

SEED & BREAD

FOR THE SOWER ISA. 55:10 FOR THE EATER
BRIEF BIBLICAL MESSAGES FROM

THE WORD OF TRUTH MINISTRY

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CONCERNING RESURRECTION

It will be my purpose in this study to exercise great care in order that all words shall be used accurately, so that Paul's admonition in 2 Timothy 1: 13 to "**hold fast the form of sound words**" will be obeyed.

The great truth of "**the resurrection of the dead**" is a divine truth. It is not found in man's religions or in his religious beliefs, unless these have come in contact with the Word of God. Even then they are corrupt and bear little resemblance to the Truth of Scripture. Therefore, in dealing with these things, they must be presented in harmony with the principle set forth in 1 Cor. 2:13: "**Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost (Spirit) teacheth.**"

In Christendom we find the phrase "the resurrection of the body" used continually. This fits in well with the Platonic theory of man's nature, but it is a phrase that is never found in the Word of God. The phrase used consistently in the Bible is "the resurrection of the dead." This teaches us that it is the one who died that is raised and not just some part or aspect of him called the body.

In insisting upon the use of the God-breathed words "the resurrection of the dead," this does not mean that I believe that resurrection is not literal and actual. I do believe. that man is raised from the dead, actually, literally, and bodily. I am insisting only that since it is a man that dies, it is a man that is raised from the dead.

I will never permit anyone to take from me the words that God has used and put into my mouth the words they use. Over and over, the Spirit of God

inspired men to speak of "the resurrection of the dead." He never led them to speak of "the resurrection of the body." This fact makes it quite simple to choose the path of faithfulness to His words and to obey the admonition of Jeremiah, "he that hath My word, let him speak My word faithfully" (Jer. 23:28). I well know that Scripture states, "it is raised a spiritual body." I fully believe this, but this has no bearing on the matter before us. We are dealing with man's phrase, "the resurrection of the body," which is used to imply that it is only the body that is dead, and God's phrase, "the resurrection of the dead." It is my choice to speak God's thoughts after Him, and in His own words.

In answering the question, "What is resurrection?" one that is seldom asked, we can say by the Word of God that resurrection is the restoration of life to one who is dead; it is an act of God that takes one from among the dead and places him among the living. If one is not dead, then resurrection would be needless and impossible. It is positively not the resuscitation of someone who is apparently dead or the reviving of one who is very near to death. It is not reincarnation, wherein something, called "the soul" by some and "the spirit" by others, returns to the body from which it supposedly moved out. The facts concerning resurrection are supported by every instance of restoration to life recorded in the Word of God. We will consider one such record.

In Luke 7:11-15 we have the divine report of the raising of the widow's son. It is a narrative of facts, and from it we can learn much about resurrection. Each word needs to be carefully considered.

"And it came to pass the day after, that He went into a city called Nain; and many of His disciples went with Him, and much people. Now when He came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her.

And when the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not. And He came and touched the bier: and they that bare him stood still. And He said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise. And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And He delivered him to his mother"

The words, "there was a dead man carried out" are an exact expression of what took place. These are not the words of man's wisdom. They are words

of the Holy Spirit. They are not the carelessly chosen words of man. They are the inspired words of God. When the Lord spoke to the dead man, He said, "**Young man, I say unto thee, arise.**" And the inspired record tells us that "**he that was dead sat up**".

In the light of these emphatic statements, certain questions should be asked and honestly answered. Was this a dead man or merely a body from which the man had departed? Was our Lord speaking to a "young man" or to a body when He said, "Young man, arise"? But most important of all, was this man dead or alive? If anyone insists he was alive, let them tell that to the Lord in the day when men shall give an account for every idle word.

This record will show plainly that all illustrations of resurrection such as the trees putting forth their buds or the flowers springing up from bulbs or seeds in the ground, so common in sermons at that time of the year that the world and the church call Easter, bear no likeness to resurrection whatsoever.

God's answer to death is resurrection. Whatever death is, resurrection is the undoing of it. Therefore, what one believes concerning death will have a profound influence on his belief concerning resurrection. If we are in possession of God's truth concerning death, we can go on and possess God's truth concerning resurrection. If we are in error in regard to the nature of death, we will then have to wrest the truth concerning resurrection to make it fit our false ideas. God's truth concerning death appears very early in Scripture.

The orthodox idea that is prevalent throughout Christendom is that in death the body is but a garment laid aside from use, or a dwelling abandoned while the dweller in the house has gone elsewhere. But this is not what we find in God's Word. A directly opposite view is there set forth. The body, dead and lifeless though it may be, is always looked upon as the man. This is the uniform, unvarying testimony of Scripture. Thus, when we read of death and burial in the Bible, it is always the man who is laid in the grave. Sarah, Abraham, Jacob, and Moses were buried. The Bible does not speak of them as having gone somewhere else or as being anywhere else except in the grave. The person, the individual, the man, he who was once alive is spoken of as lying in the grave. (See Gen. 23:2, 19; 25:8, 9; 50:26; and Deut. 34:5, 6.) .

God's truth concerning death, like His truth concerning sin and future punishment, is not pleasant truth. He never intended that man should find any consolation, not in sin and death, but in Christ our Savior from sin and our Redeemer from death. He would turn our eyes toward the One Who is our Resurrection and our Life. Our entrance into His presence will not be by means of the enemy death, but by means of resurrection through Jesus Christ.

The very fact of resurrection tells us that death is not man's end. Death is only for a time. It is not eternal, and it is not man's destruction. I accept without question the testimony of the Bible that my history as a living soul will come to an end at death. I will return to the soil and the life that God allowed me to have for all these years will return to Him Who gave it. He gave it to me with every breath I have ever drawn, but I have no assurance that my next breath will not be my last. No line will be added to my history, no matter how long I am in the state of death. I will do no work; I will gain no knowledge; I will have no experiences. However, my history will begin again on the day of my resurrection. Glorious day! I will then take up where I left off.

False teaching has led many to believe that the day we die is actually the day we begin to live, that death is a door that leads to a greater and fuller life. God forbid that I should believe this lie of Satan; for if this were true, resurrection would be wholly unnecessary.

Of course, I know from experience that many who read this study will say: **"Then you believe that the soul sleeps between death and resurrection"**; so I will here state emphatically that I do not believe any such thing. My understanding of the soul makes such belief impossible. Others will say, **"Then you must believe that the dead are unconscious."** And again I must say that I do not believe this. I do not believe in "soul sleep," and I know that the words *conscious* and *unconscious* can only be applied to the living. I believe that a man can be alive and conscious or alive and unconscious; but when he is dead, he is neither *conscious* nor *unconscious*. He is dead, and only resurrection will remove him from this state.

In the Biblical record of the death of Christ, we find the statement that Joseph begged the body of Jesus from Pilate; and after receiving permission, he came and took the body of Jesus. Some would make out of this wording the idea it was no longer Jesus, it was only His body. However, this is false;

for as if to expressly guard against any such idea, it further declares: **"Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid. There laid they Jesus"** (John 19:41, 42). When Mary came to the tomb on the morning of His resurrection, she reported to Peter and John, **"They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid Him"** (John 20:2). When the disciples were sore perplexed at this strange turn of events, two heavenly messengers appeared and said to them: **"Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen"** (Luke 24:5, 6). And if we ask why He was not among the dead, the answer comes back, **"Because He had risen."** If He had not risen, He would still be among the dead.

Over and over again, Christian people make the firm declaration, "We do not worship a dead Christ." This is true, we do not worship One Who is dead. Our Savior is a living, active, working Savior. But it must always be kept in mind that the one reason we have for making such declarations is because He arose from the dead. Apart from resurrection, He would not be alive. And once any man enters into the state of death, he will never live again apart from resurrection.

Truth at times may be bitter, but it is never disappointing. We must face the facts. If there is no resurrection of the dead, our loved ones have perished. We can chisel on their tombstones "NO HOPE," if the dead rise not (1 Cor. 15:16-19). But before we take this radical step, let us hear the words of our Lord Christ Jesus:

I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forevermore. Rev. 1:18.

These things saith the First and the Last, Which was dead, and is alive. Rev. 2:8.

Because I live, ye shall live also. John 14:19.

END ISSUE NO. SB080