

Not So Happy Birthdays!

Genesis 40:12-23



Two birthday celebrations are recorded in the Bible, and both resulted in death. Pharaoh celebrated his birthday by making a feast for all his servants. His chief butler was removed from prison and restored to his position, but the chief baker was hung according to Pharaoh's wishes (*Gen. 40:20-22*). About fifteen hundred years later, Herod celebrated his birthday by granting the request of a dancing girl, which resulted in the beheading of John the Baptist (*Matt. 14:3-12*).

These historic events can serve as reminders that birthdays have negative overtones. Our physical birth is but the first step that will ultimately result in our physical death: "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (*Heb. 9:27*). Every child of Adam was born into this world as a fallen, depraved creature: "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me" (*Psalms 51:5*). "**And sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death**" (*James 1:15*). Engraved on a tombstone is a person's birth date and death date; the two dates are linked together.

Thankfully, Christ was born and died so that we might be reborn. The new birth, blessed be His Name, results in life everlasting: "Ye must be born again...as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have **eternal life**" (*John 3:6,14,15*).

Those who are born again will never die spiritually (*John 8:51; 11:26*). The believer's tombstone may have a death date, but **death has lost its sting, and the grave has lost its victory** (*1 Cor. 15:55*). Those alive at the Rapture will not even experience physical death (*1 Cor. 15:51-52*)!

May we celebrate our new birth by being steadfast, unmovable, and always abounding in the work of the Lord (*1 Cor. 15:58*).

~George Zeller: www.middletonbiblechurch.org

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