

GREATER POWER THAN THE GREATEST POWER

THE GREATEST POWER KNOWN TO MAN IS ... **THE POWER OF DEATH**

Death is the ultimate conqueror of all living things and no living thing escapes its power.

- No matter **how cunning** you may be Like **Christopher Skase** (7 Network & Qintex) who fled to Majorca & evaded all attempts of the Australian Government to try to get him back, **he eventually fell prey to death & died of stomach cancer in August 2001.**

- No matter **how popular** you may be like **Michael Jackson** ... death still comes & claims its prize ... It is no respecter of fame.

- No matter **how rich** you may be like **Howard Hughes or Steve Jobs** ... you cannot buy your way out of its sinister determination! It tramples over all riches as if they were dirt under its feet as these men found out. Death conquers all living things in the universe.

- No matter **how powerful** you may be like **ALEXANDER THE GREAT**, who was never defeated in battle & ranked as one of the most influential people in history. Death crushes all might & power like a foot stomping on a cockroach. **Alexander was finally defeated by death at age 32.**

Death has no respect for age, sex or race ... it comes for all & all succumb to its power. It cannot be reasoned with & has no remorse for the pain and heartache it causes.

It is partner to Satan & Hell and its ultimate goal is to see the destruction of all mankind & all life. 'LIFE' IS ITS SWORN ENEMY.

NO ONE HAS EVER DEFEATED DEATH! DEATH IS THE GREATEST POWER KNOWN TO MAN.

DEATH & TAXES

- Benjamin Franklin said, *'There are only two things certain in life: death and taxes.'* Yet, there are people who have avoided tax ... But friends, **NOBODY EVER ESCAPES DEATH.**

- Henry Wadsworth Longfellow wrote in his poem 'A PSALM OF LIFE' ...
*'Art is long & life is fleeting ... and our hearts though stout & brave
Still like muffled drums are beating ... Funeral marches to the grave.'*

- Thomas Fuller, *'The first breath is the beginning of death.'*

- Woody Allen joked,
'I am not afraid of death; I just don't want to be there when it happens.'
Oh but you will be Mr Allen, you will be!

- Dire Straits – Brothers in Arms state *'Let me bid you farewell, every man has to die'*

Psalm 146:4 **SLIDE**

... For every man must die. His breathing stops, life ends, and in a moment all he planned for himself is ended. Living Bible

DEATH BY SIN

WE OWE ALL 'THIS DEATH' TO ONE MAN ... TO WHOM WE ARE RELATED

SLIDE OUR DEAR ANCESTOR ADAM OPENED THE DOOR TO DEATH AND INVITED IT IN.

Romans 5:12 **SLIDE**

... Through one man [Adam] sin entered the world and death [came in] through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned. (DEATH IS THE RESULT OF SIN)

1 Corinthians 15:56

For sin is the sting that results in death, and the law gives sin its power. NLT

Think of 'the sting' (kentron – a point) ... as a poisoned arrow or dagger.

Ellicott states,

Death is pictured here as a monster, and it is armed with a sting. Its sting is sin. If there were no sin, death would not be capable of inflicting its poison!

So, Death uses natural disasters to kill ... it promotes sickness which accomplishes its destructive cause ... but sometimes death just uses time & atrophy. It watches & waits & rejoices as all people grow frail & die & all things decay and eventually disintegrate.

NO ONE HAS EVER ESCAPED DEATH ... EXCEPT FOR TWO PEOPLE.

TWO PEOPLE **ESCAPED** DEATH

There were two people in the O.T. who escaped death. They were ...

Enoch & Elijah ... **SLIDE**

Enoch: God took him after living 365 years (Gen 5:21–24),

Elijah: He was taken up in a flaming chariot sent from heaven. (2 Kings 2:11)

It's like death watched these two patriarchs escape out of its dominion in complete horror & amazement. Before Enoch ... this had never happened to any person! Now Death had to have counselling and was just getting over its failure and what God did as He did it again with Elijah. Now Death had to take medication for 100 years to accept something it didn't understand.

Then just as it was starting to feel good about itself again ... forgetting the past and believing in itself as the most powerful thing in the universe, Jesus came!

HERE, WE MUST MAKE A DISTINCTION BETWEEN WHAT HAPPENED TO ENOCH & ELIJAH & WHAT HAPPENED TO JESUS.

These two men of God were taken out of the death realm. **THEY ESCAPED DEATH**, but Jesus didn't just 'Escape Death' ... **JESUS WAS GREATER THAN DEATH.**

JESUS WAS GREATER THAN DEATH, not because of His title or heritage but because He had **THE POWER OF A SINLESS LIFE WHICH IS A GREATER POWER THAN DEATH**
JESUS CHRIST WAS NOT SUBJECT TO DEATH. Look at what Jesus said ...

John 10:18 **SLIDE**

No one can take my life from Me. I sacrifice it voluntarily. For I have the authority to lay it down when I want to and also to take it up again. For this is what my Father has commanded. NLT

JESUS CHRIST WAS BORN WITHOUT SIN & HE LIVED WITHOUT SIN

SLIDE **THEREFORE DEATH HAD NO DOMINION OVER HIM**

- 2 Corinthians 5:21

*He made Him who **knew no sin** to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.* NASB

- Hebrews 4:15

*One [Jesus] who has been tempted in all things as we are, **yet without sin.*** NASB

- 1 John 3:5

*You know that He appeared in order to take away sins; and **in Him there is no sin.*** ESV

- 1 Peter 2:22

*[Jesus] **committed no sin**, nor was deceit found in His mouth.*

Jesus had already conquered death before the cross & resurrection.

John 14:30

*No longer will I speak much with you; for the ruler of this world comes, and **in Me he has nothing.*** (Berean Literal)

THE VICTORY OF A SINLESS LIFE

NO ONE HAD THE POWER TO KILL JESUS UPON THE CROSS EXCEPT GOD

Even Jesus' wounds on the cross would have been healed by Christ's sinless spirit as sickness only came about because of sin.

Jesus had already made the lame to walk ... the blind to see ... the dead to live ...

IT WAS THE POWER OF HIS INDESTRUCTIBLE LIFE WITHIN HIM.

WHEN LIFE MEETS DEATH ... IT RAISES THE DEAD.

Acts 2:24 **SLIDE**

*But God raised him up, having released him from the pains of death, because **it was not possible for him to be held in its [Death's] power.*** NET

Hebrews 7:16

*Who [Jesus] has been constituted not according to a law of a fleshly commandment, but according to **the power of an indestructible life.*** Berean Literal Bible

Pilot said to Jesus

John 19:10

... Do you not know that I have authority to release You and authority to crucify You? ESV

Jesus said to pilot

John 19:11

... You would have no authority over Me, if it were not given to you from above. Berean Literal Bible

Jesus wasn't killed by men on the cross. Jesus chose to die. Jesus was in full control of His spirit ... as He committed it to His Father.

Luke 23:46 **SLIDE**

And when Jesus had cried out with a loud voice, He said, "Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit." Having said this, He breathed His last.

DEATH HAD NO DOMINION OVER JESUS SPIRIT.

JESUS LAST WORDS WERE TO THE FATHER ...

This tells us ...

- JESUS REMAINED IN CONTROL OF HIS LIFE THROUGH ALL THIS HORROR.
- JESUS SPIRIT WAS NOT CORRUPTED BY SIN BUT REMAINED PURE.
- JESUS GAVE UP HIS SPIRIT TO THE FATHER WITHOUT WHICH ... HE COULD NOT HAVE DIED!

NB: Jesus spoke this after He had **cried with a loud voice**. WHAT DID HE CRY?

'TETELESTAI' IT IS FINISHED! (John 19:30)

Jesus cried this before voluntarily committing His spirit to His Father so He could die.

A SOBERING THOUGHT!

IF JESUS HAD ALREADY OVERCOME SIN & DEATH BEFORE THE CROSS ...

THEN WHY DID HE NEED TO DIE UPON THE CROSS?

HE NEEDED TO DIE FOR US! WE HADN'T OVERCOME DEATH. DEATH STILL RULED OVER US.

AT THAT POINT HE WAS OUR SURROGATE ... OUR SUBSTITUTE OUR REPRESENTATIVE.

Hebrews 1:9 **SLIDE**

*But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, because of the suffering of death, having been crowned with glory and with honour, so that by the grace of God He might **taste death for everyone.*** (Berean Lit)

NB: Jesus only **'Tasted Death'**. Death didn't defeat Him. His spirit & soul had already gone as His body died.

JESUS SPIRIT WENT INTO THE ARMS OF THE FATHER ... SAFE, SECURE ... HOLY & PURE

UNTIL THE FATHER BROUGHT IT BACK INTO CHRIST'S LIFELESS BODY.

NB: THIS REUNION ALONE WAS ENOUGH TO RESURRECT THE BODY OF JESUS ... BUT THE FATHER DID FAR MORE THAN REVIVE A BODY OF 'ADAM'S RACE'.

THE FATHER TRANSFORMED CHRIST'S HUMAN BODY INTO A GLORIFIED BODY.

THE POWER OF THE RESURRECTION

Ephesians 1:19-20 **SLIDE**

*[May you know] what is the **exceeding greatness of His power / toward us / who believe/ according to the working of His mighty power²⁰ which /He worked [energised] /in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places ...***

WHAT IS THIS POWER THAT IS TOWARD US WHO BELIEVE?

This is miraculous power. / This is supernatural power. / This is transforming power.

It is **'supernatural power** (dynamēōs). It is the same power of the Holy Spirit

Acts 1:8

'You shall receive Power (dynamis) after the Holy Spirit has come upon you.' King James 2000 Bible

HOW DOES THIS POWER WORK IN US?

I'd like us to look at 3 phrases in Ephesians above.

WE WHO BELIEVE: I used to think it was my 'believing' that made 'the power' work in me ... But this is wrong. It's not according to us trying to believe as many think & I used to think. It's talking about, 'we who believe in Christ' ... or 'believers'

THIS POWER IS NOT just for some hyped-up ... fired-up zealous few ... IT'S GIVEN TO ALL BORN AGAIN CHRISTIANS.

*PAUL PRAYED: WE WOULD KNOW **GOD HAS ALREADY GIVEN US THIS POWER.***

TOWARD US: The Greek work is eis = into

*So the power has been infused already **into us** when we first believed.*

It's not something EXTERNAL that we EXERCISE some mental belief to activate.

THIS POWER IS IN US BUT OPERATES THROUGH US & MANIFESTS AROUND US.

*PAUL PRAYED: WE WOULD KNOW **THIS POWER IS ALREADY ALIVE IN US***

WHICH HE WORKED (energēken) - ENERGISED: This is the part where many Hyper-Pentecostal & 'Word of Faith' people go wrong (as did I). I used to think I could exercise & energise this power at my will. NB: 'I BELIEVE FOR' IS NOWHERE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.
This power does not flow according to my dictates or control.

THIS POWER FLOWS AS GOD THE FATHER COMMANDS; AS HE DID AT THE

RESURRECTION.

*GOD THE FATHER ACTIVATED THE POWER IN JESUS ... **HE ENERGISED THE POWER.***

*NB: JESUS HAD ALREADY COMMITTED HIS SPIRIT TO THE FATHER ... TO HIS TIMING ... TO HIS MANIFESTING ... JESUS RESTED IN THE ARMS OF HIS FATHER. So should we ... knowing this power is alive within us & will activate as we **step out of the way** & let God do what we can't do.*

*PAUL PRAYED: WE WOULD KNOW **THIS POWER IS ACTIVATED BY THE FATHER HIMSELF***

Ephesians 3:20 **SLIDE**

*Now to Him who is able (dynamenō) to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to **the power** (dynamis) **that works** (energoumenēn) Energises **in us** ...*

(dynamis) = miraculous / supernatural power

THIS POWER NOT ONLY BROUGHT JESUS BODY BACK TO LIFE ...

THIS POWER TRANSFORMED JESUS BODY INTO A SUPER-HUMAN BODY.

This power overcame physical matter. (Quantum Physics)

There was never a human being like this before and there hasn't been since.

- Jesus could appear and disappear at will. (Luke 24:39-43)
- Jesus overcame gravity & floated into the sky. (Luke 24:51)
- Jesus ate food & the disciples touched Him & held Him. (Luke 24:39-43)

THIS IS ANOTHER FORM OF HUMAN BEING ...

*The same power that produced the marvellous miracle of Christ's resurrection now works in the hearts of believers. To appreciate this, we must bear in mind the apostle's full doctrine of the resurrection of Jesus, embracing **not only** the reviving of his dead body, but the transformation of that body into a spiritual body, and the constituting of Jesus a second Adam. (Commentary)*

This Human is no longer subject to death & decay

BUT WE WILL BE ALSO CHANGED into the same supernatural form at the final redemption. (1 John 3:1-2)

1 Corinthians 15:51-55 **SLIDE**

*Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but **we shall all be changed**—⁵² in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised **incorruptible**, and **we shall be changed**.⁵³ For this **corruptible must put on incorruption**, and this **mortal must put on immortality**.⁵⁴ So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."*

⁵⁵ *"O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?"*

Romans 8:11 **SLIDE**

*And if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead lives in you, **He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit**, who dwells within you.*

2 Corinthians 13:4

*For He was indeed crucified in weakness, yet He lives by God's power. And though we are weak in Him, yet **by God's power** we will live with Him to serve you.* Berean Study Bible

The power of sin which was transmitted in us & through us from Adam ... has now lost its root core!

There is no longer an endless reservoir of sin & death... only a remnant in the flesh ...

*But at the same time ... we do have NOW an endless reservoir of supernatural power flowing from the deepest part of our being ... **OUR NEW LIFE IN OUR SPIRIT.***

This power now rises and bit by bit begins to overcome the former power of death in us.

NOTE: Unless otherwise stated, Scriptures are quoted in the NKJV