

Who is Responsible for Death?

*(When quoting scriptures, from the Rotherham Emphasized Bible New Testament,
I will substitute the Hebrew word Yahshua for Jesus, Yahweh and Elohim for God and the LORD and Anointed for Christ.)*

Death can be divided into two categories; natural death and premature death. Many Churches teach that Yahweh is sovereign, in their words, “He has complete authority and control over all human beings and every aspect of the universe.”¹ If Yahweh is in control then all death can be laid at His feet; He either caused the death or allowed the death to occur. Other Christian organizations teach that the devil has the power of death. (See Appendix A) Neither of the two cases listed above are correct. The responsible parties for natural death are Adam and Eve, who represent mankind as a whole. The serpent can take some credit because he did deceive Eve into believing his lie, which led to Adam and Eve’s demise.² Premature death, on the other hand, has multiple causes. An individual’s actions can cause their own premature death; suicide, accident, disobedience to Yahweh, etc. Other men can cause an individual’s premature death; an accident or murder. Yahweh can put to death evil individuals either directly or indirectly. The slanderer’s deception and manipulation of mankind can indirectly contribute to an individual’s murder. (The definitions of killing and murder are listed below³.) The corruption of the earth, which is the result of Adam and Eve’s sin, can cause an individual’s premature death; sickness, disease, genetic defects, hurricanes, tornadoes etc. Christ came to destroy death, which is an enemy!⁴

Is Yahweh in Control?

We must first address the question, “Is Yahweh in Control of the affairs of Mankind.” Let’s test this Christian teaching when we are behind the controls of an automobile. At 70 mph, in traffic, lets take our hands off of the steering wheel and our foot off of the brake and see what happens. After the crash we can ask ourselves if we were in control of the car or was Yahweh in control of the car. We can perform this test one thousand times and the results will always be the same, thereby confirming that we are in control of the automobile and not Yahweh. Control means, “to exercise restraint or direction upon the

¹ Charles F Stanley, God is in Control. <http://ww2.intouch.org/site/c.dhKHIXPKIuE/b.2406769/apps/s/content.asp?ct=3405541>

² And Yaweh Elohim layeth a charge on the man, saying, ‘Of every tree of the garden eating thou dost eat; and of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou dost not eat of it, for in the day of thine eating of it—dying thou dost die (Young’s Gen. 2:16-17). And the serpent said unto the woman,—Ye shall not die, For Elohim doth know, that in the day ye eat thereof, then shall your eyes be opened,—and ye shall become like Elohim, knowing good and evil (Gen. 3:4-5).

³ **1. Kill:** To put to death; to deprive of life; to slay, slaughter. **Murder:** *a. trans.* To kill (a human being) unlawfully with malice aforethought; OED

⁴ 1Co 15:26 As a last enemy, death, is to be destroyed;

But, whensoever, this mortal, shall clothe itself with immortality, then, shall be brought to pass the saying that is written—Death hath been swallowed up, victoriously; Where, O death, is thy victory? Where, O death, is thy sting? Now, the sting of death, is, sin, and, the power of sin, is, the law; — But, unto Yahweh, be thanks, who is giving unto us the victory, through our Lord Yahshua Christ. I Cor. 15:54-57

free action of; to hold sway over, exercise power or authority over; to dominate, command.”⁵ Something being controlled has no choice or freedom of will. If Yahweh is in control of the affairs of mankind then mankind cannot have freedom of will.

Yahweh, as the Creator, relinquished His control over His creation, the earth, and gave it to mankind.⁶ He gave Adam and Eve the authority and power to control their own environment; the earth. He also gave them the ability to choose their age-abiding destiny; live in the garden forever or die.⁷ He instructed them that they could choose life by eating of the tree of life or they could choose death by eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. They chose death! Cain also chose death while Abel chose life. Men are accountable for their choices because men and not Yahweh are in control of their own affairs.

The Church teaching that Yahweh is in Control is like gangrene in the Body of the Christ. For example, let’s consider the event where King Herod murdered the children in Bethlehem.⁸ If Yahweh was in control then Yahweh ordered or allowed Herod and his soldiers to murder children, one of whom would have been His only-begotten Son if a messenger of Yahweh had not warned Joseph in a dream. Why would Yahweh send a messenger to Joseph and have him flee to Egypt if He was in control of Herod and his soldiers? If Yahweh could have stopped King Herod from murdering the children then Yahweh and not Herod is responsible for the deaths of the innocent children. The teaching that Yahweh is in control places men as puppets; unaccountable for their actions. If men are puppets then they cannot be judged for their actions; contradicting Yahweh’s teachings.⁹

⁵ OED

⁶ Ps 115:16 As for the heavens, the heavens, belong to Yahweh, but the earth, hath he given to the sons of men.

⁷ And Elohim blessed them, and Elohim said to them—Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth, and subdue it,—and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the bird of the heavens, and over every living thing that moveth on the land. And Elohim said—Lo! I have given to you—every herb yielding seed which is on the face of all the land, and every tree wherein is the fruit of a tree, yielding seed,—to you, shall it be, for food; and to every living thing of the land—and to every bird of the heavens, and to every thing that moveth on the land, wherein is a living soul, every green herb for food. And it was so. Gen. 1:28-30

⁸ Now, when they had retired, lo! a messenger of Yahweh, appeareth by dream unto Joseph, saying, Arise, take unto thee the child and its mother, and flee into Egypt, and be there, until I tell thee,—for Herod is about to seek the child, to destroy it. And, he, arising, took unto him the child and its mother, by night, and retired into Egypt; and was there, until the death of Herod,—that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt, called I my son. Then Herod, seeing that he had been mocked by the wise men, was exceedingly enraged,—and sent and slew all the male children that were in Bethlehem, and in all its bounds, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had ascertained from the wise men. Then was fulfilled, that which was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet, saying: A voice, in Ramah, was heard, weeping and great mourning,—Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted,—because they are not. Mt. 2:13-18

⁹ Ro 14:10 But, thou, why dost thou judge thy brother? Aye! and thou, why dost thou despise thy brother? For, all of us, shall present ourselves unto the judgment seat of Yahweh;

2Co 5:10 For, we all, must needs be made manifest before the judgment seat of the Christ, that each one may get back the things done by means of the body, according to the things which he practised, whether good or corrupt.

Rom. 20:12 And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne; and, books, were opened, and, another book, was opened, which is, the book, of life; and the dead, were judged, out of the things written in the books, according to their works.

Christ Came to Destroy Death

Death and sheol will be cast into the Lake of Fire because of the sacrificial death of our Lord.¹⁰ Yahshua tasted death for all mankind.¹¹ He died, not a natural death but was tortured to death, on the cross, in order that, through death,—he might paralyze him that held the dominion of death, that is, the slanderer, and might release those as many as, by fear of death, were all their lifetime liable, to bondage.¹² We were reconciled to Yahweh by his death.¹³ Yahweh raised him up from among the dead thereby loosing the pains of death.¹⁴ Christ has abolished death.¹⁵ The history and future of death is summed up in I Corinthians chapter fifteen; “For, since indeed, through a man, came death, through a man, also cometh the raising of the dead; For, just as, in the Adam, all die, so, also, in the Christ, shall all be made alive...As a last enemy, death, is to be destroyed...But, whensoever, this mortal, shall clothe itself with immortality, then, shall be brought to pass the saying that is written—Death hath been swallowed up, victoriously...Where, O death, is thy victory? Where, O death, is thy sting...Now, the sting of death, is, sin, and, the power of sin, is, the law” (I Cor. 15:21-22, 26, 54-56).

Natural Death

Adam and Eve and not the adversary nor Yahweh, are responsible for the origination of death; “For, since indeed, through a man, came death, through a man, also cometh the raising of the dead; For, just as, in the Adam, all die, so, also, in the Christ, shall all be made alive” (I Cor. 15:21-22). The ultimate consequence of Adam and Eve’s disobedience was to die or return to dust; “For, dust, thou art, and, unto dust, shalt thou return” (Gen. 3:19). The disobedience of mankind brought mortality to man and corruption to the creation. In the beginning, Adam’s natural mortality took 930 years to be fulfilled (Gen. 5:5). It appears that the natural life span of man changed after the flood from 930 years for Adam to 175 years for Abraham (Gen. 25:7); to 120 years for Moses; to 70 years for David (II Sam. 5:4). It also appears from Psalms 90:10 that the natural life span of man, on the average, will be seventy to eighty years.

¹⁰ And, death and sheol, were cast into the lake of fire. This, is, the second death—the lake of fire. Rev. 20:14

¹¹ Heb 2:9 But, Yahshua, made some little less than messengers, we do behold: by reason of the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour, to the end that, by favour of Yahweh, in behalf of every one, he might taste of death.

¹² ...in order that, through death,—he might paralyse him that held the dominion of death, that is, the Adversary, — And might release these—as many as, by fear of death, were all their lifetime liable, to bondage. Heb. 2:14-15

¹³ Ro 5:10 For, if being enemies we were reconciled unto Yahweh through the death of his Son, much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.

¹⁴ Ac 2:24 Whom, Yahweh, raised up, loosing the pangs of death, inasmuch as it was, not possible, for him to continue held fast by it.

¹⁵ 2Ti 1:10 But hath now been made manifest through means of the forthshining of our Saviour Christ Yahshua,—Who, indeed, hath abolished death, and hath thrown light upon life and incorruptibility, through means of the glad-message:

In Christ's thousand-year kingdom, the natural span of a man's life will be over one hundred years.¹⁶ During this time period, the natural man's death cannot be attributed to the adversary because he has been bound and placed into the abyss for one thousand years. Their death cannot be attributed to Yahweh because this is the new heaven and new earth, where Christ is reigning as King. Their natural death will be the result of the Adamic fall. After Christ's one thousand-year reign, the accuser will be released from the abyss. The slanderer will then deceive many of the natural men into warring against Christ, which will lead them into their premature death; fire coming down out of heaven and devouring them.¹⁷ The fire does not come from the accuser but from Yahweh or Christ because of their wickedness!

Premature Death

Yahweh Executing Justice in the Earth

Yahweh is an Elohim of justice and can kill evil people directly and indirectly.¹⁸ Numbers chapter sixteen illustrated the direct justice of Yahweh through Moses when the earth opened up and closed upon people who were trying to overthrow Moses. Also fire came down from heaven and destroyed an additional two hundred and fifty people. Yahweh also enforces justice indirectly through men and women: Moses brought the sea upon Pharaoh's army; Elijah killed 450 of the prophets of Baal (I Kg. 18:40); Jezebel was killed by the order of Yahweh, which avenged the murder of Naboth (I Kg. 21:19, 23, II Kg. 9:32). Yahweh also commands his people to put to death individuals for certain offenses.¹⁹

Yahweh's messengers have the ability to kill evil people by the order of Yahweh as was done with Sodom.²⁰ A messenger of Yahweh killed one hundred and eighty five thousand

¹⁶ For, behold me! Creating new heavens, and a new earth,—And the former, shall not be mentioned, neither shall they come up on the heart. But joy ye and exult, perpetually, in what I, am about to create,—For, behold me! Creating Jerusalem an exultation, and, Her People a joy; Therefore will I Exult in Jerusalem, and, Joy in my People,—And there shall be heard in her, no more, The sound of weeping, or the sound of a cry: There shall be thenceforward, no more, A suckling of a few days, or an elder, Who filleth not up his days,—But, a youth, a hundred years old, may die, Yea, a sinner, a hundred years old, shall be accursed, Is. 65:17-20

¹⁷ And, as soon as the thousand years, shall be ended, the Accuser shall be loosed out of his prison, and will go forth to deceive the nations that are in the four corners of the earth, the Gog and Magog, to gather them together unto the battle—the number of whom, is as the sand of the sea. And they came up over the breadth of the land, and surrounded the camp of the saints, and the beloved city. And there came down fire out of heaven, and devoured them; and, the Adversary that had been deceiving them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where *were* both the wild-beast and the false-prophet; and they shall be tormented, day and night, unto the ages of ages. Rev. 20:7-10

¹⁸ I, am Yahweh, Executing lovingkindness, justice, and righteousness in the earth,—That in these things, I delight Declareth Yahweh (Jer. 9:24).

¹⁹ But, when a man shall act presumptuously against his neighbour, to slay him with guile, from mine altar, shalt thou take him to die. And, he that smiteth his father or his mother, shall, surely be put to death. And, he that stealeth a man of the sons of Israel and selleth him, or he be found in his hand, shall, surely be put to death. Ex. 21:14-16

Whosoever lieth with a beast, shall, surely be put to death. Ex. 22:19

²⁰ For we are about to destroy this place,—for, great, is the outcry of them unto the face of Yahweh, so that Yahweh hath sent us to destroy it. Gen. 19:13

enemies of Yahweh in one night (II Kg. 19:35). Messengers of Yahweh and His saints will also kill Yahweh's enemies in the Book of Revelations.²¹

The Slanderer is a Murderer

The adversary indirectly murders individuals through his willing agents, who are men and women. Yahshua instructed us that the slanderer, "...was, a murderer, from the beginning" (Jn. 8:44). Cain, who was of the wicked one, murdered Abel (I Jn. 3:12). Jezebel had the prophets of Yahweh murdered (I Kg. 18:4). Herod murdered the children in Bethlehem who were two years old and younger (Mt. 2:16). The beast will murder the saints in the Book of Revelations (Rev. 11:7). The adversary cannot directly murder any individual. He needs an agent who has hands and feet. There is not one case in the Word of Yahweh where the adversary murdered someone without human assistance. Yahweh, His messengers and His people have the ability to kill evil people but the adversary, his messengers and his demons do not have this ability. They need humans to accomplish their tasks. (See the article, "The Authority of the Slanderer, the Adversary, the Deceiver")

Sin, Accidents & Suicide

Obedience to Yahweh's commandments lengthens one's life, while disobedience or sin hinders the blessings of Yahweh, which may shorten one's life (Deu. 5:33, Deu. 28). Israel after leaving Egypt refused to obey Yahweh's words by not entering into the land of Canaan, which would have prolonged their days. Yahweh then directed them to the wilderness but some went into Canaan to fight anyway, which Yahweh forbade. The consequence of their rebellion was death by the hands of their enemy (Deu. 1:29-45). Rebellion against Yahweh resulted in their premature death. Our own coveting tempts us, which leads to sin, which leads to death; the wages of sin being death.²² People can also die because of an accident; "Whoso shall smite his neighbor unwittingly, he, not having hated him aforetime; as when one entereth with his neighbor into a forest, to fell trees, and his hand fetcheth a stroke with the axe, to cut down the tree, and the head flieth off from the handle, and lighteth upon his neighbor, that he die, he, shall flee into one of these cities, and live" (Deu. 19: 4-5). People can also choose to commit suicide as in the case of King Saul and Judas.

The Fallen World

The earth has been corrupted because of Adam and Eve's disobedience.²³ I believe disease, killer storms and carnivores began to have an impact on mankind after the flood of Noah.

²¹ by these three plagues, were slain, the third part of mankind, by reason of the fire and the smoke and the brimstone, that proceedeth out of their mouths; Rev. 9:18

²² Let, no one, while tempted, be saying—From Yahweh, am I tempted,—for, Yahweh, cannot be tempted by things evil, and, himself, tempteth no one; But, each one, is tempted, when, by his own coveting, he is drawn out and enticed, Then, the coveting, having conceived, giveth birth to sin, and, the sin, when full-grown, bringeth forth death. Ja. 1:13-15

Ro 6:23 For, the wages of sin, is death; but, Yahweh's gift of favour, is life age-abiding, in Christ Yahshua our Lord.

²³ "For, the eager outlook of creation, ardently awaiteth the revealing of the sons of Yahweh,— For, unto vanity, hath creation been made subject—not by choice, but by reason of him that made it subject, in hope That, creation itself also, shall be freed—

Before the flood people were living over 900 years; disease does not allow these life spans. The first recorded storm or rainfall began after Noah's family entered the Ark.²⁴ Men and I believe animals were vegetarians until they left the Ark (Gen. 1:29-30, 9:3). If this was the case then carnivores, such as lions, would not have killed people. After the flood an animal, lightning or disease could lead to a man's premature death.

Conclusion

Yahweh never willed man to experience death. He gave mankind control of the earth and the freedom to chose their own destiny. Yahweh is not in control of the affairs of mankind! His original plan was for His children to choose immortality, by taking of the tree of life, and to rule the earth as gods. They were to be in control of their life and the earth. If they had taken this choice then there would not have been death, grief or pain on the earth.²⁵ They chose mortality instead, by eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, which resulted in Yahweh's contingent plan being administered. This plan was for his Son to deliver mankind from the dominion of death. Yahweh's present will is long life for all of mankind, thereby fulfilling their mission, as was done by Moses and Paul.

Yahweh notified Moses and others that they were about to die, also known as falling asleep. Their mission was complete. Yahweh spoke unto Moses and said, "...Get thee up into this mountain...and die thou in the mount whither thou art going up, and be withdrawn unto thy kinsfolk,—as Aaron thy brother died in Mount Hor, and was withdrawn unto his kinsfolk" (Deu. 32:48-50). The Apostle Paul also was informed of his upcoming death.²⁶ We have seen that death can be brought about by many causes and the adversary can be involved but the adversary cannot zap or vaporize an individual anytime he wants, neither does Yahweh take people to heaven by killing them. The slanderer's power is unveiled when someone like Stalin, who is his hands and feet, is put into power and then murders 30 million people. Death is an enemy and along with sheol will be cast into the Lake of Fire (Rev. 20:14). Natural death is the result of the Adamic Fall, while premature death can be attributed to many causes. Long life upon the earth is promised to those who live and act upon the promises of our Father's Words. Life age-abiding is promised to all who confess and believe Romans 10:9.

from the bondage of the decay into the freedom of the glory of the sons of Yahweh; For we know that, all creation, is sighing together, and travailing-in-birth-throes together until the present" (Rom. 8:19-22).

²⁴ The earth used to be watered by a mist or fountain (Genesis 2:6).

²⁵ And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for, the first heaven and the first earth, have passed away, and, the sea, is no more. And, the holy city, new Jerusalem, saw I coming down out of heaven from Yahweh, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice out of the throne, saying—Lo! the tent of Yahweh, is with men, and he will tabernacle with them, and, they, shall be, his peoples, and, he, shall be, Yahweh with them; And he will wipe away every tear out of their eyes,—and, death, shall be no more, and grief and outcry and pain shall be no more: the first things, have passed away. Rev. 21:1-4

²⁶ For, I, already, am being poured out as a drink-offering, and, the season of my release, is at hand,— The noble contest, have I contested, the race, have I finished, the faith, have I kept: Henceforth, lieth by for me—the crown, of righteousness, which the Lord will render unto me in that, day,—The righteous judge,—Ye, not alone unto me, but unto all them also who have loved his forthshining. II Tim. 4:6-8

Appendix A

Hebrews 2:14

“that through death he might destroy him that had [past tense]the power of death, that is, the devil” (KJV).

in order that, through death,—he might paralyse him that held [past tense] the dominion of death, that is, the Adversary” (Rotherham)

We must examine Hebrews 2:14 in its context. If the adversary murdered someone in chapter two then the context would be correct in stating that the adversary has the power of death but no one is murdered by the adversary in chapter two. The death of our Lord is mentioned in chapter two but his death is not attributed to the adversary. Our Lord gave his life and no one took it from him (Jn. 10:17-18).

Natural death is the result of Adam and Eve’s disobedience to Yahweh (Gen. 3:19). The context of Hebrews chapter two speaks of the death and resurrection of Yahshua, which were accomplished in order to save his brethren. “...In behalf of every one, he might taste of death...when, many sons, unto glory, he would lead, The Princely Leader of their salvation, through sufferings, to make perfect. For, both he that maketh holy, and they who are being made holy, are, all, of One; For which cause, he is not ashamed to be calling them, brethren” (Heb. 2:9-11). The context of Hebrews chapter two is not talking about the adversary but rather about Yahshua’s brethren being released from bondage; “... these—as many as, by fear of death, were all their lifetime liable, to bondage” (Heb. 2:15). How did Yahshua release us from bondage?

He released us from bondage by being raised from among the dead, never to die again. The bondage spoken of was from the fear of death. Hundreds of believers witnessed our risen Savior, who will never be bound by death again. Before this event, the adversary bound the people through the dominion (kratos²⁷) of death. Kratos means might, strength or force. The might that he held over men was the fear of death, which binds. Once Yahshua was raised from among the dead, the fear of death could no longer bind the believer. The slanderer’s ability to bind men through the fear of death has been paralyzed. Many people have been taught that the slanderer has the power (dunamis²⁸) of death, which infers that he can kill anyone at any time; that all deaths are attributed to him. This is not the case. People can die a natural death because of age (a result of the curse), as Moses and Abraham did. People can be put to death by righteous people because they have committed a capital offense (result of their free will doing evil), as Samuel did by slaying King Agag.²⁹ People can die prematurely from an accident or an illness caused by natural or spiritual means. People can also be murdered by people who are under the influence of the adversary (Jn. 8:44).

²⁷ 2904 κρατος kratos krat'-os

1) force, strength 2) power, might: mighty with great power 2a) a mighty deed, a work of power 3) dominion

²⁸ 1411 δυναμις dunamis doo'-nam-is

1) strength power, ability

1a) inherent power, power residing in a thing by virtue of its nature, or which a person or thing exerts and puts forth

1b) power for performing miracles 1c) moral power and excellence of soul

1d) the power and influence which belong to riches and wealth 1e) power and resources arising from numbers

1f) power consisting in or resting upon armies, forces, hosts

²⁹ 1 Samuel 15:33