



1 Cor. 15:20-28

Even Death Shall Be Destroyed

20 But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.

21 For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead.

22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.

23 But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming.

24 Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power.

25 For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet.

26 The last enemy that will be destroyed is death.

27 For "He has put all things under His feet." But when He says "all things are put under Him," it is evident that He who put all things under Him is excepted.

28 Now when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.

Nature Shows where animals eat each other

There is a certain sadness to it

Watching one with Margaret where the Wolves eat the Caribou

Who do you root for? If the wolves get the Caribou, the baby Caribou dies, if the Caribou escape the cute little wolf pups die.

What's the "good" there? Well as I was talking to her I realized that either way there is a certain awfulness to the equation.

Now all of the commentators talk about this "symmetry" and balance as though all things are as they should be.

That of course is the assumption of the naturalist, the materialist, that the universe is as it ought to be. Death is natural, death is right. That there is no God, that sin and death should exist. That entropy ensures that everything in the universe is breaking down returning to chaos and is traveling towards an eventual heat death. Its not surprising then that some have grasped the awfulness and hopelessness of materialism and have moved on to Nihilism.

But the word of God tells us a very different story. It tells us that things are not as they should be. When God created the universe, it was all Good, indeed "very Good." Sin and Death had no part in it.

Man knew God, walking and talking with him in the garden

Man, body and soul was originally created *not to die*

Adam didn't spend all day in the garden dodging tigers and scorpions, climbing trees as carnage broke out

All of this was a result of sin.

Adam was warned by God:

Gen. 2:17 "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."

And yet he disobeyed, *we call that disobedience Adam's Original or FIRST SIN* and the world was cursed. Sin and the wages of sin came in through Adam. And all we who are his posterity, his descendents, sinned in him, fell with him and die in him.

This idea of Adam's representative or "Federal Headship" over his descendents is opened up by Paul in Romans 5 verse 12:

Romans 5:12 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned --

13 (For until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law.

14 Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come.

But what Paul has been laboring to bring home to us is that God was not content with this situation, death reigning over his creation, the curse affecting every part of it. Both man and nature afflicted by the ongoing effects of the curse.

And none of this took God by surprise, God knew that the fall would happen before He ever created, and the members of the Godhead had agreed to deliver a people out of that estate of sin and misery and to erase the effects of the fall in creation, that man and god might be reconciled, that there might be that new heavens and new earth, that sin and death might be ended. That in a word, the effects of the fall might be undone and man brought into an even higher estate.

So as Eph. 1:1-14 spells out the members of the Godhead Father, Son, and Holy Spirit covenanted to bring about that redemption. The father electing, the Son Redeeming, the Holy Spirit Calling and Applying.

And Gal. 4:4 But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law,

5 to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.

So brothers and sisters as the first Adam brought death into the World

So the Second Adam, our Second Representative or Federal Head came into the world to bring life and redemption.

He died for our sins, was buried, and rose again bodily, and so we too, who are saved, will rise in him.

And so Findlay says "Just as it took more than a mythical Adam to produce the concrete reality of universal death, so it requires more than a mythical resurrection of Christ to annul the power of death for all believers."

Paul even spells out the order for us: Christ rose as the firstfruits, and then when He returns as he promised we shall rise.

At His coming there will be a general resurrection all the dead will awake, but that will also be the time of eternal separation. As Daniel 12:2-3 prophesied

Daniel 12:2 And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, Some to everlasting life, Some to shame and everlasting contempt.

3 Those who are wise shall shine Like the brightness of the firmament, And those who turn many to righteousness Like the stars forever and ever.

And so we are living in the period between Christ's first coming and his second, the age of grace. Christ has ascended and is reigning in heaven, and his harvest, his elect are being gathered in. The great work of redemption is continuing. But there is day coming when that work will be completed. The end spoken of in verses 23-24, the Parousia or the day of Christ's coming. On that day all the authorities on the earth shall be at an end, and even those spiritual powers and principalities, they we war against, the devil and his fallen ages, all shall be at an end forever. The devil knows that day is coming, that is why he rages his time is short.

On that day, all of Christ's enemies will be put under his feet, and Christ who voluntarily subordinated himself making himself a little lower than the angels for our sake, will return to that glory He had with the Father before Creation. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit shall rule together over the new heaven and the new earth and in that day there will be no more sin, and death, and all of the hideous effects of the curse forever.

Therefore if that is the case we must remember, you and I, that DEATH is NOT GOOD, NEITHER IS IT OUR FRIEND:

It's power over believers is blunted so that all it can do is bring us into the presence of our savior, but that doesn't make it good. And we should remember what Jesus showed us in the presence of the death of his friend Lazarus. The shortest verse in the bible is "Jesus Wept" and it is perhaps the most poignant:

Jesus wept because Lazarus, his dear friend, had been taken by death and was no more.

He wept, because of the sheer awfulness of it.

He wept for the terrible consequences of sin in the world.

He wept because of what death had done to his friend, how it had ripped apart his family, and now how it was causing terrible heartache for those who had loved and lost their dear friend Lazarus.

Jesus wept for His friend, he wept for the pain of His friend's loss, and most of all He wept because this was not how it was supposed be.

You can become used to death, perhaps even far to familiar with it, so familiar in fact that we sometime forget that death is not good. Jesus came into the world to put an end to it.

In his atoning death on the Cross Jesus triumphed not only over sin and the devil, but over death itself and we read that great good news that when Jesus returns that will be the end of death for good for we read in 1 Cor. 15:25-26

"25 For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet.

26 The last enemy that will be destroyed is death."

Jesus has triumphed over death and has ensured that one day there will be an end to all death and pain and sorrow and suffering. When the good shepherd returns for his sheep, that will be the end of tears and grief forever.

We see a picture of that in the beautiful scene in Isaiah 11 -

NKJ Isaiah 11:1 There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, And a Branch shall grow out of his roots.

2 The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him, The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, The Spirit of counsel and might, The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD.

3 His delight is in the fear of the LORD, And He shall not judge by the sight of His eyes, Nor decide by the hearing of His ears;

4 But with righteousness He shall judge the poor, And decide with equity for the meek of the earth; He shall strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, And with the breath of His lips He shall slay the wicked.

5 Righteousness shall be the belt of His loins, And faithfulness the belt of His waist.

6 " The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, The leopard shall lie down with the young goat, The calf and the young lion and the fatling together; And a little child shall lead them.

7 The cow and the bear shall graze; Their young ones shall lie down together; And the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

8 The nursing child shall play by the cobra's hole, And the weaned child shall put his hand in the viper's den.

But finally take this to heart, all we be raised from the dead, but not all will be saved. Some will be raised to everlasting corruption as it says in Daniel 12. Some will spend eternity in Hell, that place where as Jesus warned, "where 'Their worm does not die, And the fire is not quenched.' A place of eternal punishment. So Spurgeon sums it rightly when he says: ***“Not that all shall be saved, but all will be raised from the dead. ... The question is, Are we in the second Adam? Faith is that which unites us to Christ. If we are trusting in him by a living faith, then his rising from the dead ensures our rising from the dead; and if not, it be true that we shall rise, but it will be to shame and everlasting contempt.”***