree** from the Almighty God which would eternally condemn and doom all mankind in “the day” they broke it:

- As **God does not change His decrees**, James 1:17 says, “...with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.” Mal. 3:6, “For I am the Lord, I do not change...” Num. 23:19, “...Has he ever spoken and failed to act? Has he ever promised and not carried it through?” Heb. 6:17-18, “...the unchangeableness of His purpose...he cannot lie...” Heb. 13:8, “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.” Tit. 1:2, “...God, who cannot lie...” Psa. 2 “**no delay**.” Psa. 89:34, “...not break, nor **alter**...” 1 Sam. 15:29, “...not a man that He should change.” (These are just a few verses.)

** However, what I believe neither Satan, nor his fallen angels, were ever able to comprehend was that God could, or would, institute a substitutionary sacrifice in the Garden to provisionally pay for Adam/Eve’s penal death. The type of the antitype, of where God the Son Himself would condescend from His Deity position in heaven, and become a man to live the perfect obedient and sinless life, and then to die as a perfect substitutionary sacrifice. Something that no fallen human would ever be capable of now that the very first two human beings created had both sinned. That the Son would actually offer Himself to be the perfect substitutionary sacrifice to pay the penalty due for sin in order that all who believe in faith would be forgiven and delivered from the condemnation and power of sin-death, and its conjoined final results in eternal death.

This was the unthinkable only hope for fallen mankind – God broke into history and instituted the plan of redemption that would keep within His Holy nature’s requirements to be Righteous, Just, and punish/remove sin, while at the same time not destroying man the “very day” he sins.

In summarizing our preceding study into Genesis 2:17 and the “**death** Adam/Eve died” the “**day** they ate,” I believe our Bible study to this point has made this clear:

- The Death they were threatened with “in the day they sinned” was a **comprehensive death** (full and complete death: physical, spiritual (sin-death) and eternal).
- When “they ate” they immediately experienced sin-death (defiled conscience awareness, spiritual eyes opened to nakedness and guilt and shame, broken relationship with God, and condemnation).

- When God came in the cool of the evening they should have died physically on the spot, as Ananias and Sapphira were judged. However, in Gen. 3:21 we see that God killed an animal to clothe their naked bodies, *provisionally forgiving* atoning/covering their sin and spiritual shame and guilt.
- They substitutionally died with that animal. That animal died their *penal death* for them, the capital punishment death they would have died “on that day” if that animal had not died in their place.
- That animal did **not** die their *natural death* for them. They would still **naturally** die 900+ years later now that they were cast out of the Garden and have no access to the Tree of Life. They were made from the dust and now with no access to the Tree of Life their bodies would start the natural decay process (dust to dust). (Gen. 3:19)
- All mankind would now be fully mortal (definition: able to die and **subject/destined** to physically die)
 - **Important to remember:** Prior to the Fall they were “able to die,” as they were created from dust, but they were not **subject** to die because they had not sinned, nor **destined** to die because they had access to the Tree of Life. However, now after the Fall they were both **Subject** to and **destined** to physically die).
- Adam and Eve, as well as all mankind (being under the Federal Headship of Adam), because of that substitutionary animal sacrifice would not die a *penal* (capital punishment) death “the day” they sinned. They would now be able to live out their physical lives for the days God has allotted for each life, with the ability to put their faith in the promised Messiah who would be the true substitutionary atonement who would **propitiate** their sin and later give them eternal life in perfect individual spiritual bodies in heaven. Or, they could reject His only way of salvation and remain under condemnation for their own sin, where they would then pay for the wages of their sin eternally condemned in the Lake of Fire after the allotted days God had provided, where the natural decay process of the body would take their physical life, and seal their fate. (Rom. 6:23; Heb.9:27)

** Review appendix diagram “**A**”: Before/After the fall. Then appendix study “**B**” In/of the world vs. in/through Christ. Then “**C**”: Comprehensive Death: sin-death, physical, eternal - the promise and the results of Genesis 2 & 3 for the believer and unbeliever.

A study into the “death” introduced by the sin of Adam – overcome by Christ:

A fundamental doctrine of Christianity is: Christ died in our place. He died a substitutionary death on the cross. He died so that sin and death no longer had any power over us to send us to Hades/Sheol and condemn and doom us eternally in the Lake of Fire.

Undeniable by anyone in Christianity is that the “death” of Christ on the cross was to conquer the law of sin and its condemnation to eternal death brought upon all mankind by Adam.

(Important) Rom. 6:23, "For the wages of sin is (eternal) death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

What is important to understand is that this “death” was the full and final result of the promised “**comprehensive death**” which was threatened against Adam in the Garden (and subsequently to all of his posterity under his Federal Headship). It was the ultimate condemnation under the wages of sin to eternal death in the Lake of Fire. Physical death would be the gateway of the soul into the afterlife where the sinner’s condemnation under sin is sealed as eternal (second death).

Jesus lived a perfect and sinless life (1 Pet. 2:22). He died on the cross – under the condemnation of our sin – 100% as a man, separated from God when He was “made sin” on our behalf (1 Pet. 2:24; 2 Cor. 5:21). He physically died and shed His blood on the cross to pay the full wages of sin as a “substitute in our place.” He physically died and His body was put in the tomb and His Soul went to Hades/Sheol for three days and three nights (Matt. 12:39-40; Luke 23:43; 16:22; 1 Pet. 3:18-19). Having no sin of His own → after three days and nights in Hades/Sheol God raised Him out from those dead ones. Jesus was the first one to ever rise out of Hades/Sheol “**never to die again**” (Rom. 6:9) → never to have to return to Hades/Sheol again. The first one to be **permanently** raised out of Hades/Sheol defeating the power of sin and its condemnation to eternal death. (We will explore all of this in the following sections)

Bible verses teaching on the meaning of death/life:

The aspect of life/death “physically” in the Bible is not a hard concept for us to understand as humans, as we are all currently physically alive, see and hear about physical death on a regular basis, and all know one day it will be our turn. However, it is when it comes to trying to understanding the Biblical teaching of sin-death and its condemnation to eternal death in many other passages in the Bible is where some confusion can arise. Let’s delve into numerous scriptures seeking to allow the Bible to provide the explanation of this for us:

What was Jesus meaning when He said:

- John 8:51-52, “Verily, verily I tell you, whoever obeys my word will never see death.”
 - I believe we all can understand that this cannot be referring to physical death (notice how the Jews in vs. 52 misunderstood Him...just as so many people are doing today).
 - He is saying that those who obey His words will never experience the second/eternal death.
- John 5:24, “has everlasting life...has passed out of death into life.”
 - This is an example of the many “already but not yet” passages in the Bible.
 - Already: the believer presently has the right and guarantee of eternal life, and has passed out of the condemnation of sin and being subject to go to Hades/Sheol upon physical death, and a subsequent eternal death in the Lake of Fire.
 - Not yet: new perfect immortal bodies and eternal life in heaven.
- John 6:47, 53-54, “he who believes in Me has everlasting life.”
 - Guaranteed to receive the inheritance → will take the possession of it once they physically die and pass into the Promised Land (Heaven). The already but not yet. They are “heirs” but are not yet in the promised land.

- 1 John 3:14, “We know that we have passed from death to life because we love the brethren. He who does not love his brother abides in death.”
 - Those believers who love the brethren have passed from the condemnation of eternal death and now have the guarantee of entrance to, and eternal life, in heaven. Already but not yet.
 - Those meeting among them who do not love the brethren continue to live under the condemnation leading to eternal death.

- 1 John 5:11-13, “...that you may know that you have eternal life...”
 - Same already but not yet. They are “heirs” but not yet in possession of, or experiencing that heavenly country yet (the real promised land).

- 2 Cor. 1:10, “...who delivered us from so great a death...”
 - Past tense: He has delivered us from the condemnation of the eternal/second death.

- Col. 2:11-13, “...buried with Him...raised with Him...dead in trespasses...made alive...”
 - All speaking in the past tense: this is speaking of our soteriological (salvation) position in Christ at the time of our conversion. Just like the animal in the Garden died as a substitute type, and Adam and Eve died with that animal → Christ is our true Antitype substitutionary sacrifice. At our conversion we are born again through faith. Our baptism displays externally what has happened internally where our old self died with Christ, was buried, and we were raised and made alive a new creation by the power of His resurrection.
 - We were in sin-death separation from God, slaves to sin, and under the condemnation of eternal death → but were raised and made alive with Christ → forgiven and delivered from that condemnation of the eternal second death.

- Eph. 2:1; 5, “...you He made alive, who were dead...even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ...”
 - Same past tense soteriological (salvation) position as above in Col. 2:11-13.
 - Positionally described as already seated in the heavenly places in Christ → the guarantee of our promised final position in heaven in the eternal afterlife.
- Rom 8:13, “...live according to the flesh you “will [are about to]” die...put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.”
 - The Greek word *Mello* is stated in the present indicative active tense → which means “about to.” Paul is writing to the Christians in Rome and speaking about an imminent judgment which is soon coming, and if someone continues to live life satisfying the lusts of their flesh they are in peril to physically die, and if outside of Christ will also be under the eternal condemnation of the second death.
 - Where on the other hand, he says if a believer through the power of the Holy Spirit puts to death the lusts of his physical flesh (heeds the many warnings throughout the NT letter to “watch,” “be sober,” “be holy,” “put off the works of unrighteousness,” etc), they will not be under the condemnation of eternal death → they will inherit the eagerly anticipated reward of eternal life in heaven.

Let’s look at one more powerful verse:

- 2 Tim. 1:10, “...who has abolished death (sin-death separation from God, and the condemnation of eternal death in the Lake of Fire) and brought life (fellowship with God now, and the guarantee of immortality in the heavenly afterlife. The already but not yet)...”
 - The Greek word for “abolished” in the above verse is *Katargeo*, and means to: make inactive, of no effect, render inert – inoperative. We all still have to die biologically, but Paul was writing to Timothy speaking to him in the “**past tense**” that there was “now” no power or condemnation of eternal death anymore. Christ had conquered the full power of the **comprehensive death** which came upon Adam in judgement in the Garden. He paid the wages of sin and removed the judgment of eternal condemnation in the Lake of Fire for all who in faith **believed**. In conjunction with this, physical death had been forever stripped of its power to ever again send a believer to Hades/Sheol.

The “Law of Sin and Death”:

Rom. 8:2, “For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.”

In order for us to properly understand the following verses in Romans, and elsewhere, it critical for us to correctly understand what is “the law of sin and death”? Some have incorrectly tried to state that this is the 10 commandments, or even the full Old Covenant law in general. I too, at one time used to believe this. However, I now believe the Bible teaches that is not true, and incorrectly believing this has led many people into various doctrinal errors, some of which have even resulted in the forming of separate denominations which conform to various degrees of legalism, or even as far as some who form sects which cross into heretical and mystical teachings.

So this is not a light matter, but in reality it is not a difficult one either. This was why our earlier study spent so much time in laying the foundation from back in the Garden when death was first threatened. What is the “law of sin and death”? Exactly what was promised Adam and Eve in the Garden → “in the day you eat [sin]...you shall surely die.”

Recall what should have happened when they sinned? → Comprehensive death. If no intervention by God had been done then “the very day” Adam and Eve ate from the tree they would have experienced a comprehensive death: sin-death, died physically, and their physical death would have been the portal into an eternal sin-death separation from God in the Lake of Fire. The death threatened meant condemnation unto full eternal death.

We did the extensive study earlier into the penal substitutionary death, as well as the Federal Headship of Adam, to know the condition for all future fallen mankind from the time after Adam and Eve were removed from the Garden.

This brings us to the effect/meaning of the “law of sin and death” imposed on all mankind: all sin → the “law of sin and death” is condemnation to eternal death in the Lake of Fire. If you sin → the wages of sin is eternal death.

With this clearer understanding of the “law of sin and death” let’s look at these following passages and see if it does not help make them clearer:

- Rom. 5:14-21, “vs. 14a: ...condemnation to eternal death reigned from Adam to Moses...vs. 17: ...by the one man’s offense condemnation to eternal death reigned...gift of righteousness will reign in both life and fellowship now, and the eternal afterlife to come (life)...vs. 20a: ...the law entered that the condemnation to eternal death (offense) might be shown to us as if looking in a mirror to see how as our sin increases so does our condemnation to eternal death (abound)...vs. 21 so that as sin reigned in condemnation to eternal death (death)...grace reigned...to both life and fellowship with God now, and the eternal afterlife to come (eternal life).”
 - We have both righteousness now and eternal life to follow in the afterlife.
 - Sin and death reigned over man: Christ took away sin and death reigning over us (Took them out of power reigning over us. He now sits on the throne reigning). We are no longer condemned to eternal death in the Lake of Fire. (Legal requirements fulfilled, spiritual fellowship restored and eternal afterlife secured).
- Rom. 6:23, “For the wages of sin is condemnation to eternal death (death), but the gift of God is both life and fellowship with God now, and the eternal afterlife to come (eternal life) in Christ Jesus our Lord.”
- Rom. 7:9-11, “...sin became revealed and clear to me (revived) and I realized how condemned to eternal death I was (died)...the commandment...I found to bring more clarity to realize my condemnation (death)...sin...by the commandment...condemned me to eternal death (killed me).”
- Rom 8:6, “...carnally minded, is death...spiritually minded is Life...”
 - To be carnally minded is to be living according to the lusts and desires of the flesh and therefore under the condemnation to eternal death (death). To be spiritually minded is to be living according to the guidance of the Spirit which gives peace now and the guarantee of eternal afterlife in heaven to come (Life)...”

- Rom. 7:4, “...my brethren, you also have become separated from, no longer under the condemnation to eternal death (dead) to the law of sin and death...”
- 2 Cor. 3:6-7, “...the letter kills...the ministry of death...”
 - The “letter” (Ten Commandments) brought condemnation to eternal death. It was the “ministry of condemnation” written and engraved on stones.
- Rom. 3:20, “...for by the law is the knowledge of sin.”
 - The OC law was to Israel like a mirror to be a constant reminder to them of how far short they fell from the perfect standards of God’s Holiness. Paul tells us in Gal. 3:24-25 that the law had a purpose, and then when that purpose would be filled, it would then have an end, “Therefore the law was their tutor (more accurate description = pedagogue) to bring them to Christ...but after faith had come, they were to no longer be under the tutor.”

Now, with a clearer understanding of the above verses, let’s look at the following verse and see if this verse does not come into clearer understanding as well:

- Rom. 5:12, “Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned –” (NKJV)
 - So, let us insert the biblical **comprehensive condemnation to eternal death** definition and see if we can more clearly understand what this verse is trying to tell us: “Therefore, just as through one man the sinful nature in slavery to sin (sin) entered into the world, and condemnation to eternal death (death) through our sinning (sin), and thus condemnation to eternal death (death) would be upon every single person who would be born from Adam and Eve (spread to all men), because all are born with a sinful nature in slavery to sin and do their own sin (all sinned) –”

The Power of Death:

(Read) Heb. 2:14, "...destroy him who had the power of death..."

While Jesus Christ said that His initial establishing of His kingdom had come ("was ready to break into," "had arrived on the doorstep," "had come upon them.")) during His first century ministry while here on earth (Matt. 12:28-29), and that it was rooted and advancing at that time, and that He had started to "destroy the works of the devil" (1 John 3:8), it is vital to remember the present condition of that 1st century spiritual world at the time of His ministry:

- Satan was the "god of this age" (2 Cor. 4:4)
- Satan was the "ruler of this world" (John 12:31, 14:30, 16:11)
- The kingdoms of this world belonged to Satan (Matt. 4:8-10; Luke 4:5-7; Rev. 11:15)
- The **whole world** lies in the **power of the evil one** (1 John 5:19)
- Satan was the "Prince of the Power of the Air" (Eph. 2:2)
- And as we were just looking at in Heb. 2:14, Satan had the "power of death."

So, a question we need to ask is, what was the "power of death"? To answer that question, we need to see from the Bible what happened to someone when they physically died prior to the resurrection?

Sub Study: Sheol/Hades/Kever:

To assist us, let's do a brief word study on the word grave and Pit in the Bible, as our English language translations can definitely make things convoluted if we are not careful:

When the OT Hebrew writers wanted to speak of the "grave" where the physical body was put after death, they used the word = Kever (Hebrew spelling for noun form of the word)

When they wanted to speak of where the disembodied "soul" which separated from the physical body at death went, they used the Hebrew word = **Sheol**

The OT Bible writers do **not** use the word Sheol and Kever as synonyms, but are clear in their separate and distinctive uses of each word. Kever is used when speaking of the body, but Sheol is used when speaking of the soul.

- Gen. 37:35, Jacob says, “...For I shall go down into **Sheol** to my son in mourning’...”
 - Key observation: Jacob believes Joseph was killed, yet clearly refers to him as still being an individual entity, and he clearly believed that he was conscious, and that he would be re-united with him when he left this earthly life.
- 1 Sam. 28:11-15, 19-20, “bring up Samuel...When the woman saw Samuel...a spirit ascending out of the earth...Saul perceived it was Samuel...Samuel said to Saul, ‘why have you disturbed me by bringing me up?’...Samuel said...tomorrow you and your sons will be with me...immediately Saul fell full length on the ground, and was dreadfully afraid because of the words of Samuel...”
 - Key observation: Samuel was promising Saul that tomorrow he and his sons would physically die in battle, and then their conscious individual disembodied souls would descend into Sheol.
- Isa. 14:9-10, 19, “Sheol from beneath is excited about you, to meet you at your coming; It stirs up the dead for you...They all shall speak and say to you...” Vs. 19, “But you are cast out of your grave (Hebrew: Kever) like an abominable branch...thrust through with a sword, who go down to the stones of the pit (Hebrew: Sheol)...”
 - Key observation: Both Kever and Sheol are used in the same verse showing the clear distinction between the physical body which gets put in the ground/grave, and the individual disembodied conscious soul which goes down into an unseen underworld.

The Septuagint, which is a Greek translation of the Hebrew scriptures (OT), **never** translates the Hebrew word Sheol as the Greek word for grave “Mneema,” but **always** as Hades, which meant underworld, or the unseen world. The Greek NT likewise, uses the word Hades when referring to the place of the disembodied souls in the unseen underworld after physical death.

- Let’s turn to the NT and read Luke 16:20-31, the Lord speaking of the poor beggar Lazarus says, “...the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham’s bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom...between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us...”

- Key observations:

- This passage provides a clear description of the separated chambers in Hades/Sheol before the resurrection. One chamber being for the believers awaiting their Saviour and their resurrection out from there to receive their new immortal bodies and eternal life in heaven, and one chamber for those unbelievers awaiting the resurrection for their final judgement and condemnation to eternal death. (Matt. 25:34, 41, 46)
- A couple of other verses which clearly indicate the individual disembodied conscious soul upon physical death goes down into an unseen underworld:
 - Job 26:5-6, “The dead tremble (The Hebrew word means to twist and writhe with pain), those under the waters and those inhabiting them. Sheol is naked before Him, and destruction has no covering.”
 - Psalm 116:3, “Compass me have cords of death, And straits of Sheol have found me, Distress and sorrow I find.” (YLT)

- Luke 23:43, speaking to the thief beside Him on the cross, “And Jesus said to him, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, **today** you will be with Me in Paradise.’”
 - Key observations:
 - This passage clearly confirms the individual disembodied conscious soul after physical death, as Jesus’ physical body was laid in a tomb for three days upon His death (Luke. 23:52-55), and yet He promised to the thief on the cross that “today” he would be with Him in Paradise (Abraham’s Bosom: the good side/compartment of Hades/Sheol).
 - Luke 23:43, in agreement with Luke 16:20-31 we just looked at previously, as well as other scriptures, confirms for us where they went. Along with the spirit of the thief who was beside Him on the cross, who went with Him that day, Jesus’ disembodied Spirit “descended into the ‘lower parts of the earth’” (Hades/Sheol)(Eph. 4:8-10), where the Bible says that Jesus “preached to the spirits in prison, who were formerly disobedient...” (1 Pet. 3:18-20), as well as preached the gospel to those who were in Abraham’s Bosom/Paradise (1 Pet. 4:6).
 - Also, we read in Acts 2:31, “...concerning the resurrection of Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption.” This verse shows a clear distinction between Christ’s body which was laid in the tomb, and His soul which went to Hades/Sheol. Hades, where we just read in 1 Peter He preached to those in prison, as well as to those who were in Abraham’s Bosom. (In like manner as He did with two of His disciples on the road to Emmaus in Luke 24:25-27).

In studying to understand what was meant by the “**power of death**,” we begin to see how beneficial it becomes in now having more understanding into what happened to the pre-resurrection souls upon their physical death.

(End of Sub Study)

Christ's physical death and shed blood destroying the "power of death" from sin:

We recall from our first Study Series on the "Character of God," how God's character is Holy and Pure and Righteous, and that He could not be in fellowship with sin, and recalling from earlier in this study, how man had freely sinned in the Garden and in "that day" came under the condemnation to eternal death. God performed an animal sacrifice to pay for the immediate *penal* death Adam and Eve should have suffered that very day, which *provisionally* forgave them. While they were put out of the Garden forgiven, able to live out the allotted days God would provide them, their true forgiveness and propitiation of their sin would only come through faith in the true substitutionary sacrificial Lamb of God who would come in the future and crush the head of the serpent and satisfy the wrath of God paying for the wages of their sin and bringing full forgiveness and salvation from the condemnation to eternal death.

Fallen history of mankind starts and now all of their prodigy are born with a fallen nature where one who sins is: captive and slaves of sin and Satan (Rom. 6:6; 16-18; John 8:34, "...slaves of sin"; Luke 4:18, "...proclaim freedom to the captives..."; Col. 1:13, "He has delivered us from the power (dominion) of darkness..."; Eph. 4:8-10).

A sinful human could never be able to go into the full presence of Holy God again, and live. Due to each person's sin, Satan then had the power and claim, both in this life as a slave to sin, and upon physical death to then hold the disembodied soul "captive" and separated from its God in Hades/Sheol.

After the fall, all mankind now sins and thus earn the "wages of sin," and Satan (and the Death Angel) held the keys to Hades/Sheol to hold all disembodied souls captive after their physical death because of their sin in the "power of death" =

- 1) For those who had rejected the Messiah to come: upon physical death their soul was held captive under the wages of their sin in the compartment of torments in Hades/Sheol (Luke 16:23, 26) waiting for the final resurrection for judgment of their sin and condemnation in eternal death in the Lake of Fire (second death).

2) For those who had in faith believed in and were waiting for their Messiah to come: upon physical death their soul was held captive because their sin had not yet been propitiated (paid for and removed) by Christ. They went to the compartment of Paradise/Abraham's Bosom in Hades/Sheol (Luke 16:22, 26) waiting for the Messiah who would come and die as their substitutionary atonement on the cross and pay for in full their "wages of sin." Upon which, He would descend to them in Hades/Sheol for three days. Their faith is then able to be actualized in the Person of their Messiah. After three days Christ would then be the firstfruit raised/resurrected out from among the dead ones in Hades/Sheol → to never die again, or to ever have to return to Hades/Sheol (Rom.6:9) → thus destroying the "power of death" (Heb. 2:17), and becoming the forerunner/firstfruit for all those believers to be resurrected from out of Hades/Sheol (Col. 1:18). At the final resurrection they would now be raised out of Paradise/Abraham's Bosom to receive eternal life in their new immortal bodies to enter heaven forevermore.

Thus, we see the absolute necessity that the Messiah to come had to be without sin (therefore, **not** able to be held captive in Hades/Sheol), so that He would be able to be the substitutionary sacrifice to propitiate the sin of man (Rom. 3:25; Heb. 2:17; 1 John 2:2, 4:10). His shed blood on the cross would propitiate sin: satisfying the wrath, justice, and righteousness of God, thereby paying for the penalty/wages of sin, making peace, and thus removing sin, and the penalty of sin = **condemnation to eternal death** → thus stripping the **power of physical death** from being the gateway into the afterlife sealing the soul in condemnation and eternal death.

The Messiah was the One whose sinless physical death would "destroy him who had the power of [physical] death." Thus, setting the "captives" free (Eph. 4:8-9).

Christ the first to be raised out from among the “dead ones” – the firstfruit:

We clearly know from the Bible itself that Jesus was not the first to be raised **physically** from the dead (Lazarus raised in John 11:38-44; young man raised by Christ in Luke 7:11-15; little girl raised by Christ in Luke 8:54-55; as well as various OT resurrections). However, the Bible is just as absolutely clear in stating that Jesus was to be the “**first to rise from out of the dead ones.**” (**Read** Acts 26:22-23).

- The Bible is truth, and the Bible does not contradict itself. What Paul is declaring is not about a mere physical resurrection like had happened to some in the past → he is stating that Jesus would be the **first** to be “**raised out from among the dead souls waiting in Hades/Hades**” → to **never** have to “physically” die again, and to **never** have to return to Hades/Sheol (**Read** Rom. 6:9). He would be the first to be raised out from Hades/Sheol because He was without sin.

This is also the exact same meaning of (**Read**) 1 Cor. 15:20-22 when Paul talks about Christ being the firstfruits risen from the dead.

- This passage is not referring to some general statement about the result of Adam’s sin being that all mankind has to “physically” die, because even 1 Cor. 15:51 tells us that **not** every person will die physically. Also, we know that Enoch and Elijah never died physically.
- No, this is teaching us how Jesus Christ was the “first born, firstfruit” raised out from among the dead ones in Hades/Sheol → **never** to physically die again, and **never** to return to Hades/Sheol. **And**, as a result of Christ destroying the power of death and the condemnation to eternal death → then all of those who had died in Christ and were waiting in Hades/Sheol were promised to be raised out from there at His *Parousia*.

(Read) Col. 1:18, "...He is the head of the body, the church...the firstborn from out of the dead ones..." (Also Rev. 1:5).

- He was the firstfruit, the forerunner, that He would have the pre-eminence in **all** things. He was the first one to be raised out from among the dead and waiting souls in Hades/Sheol. He was the "beginning" of all those waiting believing souls who would be raised to meet Him in the air at His *Parousia*. They would **never die again, never have to return to Hades/Sheol**, they would receive their new immortal individual bodies reserved for them by God in heaven (2 Cor. 5:1-2)...forever to live with Him in heaven.

(Read) Rom. 8:29, "...firstborn among many brethren."

- Clearly speaking of Christ being the first to be raised out from among the dead ones in Hades/Sheol
 - → **Never** to physically die again or return to Hades/Sheol.
 - → The **first one** to ascend into heaven and inherit (take possession of) the **immortal life in heaven**.

(Read) Acts 2:22-35 (discuss vs. 24 asking: what were the "pains of death" that were loosed? (Birth pains, labor pains, agony, waiting in Hades/Sheol). Christ was "about to be" the "**firstborn**" (Rom. 8:29) from "**out of**" all the dead ones who were waiting in Hades/Sheol.)

- → 3 days Jesus was in the "pains/pangs of death" → but there are no physical pains in Paradise. Acts 2:24 → God loosed/destroyed/abolished the pains of death/"**separation**" (God raised Him back out of Hades/Sheol)
- Christ was not in any **physical** suffering – however, Christ was born 100% man, and as a man, He experienced the pains/pangs of physical death → being disembodied from His physical body in Hades/Sheol (Paradise/Abraham's Bosom) as all of the other departed believers of old were.

- After 3 days God “destroyed/abolished” the pains/pangs of death because it had “no power” over Him and could not hold Him because He had no sin. Satan had “no claim or right to keep Him in Hades/Sheol,” as he had nothing in Him (John 14:30). And being that He had lived a perfect life of obedience to His Father His body in the tomb “had no sin” and “saw no corruption” and He was resurrected into His same perfect sinless body.

An Interesting verse to consider:

(Read) Eph. 4:8-10, “...when He ascended on high...He led a host of captives...”

- After spending 40 days with His disciples after His resurrection out of Hades/Sheol it says that when Christ ascended back to the heavenly realm that He took a host of those souls who were captive in Hades/Sheol with Him. (cf. Heb. 2:15)(This seems to fit the narrative Paul is speaking of in 2 Cor. 12:1-4 **(Read)** where Paul says that he “ascended” up to Paradise seen in the “third heaven” (it is no longer described in scripture as a place below from after the time of the ascension (as we saw earlier in this study Hades/Sheol being a place below was a common description in the OT scriptures, as well as in much of Hebrew teaching and writing).

The substitutionary sacrifice conquering sin and the condemnation to eternal death:

In 2 Cor. 5:21 we are told that upon the cross Christ was made sin for us (cf. 1 Pet. 2:24). As the animal in the Garden had to physically die and shed its literal blood as the type substitutionary atonement sacrifice for sin, so too Christ, the very Antitype Lamb of God, had to physically die and shed His literal blood on the cross to pay for the **wages of sin = condemnation to eternal death** penalty for sin to cleanse the sins of all those who would believe in faith, because without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins (Heb. 9:22b).

In Matt. 27:46, Jesus cried out “My God, My God, why have you forsaken Me?” While going to the cross in the will of the Father (Matt. 26:39; Acts 2:23), He evidenced that He bore the punishment and would physically suffer and die 100% as a man, without any aid or relief from the Father or Spirit. Upon the cross God laid on His body the iniquity of us all, and He was then smitten and afflicted by God → facing the full wrath and justice for the punishment of our sin (Isa. 53:4-12).

He bore our sins in His own physical body on the cross (1 Pet. 2:24) and physically died and shed His literal blood on the cross → that was our atoning substitutionary sacrifice (Heb. 9:22). He died under the **condemnation of sin** paying for and removing sin and the **condemnation of eternal death** (second death) by his shed blood for all of those who would in faith believe. His body was buried, and His Soul went to Hades/Sheol for three days, and then because He had no sin of His own (2 Cor. 5:21; Acts 2:24), He was raised/resurrected as the firstfruit out from the dead ones “destroying the power of death” (Heb. 2:14) → never to die again (Rom. 6:9), or ever to return to Hades/Sheol.

Christ’s substitutionary death on the cross **was not** to pay the penalty of sin so that we never would have to die **physically**. He died so that sin’s penalty – **condemnation to eternal death**, and the **power of physical death** to usher us into the spiritual realm where if outside of Christ in our sins we would be sealed forever in eternal death, would be **paid for and abolished** and we would **not** have to pay this penalty ourselves.

Second Death (Condemnation of Eternal Death):

Rev. 20:13-15, "...Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them...then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

- Did you notice that both "Death and Hades" are personified/objectified. The Death being spoken of is "the **Death Angel**." Hades was an actual "place" where the disembodied souls "**in them**" were held captive prior to the resurrection. They delivered up the dead souls which were held captive separated from their physical bodies.

Let us look at this same passage again, now expanding it to allow the biblical language to more clearly show us this personification, as well as the **condemnation to eternal death** aspect of what is being meant:

Rev. 20:13-15, "...the Death Angel and the place of Hades (aka Sheol) delivered up the disembodied souls who were **in them**...then the Death Angel and the place of Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

- "Then **Death**" – The "Death Angel" (Exod. 12:23; 1 Chron. 21:25), and its Hebrews 2:14 "**power of death**" (the Death Angel's power under the condemnation of sin to hold the souls captive in Hades after physical death)... **were cast into the lake of fire** (Again, both "Death and Hades" are depicted as actual entities).
- This is the second death – **condemnation in eternal death/separation...**" (The damned disembodied souls are said to be cast into the lake of fire, which is called the second death. This "second death" is a second/final/eternal condemnation and separation from God. (From scriptures we know that the damned are conscious: Matt. 13:41-42, 49-50, 25:41, 46).

Rev. 21:8, "...cowardly, unbelieving, abominable...have their part in the lake of fire...which is the second death."

- Condemned under their sins to eternal conscious punishment and separation from God.

Is “Physical” death the last enemy of God?

Paul wrote to the 1st century Christian church in Corinth to tell them in 1 Cor. 15:26, “The last enemy that will be destroyed is death.” (Destroyed: Greek word is *Katargeo* → stripped of its power. Made impotent → powerless, inoperative)

Let me ask you this question: when a Christian dies physically – where do they go? We know from Paul himself that from right there in the 1st century that they go to be present with Christ (2 Cor. 5:8).

Paul also said in Phil. 1:21, 23 “...to die is gain...having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better.”

- A believer **before** Christ’s resurrection could not have said, nor had this hope/truth. Their soul had to go and wait in Hades/Sheol in the place called Abraham’s Bosom, or Paradise (Luke 16:22, 23:43)

As Christians, our sins are washed away by the blood Christ’s body shed on the cross. We have the righteousness and purification of His shed blood applied to us and we are redeemed and without blemish before Him, and when I take my last breath I am instantly before Him in glory → how would physical death be my enemy? My biological death ushers me away from the trials and tribulations of this life to be with Christ forever – how could this possibly be my enemy? Where is the power and judgement of sin?

Col. 2:14-15, “...wiped out...nailed to the cross...” by the literal shed blood and physical body substitutionary death of Christ on the cross on my behalf.

Physical death is no longer a threat or enemy to the Christian. It no longer has any power to harm us in the afterlife. It is now our friend, since it ushers us into the spiritual realm where Christ has conquered and removed the power and condemnation of sin-death and eternal death for us. Physical death is no longer the **gateway** into Hades/Sheol or eternal death, but rather the **gateway** into eternal life in the heavenly realm in the presence of God for the believer, Amen!