

8. What Does God Say about the Beginning, End, and Nature of Life

Modern controversies about the beginning of life focus on the beginning of physical life for human beings and abound in pro and con arguments on abortion usually divided in pro-life and pro-choice groups. The controversies and the arguments are important more to individuals who take opinions on one side or another. The physical development of life has been described by many. One such definition follows:

According to this elementary definition of life, life begins at fertilization, when a sperm unites with an oocyte. From this moment, the being is highly organized, has the ability to acquire materials and energy, has the ability to respond to his or her environment, has the ability to adapt, and has the ability to reproduce (the cells divide, then divide again, etc., and barring pathology and pending reproductive maturity has the potential to reproduce other members of the species).

Others contend that the fetus is a simple appendage of the mother; and still others, by contending that contraception is wrong, contend, at least by implication, that life is in the sperm and the egg. God has given little on the physical growth and development of humans, but He has revealed so very much about the living soul which he has given each precious human. This article begins with God breathing the breath of life, making him a living being.

The Breath of Life (The Power of Life is in the Breath)

Gen 2:7

7 the Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.

The very grammar of this passage denies all interpretations but one: Subject—God; active verb—breathed; direct object—the breath of life. Who did what: God breathed into man the breath of life. What was the outcome? Subject—man; state of being verb—became; predicate nominative—living being. When did man become a living being? When he breathed the breath of life, he became a living being.

Gen 1:29-30

30 And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air and all the creatures that move on the ground – everything that has the breath of life in it – I give every green plant for food." And it was so.

The breath of life is the descriptive feature of all living creatures—“everything that has the breath of life in it. Thus with no breath there is no life. By God’s own testimony, to breath is to live. This teaching follows throughout the Bible and emerges as an eternal principle.

Gen 2:8-9

9 *And the Lord God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground – trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.*

Early in His revelation, God distinguished all the other living beings and man; and in His garden he placed the tree of life. This tree plays prominently throughout the Bible history right up to the end of *The Revelation*. Rev 22:14 teaches:

14 "Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city.

Gen 3:22-23

22 *And the Lord God said, "The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever."*

The power of eternal life comes via the tree of life; the power of physical life comes via the breath of life.

Gen 3:24

24 *After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.*

Therefore, the tree of life would never be available to mankind outside God's eternal purpose before the foundation of the world. Eph 1:9-10 teaches that that purpose was in Christ:

9 *And he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, 10 to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment – to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ.*

Gen 6:17

17 *I am going to bring floodwaters on the earth to destroy all life under the heavens, every creature that has the breath of life in it.*

What is *all life* under the heavens? Every creature that has the breath of life in it.

Gen 7:15-16

15 *Pairs of all creatures that have the breath of life in them came to Noah and entered the ark.*

Gen 7:22-23

22 *Everything on dry land that had the breath of life in its nostrils died. 23 Every living thing on the face of the earth was wiped out; men and animals and the creatures that move along the ground and the birds of the air were wiped from the earth.*

Deut 32:39

39 *"See now that I myself am He!
There is no god besides me.
I put to death and I bring to life,*

*I have wounded and I will heal,
and no one can deliver out of my hand.*

God testifies to Moses that He brings to life. The logical conclusion from the scriptures is that when mankind breathes the breath of life he becomes a living creature.

Job 7:7

*7 Remember, O God, that my life is but a breath;
my eyes will never see happiness again.*

Job understood that his life was only a breath. The next three quotations affirm that life comes from the breath of God.

Job 12:10

*10 In his hand is the **life** of every creature
and the **breath** of all mankind.*

Job 27:3-4

*3 as long as I have life within me,
the **breath** of God in my nostrils,
4 my lips will not speak wickedness,
and my tongue will utter no deceit.*

Job 33:4

*4 The Spirit of God has made me;
the breath of the Almighty gives me life.*

The life force of all humankind is the breath of God. When does life begin? Life begins when one breaths the breath of life.

Ezek 37:4-6

*4 Then he said to me, "Prophesy to these bones and say to them, 'Dry bones, hear the word of the Lord!
5 This is what the Sovereign Lord says to these bones: I will make breath enter you, and you will come to life. 6 I will attach tendons to you and make flesh come upon you and cover you with skin; I will put breath in you, and you will come to life. Then you will know that I am the Lord.'"*

Through Ezekiel, the Sovereign Lord repeated the principle eternal concerning breath and life: "I will make breath enter you, and you will come to life."

Acts 17:24-26

24 "The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by hands. 25 And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else.

Paul repeated the principle of breath and life, which had begun with creation, to the Greek philosophers, teaching that God gives life and breath and everything else.

Life of Every Creature Is Blood

Gen 9:4-5

4 "But you must not eat meat that has its lifeblood still in it. 5 And for your **lifeblood** I will surely demand an accounting. I will demand an accounting from every animal. And from each man, too, I will demand an accounting for the life of his fellow man.

If life begins by breathing, it is maintained by the blood, enriched with oxygen, called **lifeblood**.

Lev 17:14

14 because the life of every creature is its blood. That is why I have said to the Israelites, "You must not eat the blood of any creature, because the life of every creature is its blood; anyone who eats it must be cut off."

Because it is lifeblood, we are forbidden to eat the blood of any creature according to Deut 12:23-25:

23 But be sure you do not eat the blood, because the blood is the life, and you must not eat the life with the meat. 24 You must not eat the blood; pour it out on the ground like water. 25 Do not eat it, so that it may go well with you and your children after you, because you will be doing what is right in the eyes of the Lord.

Acts 15:23-29

To the Gentile believers in Antioch, Syria and Cilicia:

Greetings.

24 We have heard that some went out from us without our authorization and disturbed you, troubling your minds by what they said. 25 So we all agreed to choose some men and send them to you with our dear friends Barnabas and Paul— 26 men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. 27 Therefore we are sending Judas and Silas to confirm by word of mouth what we are writing. 28 It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us not to burden you with anything beyond the following requirements: 29 You are to abstain from food sacrificed to idols, **from blood, from the meat of strangled animals** and from sexual immorality. You will do well to avoid these things.

Farewell.

The same prohibitive teaching against eating and drinking blood was reiterated to the early Christians and carries over to our time and until the end of days.

The Tree of Life and Eternal Life

Gen 2:9

In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

By far, the most profound teaching is not that concerning the physical life, but that concerning eternal life. In fact the physical life that so dominates our thinking in as transient as a whiff of air. James 4:14 teaches of this life: "What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes."

Gen 3:22-24

22 And the Lord God said, "The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever." 23 So the Lord God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken. 24 After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.

The way to the tree of life is guarded and so no one may find it and take it and live forever. God has reserved the path to the tree of life for those who overcome evil and obey his son.

Prov 11:30

*30 The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life,
and he who wins souls is wise.*

Thus, it is that the fruit righteousness is a tree of life, and eternal life belongs to the righteous.

Prov 13:12

*12 Hope deferred makes the heart sick,
but a longing fulfilled is a tree of life.*

Rev 2:7

7 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.

God's final revelation of His mystery describes the tree of life as the paradise of God. Those who receive it by right are those who overcome.

Rev 22:1-3

22 Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb 2 down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. 3 No longer will there be any curse.

For those who overcome, the curse coming from Adam passes away. God's righteous who have overcome may eat of the tree of life.

Rev 22:14-15

14 "Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city. 15 Outside are the dogs, those who practice magic arts, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idolaters and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.

Certainly, those who are sinful will not have a right to the tree of life. Christians have washed their robes. The cleansing begins with baptism just as Paul was told in Acts 22:16:

16 And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on his name.'

The power of the washing is in the blood of the Lord Jesus in Rev 7:14-15:

And he said, "These are they who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

Our redemption is secured by a life of righteous acts in Rev 19:6-8

"Hallelujah!

For our Lord God Almighty reigns.

7 Let us rejoice and be glad

and give him glory!

For the wedding of the Lamb has come,

and his bride has made herself ready.

8 Fine linen, bright and clean,

was given her to wear."

(**Fine linen** stands for the **righteous acts** of the saints.)

Rev 22:19

19 And if anyone takes words away from this book of prophecy, God will take away from him his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.

Finally, to pervert God's prophecy is to lose our share in the tree of life!