



Daily Verse and Comment

Ecclesiastes 7:1-4

(1) A good name is better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of one's birth. (2) It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting: for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to his heart. (3) Sorrow is better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better. (4) The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning; but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth.

King James Version

If we believe these verses, we must accept that death must have its "better" points. We are all well aware of the reasons why we think of death as a negative thing, but how can we think of such an event and condition as positive?

We must always remember that our Creator, the Master Craftsman who made everything of the highest quality ([Genesis 1:4-31](#)), built death into man's design. He did this for good reasons. Surprisingly, there really are good and positive purposes behind both the "first death" and the "[second death](#)" ([Revelation 2:11](#); [20:6](#), 14; [21:8](#)). The first death is the one with which every person is familiar—the one everyone must face. This death terminates the physical life of every human being who lives during the 6,000 years allotted to man.

Before the Flood, even though many people lived for multiple hundreds of years, they all still died. Afterward, [God](#) gradually shortened man's average lifespan to 70 years ([Psalm 90:10](#)). Perhaps He did this to show us the results of long lives of disobedience to God's law, such as we see in the record of the pre-Flood world, the Tower of Babel, and Sodom and Gomorrah. What would [the world](#) be like if it were filled with immortal, law-breaking humans?

God is reproducing Himself. He wants children who will not turn to lives of [sin](#). Death is the wages of sin for human beings; death, the wages of sin, is our penalty for failing to live God's way ([Romans 6:23](#)).

Is death, the just penalty for sin created by God, really the "bad thing" in this equation? Is it not rather sin, which causes the death penalty to be incurred, that is really bad?

God does not want one of us to live a miserable, sinful existence for all eternity. He wants children who will learn to obey Him willingly, who will learn to reject sin and reap the positive results throughout eternal lives of [joy](#). He has promised to give every human an opportunity to receive His gifts of salvation and eternal life in His Family and Kingdom. However, if any of His regenerated children insist on continuing in sin after they have been given adequate time to learn, weigh, and understand the consequences of each alternative, they will incur the penalty of the second death, God's loving and [merciful](#) penalty of eternal sleep ([Revelation 2:11](#); [20:6](#), 14; [21:8](#)). [Romans 6:23](#) can be paraphrased as, "The wages of sin is death! Eternal *death*! Not eternal *life* in hell-fire, agony, and misery!" We can see by this merciful method of final punishment that, when God tells us to [love](#) our enemies, He is not asking us to do something that He is not willing to do Himself. What a loving and merciful God we have!

We believe and hope that [Jesus Christ](#) will return very soon to straighten out the mess that man has made of His creation. However, if He does not return before our allotted time expires, we will experience the dreamless sleep of the first death as He did. Jesus' sleep lasted only 72 hours. We should not be concerned that ours will probably last longer because, when we are in a deep, sound sleep, we are unaware of time passing ([Ecclesiastes 9:5](#)).

— Staff

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