

“Do Babies Go to Heaven?”

Do babies and small children go to heaven?

We have lengthy answers to this question [here](#) and [here](#), but [Shane Pruitt](#) provided an especially insightful, excellent answer to this question on [X \(Twitter\)](#):

At 12:50 AM on a Tuesday morning, our ten-year-old son with unique needs went to be Jesus.

So, a statement like this begs the question, “Am I just wishing this to be true, or do I Biblically know this to be true?”

Meaning, is there support in Scripture that God welcomes babies (born and unborn), young children, and those with unique mental needs (meaning they may be older, but have the mind of a child) immediately into Heaven?

I absolutely believe the Bible answers this. Here are Biblical reasons why I know this to be true:

God’s Knowledge: The Lord knows every child at conception and values them. They are considered a person, known and loved by God, from the very beginning. (Psalm 139:13 – 16).

God’s Declaration: God refers to young children as “innocents”. Not that they were perfect or without a sin nature, but they were innocent of the ability to understand the need of repentance and forgiveness. (Jeremiah 19:4).

God’s Promise: In Deuteronomy, we find an unbelieving generation of Israelites being prevented from entering the Promised Land, but their children were exempt from that penalty and were able to enter (Deuteronomy 1:39).

God’s Possession: He considers all babies to be His. God condemns Israel in Ezekiel 16:21, of the wretched act of child

sacrifice. "You slaughtered My children and offered them up to idols by causing them to pass through the fire."

God's Compassion: He has compassion on all little ones and infants, and is not willing that even one of them should perish (Matthew 18:14). His grace covers them, until they realize their need of a Savior.

God's Illustration: He used a child to illustrate what one must become like to enter His Kingdom (Matthew 18:1 -5). If infants and children would end up in Hell if they died young, He most likely wouldn't use them as an illustration of how to enter the Kingdom.

God's Compliment: He said children were the greatest in His Kingdom (Matthew 18:4).

God's Blessing: Jesus blessed the little children and said the Kingdom of God belongs to them (Mark 9:13 – 16). Jesus typically didn't bless those destined to Hell or promise them the Kingdom, unless He meant it.

David's Assurance: David knew that he would be in heaven forever after death (Ps 23:6). He also had the assurance that his baby (that had died) would be there as well, where they would be reunited. "... I will go to him, but he will not return to me (2 Samuel 12:22 – 23)."

God's Presence: I do not believe in a "soul sleep". When babies, young children, and those with unique needs die; they are with the Lord immediately (2 Corinthians 5:8, Luke 23:43).

God is not silent on this topic. Scripture speaks.

Therefore, you can know with absolute confidence that you did not "lose" your baby, child, or loved one with unique needs. You didn't lose them, because you know exactly where they are. They are perfectly and fully alive with Jesus.

Posted 8/3/2023

“How Is It Moral To Own People as Property?”

How is it moral to own people as property and pass them along to your heirs, Leviticus 25:44-46?

We wouldn't say it's moral, but it IS part of life in a fallen world deeply impacted by sin.

The Bible never condones slavery, but God does regulate it to protect people where slavery was part of an economic system.

Much of slavery in the ancient world was different from the heinous, inhuman, and degrading slavery of the past several hundred years (and unfortunately, continuing into today). People would choose to sell themselves into slavery as a way of managing debt and insufficient income to provide for themselves and their families.

Slavery has been and is part of a fallen world, but ultimately, when Jesus Christ sets everything right in the new heavens and the new earth, there will be no slavery. God does have a plan and a timeline for abolishing slavery altogether and forever.

Here's some helpful insight on the subject: www.gotquestions.org/Bible-slavery.html

Blessing you,

Sue Bohlin

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“How Could Jesus Take Our Sins on Himself If God Cannot Tolerate Sin?”

How was it that Jesus, considering He is fully God, and God is not able to have sin anywhere near Him, can take all of our sins on Himself? Having trouble wrapping my mind around this. I fully believe what Jesus did, however, this is a bit confusing for me.

Great question.

You are operating with a misunderstanding common to a LOT of people, that “God is not able to have sin anywhere near Him.” That’s not true. First, consider Job 1, where the Holy Spirit pulls back the curtain on heaven and we see Satan striding confidently into heaven’s throne room. God allowed the most evil of creatures access to Himself. Second, consider the incarnation, where the Son wrapped Himself in human flesh and entered the sin-filled world where he was literally surrounded by nothing but sinful people His entire earthly existence.

I think it’s helpful to look at Habakkuk 1:13, where the prophet writes, “Your eyes are too pure to look on evil; you cannot tolerate wrongdoing.” This is Habakkuk’s perspective on God, but it is not teaching doctrine. We know from Job 1 that while He is pure, it does not prevent Him from looking on evil. We also know that God is so longsuffering, He does tolerate wrongdoing. He just won’t tolerate it forever.

Does this help remove the obstacle to acknowledging that the Holy One can take all our sin into and onto Himself while on the cross? Even without fully understanding what a deep

mystery it is?

Blessing you,
Sue Bohlin

Thanks so much for getting back to me and yes that helped and yes it is very deep and mind boggling. And what is it that they say? To completely understand something like that we would then have the mind of God, right?

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“Why Was Jesus Crucified Outside Jerusalem?”

What is the meaning behind Jesus being crucified outside Jerusalem?

There is an interesting passage in Hebrews 13:10-14 which speaks of Jesus suffering “outside the gate” of Jerusalem. Since this letter was originally written to Jewish believers who were tempted to abandon their Christian faith and return to Judaism and the Temple, the author seems to be encouraging his readers to share Christ’s humiliation and rejection by the Jewish community. This is symbolized by their going “outside” the Jewish community and sharing in Christ’s sufferings. As one commentator puts it, “In essence, the author’s command to ‘go forth to’ Christ was a command to abandon Judaism. Anyone found with Christ—outside of the city gate—would be considered outside the Jewish community.”

Shalom,

“Is Soul Sleep Biblical?”

I am writing to seek clarification on the rather thorny issue of life after death. In 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17 Paul outlines how the process of judgment will take place. He says, “For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a loud cry of summons, with the shout of an archangel, and with the blast of the trumpet of God. And those who have departed this life in Christ will rise first.” Isn’t this a substantive indication of “soul sleep”? If what Paul asserts is anything to go by it means that after death the soul remains in somewhat a “holding cell” until the day of judgment regardless of the person’s beliefs and tenets prior to death. An appendage would be 1 Samuel 28:1-14; I believe this passage also corroborates the “holding cell” school of thought.

Thanks for your letter. This is a very important issue. I am personally persuaded that the doctrine of “soul sleep” is incorrect. When the Bible speaks of death in terms of “sleep,” it is speaking this way because the person’s body looks as if it were asleep. In other words, this way of speaking has to do with the body, and not the soul.

This is evident, I think, when one considers a passage like Luke 16:19-31. Both the rich man and Lazarus die, but their souls are very far from being “asleep” (in the sense of unconscious). The men in this story, although physically dead, are pictured as consciously awake and aware of their surroundings. Their bodies have died, but their souls are very much conscious in the afterlife.

This is also evident in Revelation 6:9-11. And it is further supported by the teaching (concerning believers) that when we die, we go immediately to be with the Lord. Here, remember what Jesus said to the thief on the cross, "Today, you will be with Me in paradise" (Luke 23:43). Or consider Paul's statements in passages like 2 Cor. 5:1-10 or Philippians 1:23. All of these passages indicate, I think, that believers are conscious and with the Lord in paradise between death and resurrection. Unbelievers, likewise, are also conscious (though they are in torment and separated from the Lord).

Hence, the Bible seems to teach that we continue to experience some form of personal, conscious existence between death and resurrection.

I hope that these passages from Scripture will help to clear up this issue for you.

Shalom in Christ,

Michael Gleghorn

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"My Girlfriend's Parents Won't Accept Me Because I'm Not Saved"

My girlfriend's parents do not accept me because I am not saved though I have never put a foot wrong. I would like to know where Probe Ministries stands on this. As a footnote, she has a child which I have accepted as my own.

Thanks for writing. Although I do not know all the details of your case, there is actually biblical justification for your girlfriend's parents reaction to you. The apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthians as follows in 2 Corinthians 6:14-16:

"Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: 'I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people.'

This passage clearly forbids believers to marry unbelievers. If your girlfriend is a Christian, then this could at least partially explain her parents' reaction to you.

Of course, the good news is that you don't need to continue relating to your girlfriend's family as an outsider! After all, Christ died for you too! So why not repent of your sin, give your heart and life to Christ, and place your trust in Him for forgiveness, cleansing, and the free gift of eternal life? Of course, you must do so genuinely and sincerely and from the heart. But if you do, then you will (most importantly) be an adopted son of God and a member of His family forever. In addition, if you sincerely give your life to Christ, it might also make you more acceptable to your girlfriend's parents. Of course, I want to be very clear, that you do not PRETEND to become a Christian in order to win their approval. That would be a very great sin in the eyes of God. However, if you genuinely and sincerely give your life to Christ and become a member of the family of God, then He may (as an added bonus) grant you the approval of your girlfriend's family as well. And even if He doesn't, you will still have the greatest good that any man can ever have/M a

personal relationship with the Triune God, your Creator and Redeemer who loves you, and gave His Son for you. And what could ultimately be better than that?

Shalom,

Michael Gleghorn

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“What About Believers Who Stop Believing in Christ?”

I saw [your response to a question](#) regarding Hebrews and the warning of falling away. The thing is, I've known people who stopped believing in Christ, and then were restored to faith. How does this go together with these verses? Even missionaries like Adoniram Judson, Isobel Kuhn and John Newton all had times of rebellion in their younger years. And so did I; even though I grew up in a Christian home, I denied my faith in Christ at age 17—I sort of lived as a “Secret Christian” because of my Muslim fiancée at the time. At that time I didn't even know how bad it was. Because I wasn't born again or knew of repentance I never felt convicted of sins before. It's now been three years later, and I recently experienced a hatred for sin and a true faith in the sacrifice of Jesus (a faith beyond just mental acknowledgement). Does that mean I'm beyond hope?

I'm a little confused also because the verses you say refer to not true believers. My question also is, would a Jew really leave Judaism to become a nominal Christian at that time? I

doubt one could say that they were nominal Christians who were in danger of falling away, when I know how much it means to leave one religion for Christianity in a country with mostly people who belong to false religion. To leave their faith to convert to Christ meant to sacrifice all—it would be like a Muslim converting and losing his family just by some superficial faith . . . that's why I feel like it didn't make sense to say the Jews who fell away were just superficial believers?

These are some very important (but also difficult) questions. We must honestly admit the difficulty, I think, as we nonetheless strive to understand (and believe and obey) what the Bible teaches. My own view is basically this:

First you ask: "I've known people who stopped believing in Christ, and then were restored to faith. How does this go together with these verses?"

If these people were true believers, and have been restored to genuine faith in Christ, then they are saved. If "[eternal security](#)" of the believer is true (i.e. once saved, always saved), then they were always saved (since first trusting Christ for salvation). If this doctrine is false, then it appears that they have been graciously restored to faith (and salvation). Either way, if they are trusting Christ for salvation (and their faith is genuine), then they are saved.

Of course, it's also possible that they weren't initially true believers at all. Sometimes people think they are Christians because they go to church, or believe in God, or because they have been baptized, or something else. But they may never have truly trusted Christ for salvation. One cannot lose what one never had. In this case, such people are not really saved at all until they truly trust Christ for salvation. And this may not actually happen until after some period of rebellion.

Indeed, you say of yourself, "Because I wasn't born again or

knew of repentance I never felt convicted of sins before. It's now been three years later, and I recently experienced a hatred for sin and a true faith in the sacrifice of Jesus (a faith beyond just mental acknowledgement). Does that mean I'm beyond hope?"

Of course you're not beyond hope! You have trusted in Christ for salvation and you are saved! But it doesn't sound like you were saved before this (even though you may have grown up in a Christian home). In other words, it doesn't sound like you ever really left the faith, because it doesn't sound to me like you were saved until recently. And the same would almost certainly be true of Adoniram Judson and John Newton. By the way, Christians continue to struggle with sin after salvation, but that is a different matter from completely abandoning the faith.

Finally, no, I do not think that a Jew would abandon Judaism to become a nominal Christian (except possibly under extreme duress). But people may become lax in their faith over time. And such people could potentially abandon their faith to return to Judaism. Note: I'm not saying this actually happens. But it could. And if it were to happen, then such a person might indeed forfeit salvation (if "eternal security" is false, which is debatable).

This is how I see the matter. I tend to think that eternal security is true, and that a believer cannot lose salvation. But other disagree with this view and it is always possible that they are right and that I am wrong. Regardless, however, it is God's intention to save those who come to Him through His Son. And we are definitely secure in Christ. The only way a believer could lose salvation (if such a thing is even possible) is by committing apostasy and rejecting Christ, and then persisting in this rejection until overtaken by physical death.

Shalom in Christ,

Michael Gleghorn

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“What Is the ‘Sin Unto Death’?” [Michael Gleghorn]

What is the sin unto death, according to 1 John 5:16-17? [If anyone sees his brother committing a sin not leading to death, he shall ask, and God will give him life—to those who commit sins that do not lead to death. There is sin that leads to death; I do not say that one should pray for that. All wrongdoing is sin, but there is sin that does not lead to death.]

The passage does not tell us what sort of sin leads to death, nor does it tell us what sort of death is in view here (e.g. physical or spiritual).

In my opinion, it seems best to understand the “death” in view here as physical, not spiritual. We actually have examples in the Bible in which believers sinned so grievously that God took their lives (see, for example, Acts 5:1-11 and 1 Corinthians 11:30 [in the context of verses 17-34]).

If your version of the Bible has the indefinite pronoun “a” before sin in these verses, you should know that this has been added by translators and need not be supplied in the translation. In other words, John is not necessarily talking about a particular sin. Rather, he is probably speaking of a category of sins which could (if committed) lead to physical death. This would be due to God’s judgment on the believer’s

sin.

One final point. If this understanding is correct, it need not be understood to mean that the believer whose sin leads to physical death is therefore spiritually lost. The judgment would be upon the believer's life in this world. It would not imply that such a believer also forfeits heaven. The believer so judged by God would still be saved. But he would probably be like one of those believer's described by Paul in 1 Corinthians 3:15—"he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames." Such a believer is saved, but appears to have suffered the loss of all possible heavenly rewards. If this is correct, then salvation is not at issue here, but rather the loss of rewards that could have been earned through obedience. Of course, salvation itself is by grace through faith, and not by our works (Ephesians 2:8-9).

I hope this helps. This is basically how I would understand the passage in 1 John.

Shalom in Christ,

Michael Gleghorn

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"Jehovah is the Only Name of God!"

Posted on Probe's Facebook:

Having just been looking at several sites including Wikipedia

for God's name (which I already know from scripture) it never ceases to amaze me how wrong some people are. There is only one truth and God's name Jehovah is in the original scriptures over 7000 times. Jesus said in His Model prayer "Let Your name be sanctified." How can we sanctify it if we don't use it, as sanctify means "make known." God and Lord are just titles like king or judge or doctor. So unless you are going to be completely truthful then it would be better for none of these sites to say anything. People the truth is out there, it's up to you to do your own homework like I did.

The Name of God is not "Jehovah"! God revealed His Name to Moses in Exodus 3:14 as YHWH, popularly known as the Tetragrammaton or "the four letter name" which means "I AM" or "the eternal one" or "the self-existing one." The exact pronunciation of this Name was lost to history with the destruction of the last Temple in Jerusalem. It was uttered only once a year on the Day of Atonement. Although the Name appears thousands of times in the Old Testament, it was never spoken; instead Adonai was used in its place, which was a generic reference to God. Many English translations use LORD to show where the Name appears in the Hebrew text. The word "Jehovah" was coined by scholars around the 17th century through combining the vowels from Adonai with the consonants of YHWH.

More importantly than the actual pronunciation or even spelling of the Name was its meaning; in revealing His Name as "I AM," God declared that He cannot be identified with a name because that limits the eternal one to a finite and temporal description. In ancient times a name denoted the character of its object, setting limits to it (Ecclesiastes 6:10), and gave the name-giver a particular power over the named, such as with the name God gave to the first human Adam which means man and positioned him at the pinnacle of creation; in turn Adam was responsible for naming all the animals which established his authority over them (Genesis 2:20). A proper name for God

suggests a limitation to the finite world much like the pagan deities of Egypt. However, because God is eternal He remains outside of the cosmos and in control of it. A name sets a boundary to His eternal being. In other words, God's Name revealed to Moses was a Name that cannot be named or as it has been called "the ineffable Name." In the context of Exodus God was confronting and destroying the pagan Egyptians and their false gods, which all had names that represented particular aspects of the finite world: the sun, the moon, the underworld, the river, etc. God declared that He is different than those limited gods because He is Wholly Other, all powerful and eternal. He cannot be represented or personified by the cycles of nature.

Naming divinity in the ancient world made the gods personal, but extremely limited in their abilities and powers. The gods of paganism were personifications of nature; for example, Ra was the sun god that gave life, but his power did not reach to the underworld. Zeus controlled the sky, but not the sea which belonged to Poseidon. The gods did not ultimately rule the cosmos, but were subject to a universal principle of fate; not even the gods could escape their predetermined destinies.

YHWH declared Himself "holy" or different from the limited pagan gods. Yet, He was personal too in that He did not rule by caprice; His followers could pray to Him, reason with Him and even argue with Him as with any personal deity in the hopes that He would change His mind (Genesis 6:6; Numbers 11, 14:11-19). YHWH was both eternal and personal, a radical departure from the ancient pagan belief in limited gods and unpredictable fate.

The New Testament embodies the fullness of this infinite yet personal God in the incarnation of Jesus Christ. God becoming man in John 1 was the equivalent of YHWH revealing His Name to Moses in Exodus 3. Just as the eternal one did the impossible by limiting Himself with a proper name, so through the incarnation God did the impossible in the minds of strict

monotheistic Jews by becoming man (John 5:18; 10:33), a concept the Jews thought so blasphemous that they wanted to stone Jesus for claiming to be "the Son of God" a title he used to identify himself as God (John 10:36). Just as Jesus used "Son of Man" in order to show his complete identity with humanity, God chose self-limitation in emptying Himself and took the form of a man in Jesus Christ (Philippians 2:6-8).

Yet "Jesus" is not the Name of God and "Christ" (the chosen one) of course is a title. Jesus means "salvation" and although He was the incarnation of God, He was still limited and still a man, like us in every way except for sin (Hebrews 4:15). Jesus of Nazareth was not superman and had no special magic powers or abilities. All that He accomplished was through faith in his Father God and by the power of the Holy Spirit (John 14:10). Jesus is the name of a man, who identified himself as "I AM" (John 8:58). He was the God/Man who humbled himself in death, bringing salvation to humanity, and because of His suffering it is the name of Jesus that God exalts above every Name (Philippians 2:8-11). And only through calling on the name of Jesus does humanity experience salvation (Acts 4:12). The exaltation of Jesus Christ makes the whole debate over the proper Name of God a moot point, since it is the name of a man that is greater than even the Name of God.

It is therefore biblically inaccurate, linguistically mistaken and theologically impossible to make reference to "Jehovah" or "Yahweh" as the Name of God. It is best that we abandon the entire use of the name Jehovah and simply return to the word LORD in our English translations wherever the Hebrew reads YHWH with the understanding that this is "the ineffable Name" that means "the eternal self-existing one," who is Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and who remains forever present with us through the Holy Spirit.

Lawrence Terlizzese, Ph.D.

Posted Aug. 2013

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“From Flat Earth to Lot’s Daughters—Major Questions on God”

Several very broad questions that have plagued many through the years were asked by young lady from the U.K.:

- 1) The Bible reflects that we live on a flat earth, does it not?
- 2) Why did God allow such terrible violence in the Old Testament?
- 3) Why does the bible degrade the women unequal to men?
- 4) The Bible says that women should not have authority over man or teach in 1 Timothy 2:12? Isn’t that God being [unfair] to women?
- 5) Why did Lot offer up his daughters to be gang raped? Why did God allow Lot’s daughters to later have sex with their father? I don’t understand why a loving God will allow this?
- 6) Was God being evil when He killed all the firstborn in Egypt?

Hello _____,

Thanks for your letter. Please allow me to briefly respond to your questions in the order in which you asked them:

1. The Bible nowhere teaches that we live on a flat earth. While some might say that the Bible’s use of poetic language implies such a thing, this would be to seriously misread and

misinterpret biblical poetry.

2. This is a question related to the problem of evil. Please see response #5 below.

3. The New Testament teaches that men and women are equal in Christ. Paul writes unequivocally, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28). Both men and women are made in the image and likeness of God and, hence, have intrinsic worth and dignity (Genesis 1:27). But this equality in worth and value before God does not mean that men and women have the same function in the world or role in the church.

4. So I don't think that 1 Tim. 2:12 is teaching that women are not equal to men in worth and dignity before God. Paul has already taught that they are in Galatians 3:28. Rather, this verse shows that men and women have different roles to play in the body of Christ. The sexes have different roles and responsibilities. Hence, women (and not men) are honored with bringing children into the world (and thus Eve is called the mother of all the living in Genesis 3:20). Further, they are encouraged to teach other women (Titus 2:4) as well as children. This verse (and others like it) speaks to that authoritative teaching ministry of the church (when it is gathered together as the church, with both men and women present) which God has committed to men. It does not mean that a woman cannot instruct men in all sorts of arenas (including college and university settings, etc.) outside this special teaching function in the church. Paul is speaking to a very limited area of teaching in the church which God has given to men. Women have other teaching functions in the church and (as I said) they can also teach all they want outside the church. But God has entrusted what we might call the "pulpit ministry" of the church to men.

5. This also, it seems to me, is a question which can be

subsumed under the problem of evil. I think the correct answer to questions such as this is, first, to point out that such behavior contradicts (and is contrary to) God's revealed moral will. In other words, it is sin. All human sin must be laid at the feet of human beings, for these are the ones committing such vile acts. God does not force man to misbehave and do evil. Rather, mankind freely chooses such abominable behavior. God, indeed, is the One who has graciously provided a way of escape for all men in Christ. And hence, all men and women are called upon to repent of their sins and place their hope and faith in Christ for salvation. Those who refuse to repent and place their trust in Christ for salvation will be held fully accountable before God for their sins. This is a situation that we are all strenuously called upon to avoid by fleeing to the refuge (in Christ) which God has graciously made available to all men and women. But those who refuse God's free offer of salvation in Christ will be held fully accountable for all the sin and moral evil which they have committed.

6. Now, as to God's killing the first born of Egypt, we must bear in mind a few things. First, as the Author and Giver of life, God has the right both to give and take life as He sees fit. Indeed, He does this all the time. But according to the Bible, physical death does not end our personal, conscious existence. Rather, our existence continues into the afterlife. And if (as I believe) all those that die before reaching an age of moral accountability before God (whatever that age might be) are saved, this sovereign act of God would have brought many of these people to a much better place—a place of everlasting joy and peace in the presence of God—a place they might never have seen had they been permitted to live out their days on earth. [See also our article [Do Babies Go to Hell?](#)] Secondly, all these deaths could have been avoided if Pharaoh would have yielded his own arrogant will to God's and let God's people go free (as he was repeatedly told to do). Pharaoh witnessed several miracles of God and was given repeated opportunities to obey and let God's people go.

Unfortunately, he refused—with the result that both he and his people were made to endure several more plagues until he finally relented and allowed God's people (whom he had enslaved, after all) to go free. It's always important to bear in mind the “much-bigger” picture of what we read in the Bible.

I hope these answers prove helpful to you in your ongoing spiritual pilgrimage. Each of these answers could be (and has been) developed at much greater length by Christian scholars—and I would encourage you to explore such answers in articles and books. But this is all I can say over email, for time is very limited.

God bless you _____!

Shalom in Christ,
Michael Gleghorn