



## A Taste of Death

**H**ave you ever been to a taste test? Maybe a wine tasting party, or a food tasting party? When you go to one of these, you get enough of the item to taste it, but not really eat it. If you want to dig in to a full meal or have a full drink, you won't find it at the taste test. Our lives on earth seem to forever come short of the real thing. Often, we struggle to attain our goals, only to find them not as fulfilling as we thought they would be. Food is nice, but not always exciting. Jobs are great, but not as fulfilling as hoped. Relationships often require more work than expected. Pains are sometimes more abundant than its relief. Spiritual things are attainable, but only in part. Our life in this



world seems to be only a taste of the promises of a life to come.

For instance, we get to taste if the Lord is gracious.

*If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious. (1 Peter 2:3)*

What we experience in that taste is nothing more than a taste of that which is to come. God provides our every need, He cares for us, and He will never leave us. But, we still only get a taste of Him today, primarily through His Word.

You get to taste God's Word when you hear it.

*How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth! (Psalms 119:103)*

God's Word always has a sweet taste. Man's words can't compare.

*Contrary to the greatness of an abundance of life, the Bible also speaks of death – a subject most of us would gladly avoid.*

I'd like to talk about this subject for a few minutes in order to provide you with some hopeful insight to the following phrase, "a taste of death?" This is a biblical

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term, but what does it mean?

*Death is frightening to many, but the Christian should not be afraid of it.* Jesus said that some people would never taste death.

Then said the Jews unto him, Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death. (John 8:52)

What does it mean, “to never taste of death?” Today, death is only death in part. That may sound strange to you, especially because today’s death seems so final. But it is not so final for us. *We will shortly see that this taste of death is only a sample of the second death.*

## The Christian Resurrection or Gathering Together

All mankind will be resurrected from the dead. Since there are three separate “resurrection” events, I’d like to cover them individually. The first one is for Christians, those who will be raised from the dead at the return of Christ.

For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: (1 Thessalonians 4:16)

At this time, all dead Christians will be raised from the dead. This event precedes all other resurrections of mankind.

Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the

Lord. (1 Thessalonians 4:17)

At this time, all alive Christians will not taste death at all, but rather, be gathered together right after the dead in Christ rise first. From this moment on, all of these people will forever be with the Lord Jesus Christ. Where he goes, we go.

## The Resurrection of the Just

There are two other resurrections of mankind’s dead. The first is called the first resurrection.

But the rest of the dead [those not resurrected at the resurrection of the just] lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. (Revelation 20:5-6)

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This same resurrection takes place prior to the millennium, the thousand-year period of Christ's rule on earth. Christians are absolutely not involved in this resurrection. They have already been gathered together with Christ. By this time, they will have spent a short time with him in heaven. The people raised in the resurrection of the just have already faced their judgment. The fact that they were raised at all during this time signifies that they have already been justified. These people have the privilege of going right into service with Jesus Christ as priests of God and of Christ. *Let me say it one more time, these people will not be judged any further.*

This resurrection is also called the resurrection of the just.

*And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense*

*thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just. (Luke 14:14)*

And . . .

*And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust. (Acts 24:15)*

## The Second Death

The "second death" has nothing to do with (1) Christians, and (2) people raised in the resurrection of the just. *What is the "eternal" death. It is the permanent absence of life, hope of life, or a change in state.* People

who receive the second death will then, forever remain dead. The death that you and I may face today is not this death. In answer to the question, "what does a taste

of death mean," today's death is only a taste of the second death, one of which we will have no part. In other words, you may taste it, but you'll never have to dine on the full meal!

God already knows all people who were justified, and it will be these people who are raised at the first resurrection. This same resurrection has yet another name. It is also called the resurrection of life.

*And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. (John 5:29)*

## The Resurrection of Damnation or of the Unjust

This verse talks about two different resurrections. The resurrection of damnation is the

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second resurrection I previously mentioned.

And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead [the second resurrection folks] were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell [the grave] delivered up the dead which were in them: and they [the second resurrection folks] were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever [of the second resurrection folks] was

not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire. (Revelation 20:11-15)

In this resurrection, people will be judged at the great white throne of God. To avoid the second death, the eternal death, a person's name has to be found in the Book of Life.

This resurrection is also called the resurrection of the unjust.

And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust. (Acts 24:15)

This event marks the second resurrection, although it is not biblically called that. *The people who were raised at the first resurrection are not judged at this time.* They already were judged and raised at the first resurrection.

Christians also have no part in this judgment. To state it again, this second resurrection is for people who refused God, were not justified under the Mosaic Law or any other way, and also were not Christians.

**Here are the three events for clarification:**

- Christians have their own special resurrection and will ALL be gathered together at Christ's return (whether dead or alive).
- Those previously justified by God under the law or otherwise have their own special resurrection and will all be raised from the dead in the first resurrection, the resurrection of the just, or life.
- All remaining peoples have their own special resurrection and will be raised from the dead and judged at the great white throne judgment, the resurrection of the unjust, or

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damnation. In order for these people to avoid the second, eternal death, their names have to be found in the Book of Life. All people found in the Book of Life won't face the second death!

**No matter if you die today, if you are a Christian, you will only *taste* death.**

What about when Jesus said that some would never die?

**Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? (John 11:25-26)**

Perhaps you can now answer the age-old question, "how could these people "never die?" The answer is quite simple. Jesus isn't talking about the first death, the taste of

death. He is talking about the second death. Think about it.

Did you know that Jesus only tasted death?

**But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. (Hebrews 2:9)**

You can be guaranteed that Jesus was as dead as a doornail when he lay in the grave for 72 hours after his crucifixion. Make no mistake about it. In fact, you have to believe that he did die in order to believe that God raised him from the dead. He died for us so that we could live. But he only tasted death. This means, that he did not face eternal death. Why? Because God raised him from the dead. The beautiful thing about this is that, we too, will only taste death

because we will also be raised at Christ's coming.

A Taste is a sample only. It is not the real thing. Even though some of us will have to taste death, we certainly have something far greater to look forward to. After you die, in less than a split second, you will see the Lord Jesus Christ in the air at the gathering together.

**In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. (1 Corinthians 15:52)**

From this moment, all of the events of eternity will begin to unfold, and you won't miss out on a single one. ***Well, I guess you will miss just one – the great white throne judgment. Sorry, but Christians don't get to be judged at this one.***

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Your place in eternity has already been approved, signed-off on, accepted and guaranteed. Even though our lives in this world seem like just a taste sometimes, a far greater life is about to unfold.

God bless you abundantly!

Jerry D. Brown