

## WHAT DOES DEAD IN SIN MEAN?

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(A section from the booklet “The Fall of Mankind”)

### ROMANS 5:12

**“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin . . .”**

Adam brought sin into the world by his own free will, and spiritual death comes by sin. Adam became dead in sin (morally depraved and separated from God) just as God said he would, the very day that he ate from the tree. Though Adam physically died many years later, on account of being removed from the garden that had the tree of life, Adam morally and spiritually died the same day he sinned against God.

“In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die” (Gen. 2:17). Since God cannot fellowship with or dwell with sin, Adam spiritually died, that is, he became spiritually separated from God the day he sinned. “And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and he died” (Gen. 5:5); that is, Adam eventually physically died since he was removed from the tree of life (Gen. 3:22-24).

**“. . . and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.”**

It is clear that the type of death spoken of here comes upon men for their own personal sin, “for all have sinned”. And their sin is distinct and different from the sin of Adam (vs. 14). Some infant children physically die during pregnancy though they are “innocent” (2 Kgs. 21:16; 24:4; Joel 3:19) and haven’t ever sinned (Rom. 9:11). Physical death is because of Adam’s sin, not individual personal sin. So the type of death which comes upon all men for their own personal sin is not physical death but spiritual death, which type of death this verse is addressing.

Spiritual death comes by sin, so all who choose to sin become spiritually dead. A moral fall causes spiritual death. Because God cannot have fellowship with those who are in sin, those who are in sin must be separated from God, and thus they are spiritually dead in their sins. A state of spiritual deadness is a state of *relational separation* from God because of personal *moral disobedience*.

“For I was alive without the law once, but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died [morally and spiritually, since Paul was still physically alive]” Rom. 7:9

“But your iniquities [not Adam’s] have separated between you and your God [brought spiritual death], and your sins [not Adam’s] have hid His face from you [separation]” Isa. 59:2

“For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me [morally and spiritually killed me]” Rom. 7:11

“But sin... working [moral and spiritual] death in me...” Rom. 7:13

“For to be carnally minded is [moral and spiritual] death...” Rom. 8:6

“Christ...died for all, then all were dead [morally and spiritually].” 2 Cor. 5:14

“And you who were dead [morally and spiritually] in trespasses and sins.” Eph. 2:1, Eph. 2:5

“... alienated and enemies [relationally]... by wicked works” Col. 1:21

"And you, being dead [morally and spiritually, since they were still physically alive] in your sins [not Adam's sin] . . .” Col. 2:13

“But she that lives in pleasure is dead [morally and spiritually] while she [physically] lives.” 1 Tim. 5:6

“...and sin, when it is finished, brings forth death [moral and spiritual]. Jas. 1:14-15

“...thou hast a name that thou liveth, and art dead [morally and spiritually].” Rev. 3:1

Adam's disobedience brought sin into the world. Spiritual and moral death comes to those who choose to join in Adam's rebellion. So, many who are dead in their sins (“be dead”) are dead as a result of Adam's leading into sin, example of sin, and lasting influence to sin. But now the gift of eternal spiritual life [knowing God (Jn. 17:3)] is offered through Christ to all those who are spiritually dead in their sins. But the offer of a gift must still be voluntarily received and accepted by the one to whom the gift is offered.

Those who choose or decide, by free will, to follow Adam are spiritually dead in their sins; that is, they are separated from God relationally (Isa. 59:2; Rom. 7:9, 13; Col. 2:13), without any righteousness (Rom. 6:20), and they will receive eternal death – the punishment of hellfire (2 Thess. 1:9; Rev. 21:8). But those who choose or decide, by free will, to follow Christ will be spiritually alive; that is, they will be reconciled unto God relationally (Jn. 17:3; Rom. 5:10; 2 Cor. 5:18; Col. 1:21), without sin (Rom. 6:7, 11, 13; 8:10), and they will receive eternal life in the world to come (Mk. 10:30). Those who become spiritually and morally dead in their trespasses and sins (relationally dead to God) need to choose to be “born again” (Jn. 3:3) and therefore become morally, spiritually, or relationally “alive again” (Lk. 15:24).

“...He that...believeth...is passed from [moral and spiritual] death unto life [relationship].” Jn. 5:24

“...for this my son was dead [morally and spiritually] and is alive [relationship] again.”  
Lk. 15:24, Lk. 15:32

"Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead [moral and spiritual], and Christ shall give thee light." Eph. 5:14

“...yield yourselves unto God, as those that are [relationally] alive from the dead [moral and spiritual].” Rom. 6:13

“And you, being [morally and spiritually] dead in your sins... hath he made [relationally] alive together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses.” Col. 2:13

“We know that we have passed from [moral and spiritual] death unto life [relationship].”  
1 Jn. 3:14